

August 23, 2016

Illinois Climate Action Plan Working Group (iWG)

Ben McCall, Associate Director for Campus Sustainability, representing iSEE and serving as iWG Chair
Morgan Johnston, Associate Director of Facilities & Services (F&S) for Sustainability, representing F&S
Robyn Deterding, Director of Campus Recreation, representing Student Affairs
Matthew Tomaszewski, Associate Provost for Capital Planning, representing the Office of the Provost
Gary Kling, Chair of Senate Committee on Campus Operations, representing the Academic Senate
Joe Edwards, Chair of the Student Sustainability Leadership Council
Sean Reeder, Assistant Director Engineer, representing the Office of Business and Financial Services
Rob Fritz, Beckman Institute Director of Facilities, representing the college-level facility managers

Dear Colleagues,

Thank you so much for agreeing to serve as a representative on the Illinois Climate Action Plan, or iCAP, Working Group. This important group serves an essential role in our campus's procedure for developing and evaluating new sustainability policies and initiatives.

The primary responsibility of the iCAP Working Group (iWG) is to consider recommendations made by the topical Sustainability Working Advisory Teams (SWATeams). Small-scale recommendations will be evaluated by your chair, who will report to you about them at your regular meetings. Recommendations with moderate-to-large impacts on budget and/or policy should be considered by your full group. If you feel that more detailed study is needed for a particular item, you are to transmit a request for such study to the appropriate units and re-consider that item once the study is complete. You should formally transmit recommendations with moderate budget/policy impact directly to the impacted units. You should transmit recommendations with large budget/policy impacts to the Sustainability Council, which is chaired by the Chancellor. Your group will then facilitate the implementation of the Sustainability Council's decisions.

The 2015 iCAP also has objectives that are not directly tied to one of the six SWATeams. The introduction notes, "we have decided to undertake a detailed study during the 2015-2016 academic year, using the sustainability process described above, to determine what steps our campus would need to take to accelerate our efforts and achieve carbon neutrality by 2035. This study will include an examination of the costs and benefits of those steps, considering both the short- and long-term impacts on our campus finances, environmental impact, and reputation. Following the completion of this study, we expect the Sustainability Council to advise the Chancellor as to whether the goal of carbon neutrality by 2035 should be adopted." Chapters 8 and 9 include objectives regarding Offsets and Financing. Chapters 9 and 10 include objectives related to Curricular Education and Outreach, and Chapter 11 includes objectives regarding Research.

The iWG should consider potential strategies for achieving these additional objectives and make recommendations to the Sustainability Council or appropriate campus units to facilitate meeting them. For example, iCAP objective 9.1 is “By the end of FY16, develop criteria and a review process for the iCAP Working Group to allocate funding for feasibility studies of SWATeam-recommended sustainability projects and initiatives, using funds provided by campus administration and other sources.” The list of criteria was completed by the iWG in February 2016, and the review process needs to be established.

As you are no doubt aware, our campus is placing a renewed emphasis on the topic of sustainability, following the results of the Visioning Future Excellence process and the creation of iSEE. In 2008, our campus signed on to the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, and with the adoption of the 2015 iCAP we reaffirm our commitment to become carbon neutral as soon as possible while also serving as a model of sustainability for all universities in the nation. Thank you for helping to bring this vision to reality.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Evan H. DeLucia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'E'.

Evan H. DeLucia
G. William Arends Professor of Integrative Biology
Baum Family Director, Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment