

## Advocacy Working Group Summary

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**Question: “What are the advocacy strategies for advancing sustainability in higher education?”**

Discussion on internal and external strategies for advancing SHE:

### Internal strategies:

1. Focus across the university and engage at all levels (finance managers, facilities, purchasing, investment, faculty, students, etc.) and all departments
2. Less reliance on upper echelon and more incorporation into the core value system
3. Promote change in tenure/promotion policies
4. Expand concept of graduation pledge to beginning of matriculation (orientation) and discuss integrating it into education process (include in Student Handbook)
5. Form consortia/ build on existing consortia (e.g. Associate Colleges of the South; Pennsylvania Consortium for Interdisciplinary Environmental Policy)
6. Form learning networks within and across universities, creating peer-to-peer discussions within higher ed as well as between greening business and higher ed
7. Develop marketing materials/strategies/social marketing
  - A. Develop primers for each of the target areas (curricula, students, presidents/administration, purchasing, finance, facilities...) which include concise practical definitions, possible processes and formulas to use, appendices with case studies, stories and a resource list of people for questions
  - B. Introductory (Activists’) handbook on how to speak to and mobilize different audiences for sustainability
8. Focus on K-12 Teachers and counselors
9. Explore opportunities to connect with people exploring new ways of learning
10. Link up with existing networks: civic engagement network, tenure and promotion network, and collaborative learning network to integrate sustainability agenda/paradigm
11. Increase multidisciplinary/interdisciplinary research – see below
12. Strategies to enhance student engagement
13. On-going on-site permanent comparative experiences (e.g., sustainable vs. conventional dormitories; possible curriculum comparison of two different ways to teach chemistry)
14. Try to influence strategic plan/master plan (Into activist handbook)
15. Conduct baseline of who is interested and what is going on, and use this to create a critical mass for action. Use students to gather the information (Into activist handbook)
16. Faculty and staff development training (e.g., Tufts Environmental Literacy Institute, Northern Arizona Univ.’s Ponderosa project, WRI’s BELL project, Second Nature’s regional workshops)
17. Start a Futures Institute
18. Develop mechanisms for continuous communication/learning

19. Rewards and appraisal (Reward and celebrate what has been done in the past)
20. Engage presidents and trustees
21. Get sustainability strands into disciplinary conferences
22. Speak the language that works – concise, practical definition; use stories
24. Focus on financial directors (senior management)
25. Connect operations and research

External Strategies:

1. Connect with activist community (e.g., SEAC – Student Environmental Action Coalition)
2. Sustainability to be a greater priority for research/education \$ (e.g. NSE, industry)
3. Engage private sector that cares about sustainability re: funding and recruiting
4. Peer pressure “modeling/competition” reporting; appeal to schools’ reputations; piggyback on where deans, presidents, provosts etc. meet regularly and try to get on agendas there
5. Professional associations
6. Engage alumni
7. Directory of sustainably oriented businesses – use existing networks
8. Higher Ed associations
9. Accrediting agencies
10. Use political pressure and existing public policy requirements going on – Arizona business environmental survey
11. Make connection between retention of employees and need for students to know sustainability
12. Training career officers
13. Change employment codes for alumni
14. Continue to ask difficult questions – transformative experiences to create and manage an organizational culture change (“Is your purpose to change the institution or to contribute to the larger social project?”)
15. Use the media – Engage larger press and internal press
16. External recognition for leaders – competition for awards
17. Vendors education – vendors can be required to share environmental impact of products
18. Investment and pension funds
19. Insurance costs as incentives and insurance companies to assist
20. Use investment dollars from universities for sustainability – 0% revolving loan fund (e.g. Harvard)
21. Form a consortium of environmental schools (which provides internal and external pressure)
22. Work with the public sector (community and state levels) to facilitate efforts
23. Work with industry CEOs to speak directly with college/university presidents (rather than typically being spoken to by environmental groups)

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