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Introduction

Brock University, located within a UNESCO designated Biosphere Reserve and the Regional Municipality of Niagara as well as a signatory to the Council of Ontario Universities (COU) Statement on Creating a Sustainable Environment, is committed to the protection of the environment, the health of the broader community and the well being of future generations.

Purpose

Sustainability is one of the seven core values of Brock University's Integrated Strategic Plan that informs and strengthens the Institution's actions. We ensure sustainability through an appropriate balance of resources and activity. In setting our goals, we evaluate their impact on our human, financial and environmental resources to ensure that the outcomes will not only be sustainable but will also form a solid academic foundation for our future scholarly endeavours. We are committed to sustainability in human, financial and environmental contexts.

Scope

Creating a sustainable university requires the cooperation and dedication of faculty, staff, students, partners and the wider community working collaboratively with each other. This policy is intended to guide the Brock community, individually and collectively, in its daily operations and strategic directions as we:

- a. incorporate the November 2009 COU pledge committing Ontario universities to a greener world;
- b. embrace the eight theme-based goals that support Niagara's vision for a sustainable future:
 - i. agriculture and food,
 - ii. built environments,
 - iii. culture learning & social development,
 - iv. economy,
 - v. ecosystems & natural areas,
 - vi. governance,
 - vii. health & security,
 - viii. infrastructure systems; and
- c. support the eight main characteristics of UNESCO Biosphere Reserves:

- i. achieving the three interconnected functions: conservation, development and logistic support,
- ii. outpacing traditional confined conservation zones, through appropriate zoning schemes combining core protected areas with zones where sustainable development is fostered by local dwellers and enterprises with often highly innovative and participative governance systems,
- iii. focusing on a multi-stakeholder approach with particular emphasis on the involvement of local communities in management,
- iv. fostering dialogue for conflict resolution of natural resource use,
- v. integrating cultural and biological diversity, especially the role of traditional knowledge in ecosystem management,
- vi. demonstrating sound sustainable development practices and policies based on research and monitoring,
- vii. acting as sites of excellence for education and training, and
- viii. participating in the World Network.

Definitions

Sustainability: Development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

UNESCO: The Paris-based United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Niagara Escarpment Biosphere Reserve: A Biosphere Reserve designated by UNESCO in 1990 that recognizes the Niagara Escarpment as an internationally significant ecosystem for its special environment and unique environmental plan that stretches 725 km from Lake Ontario (near Niagara Falls) to the tip of the Bruce Peninsula (between Georgian Bay and Lake Huron). The Escarpment corridor crosses two major biomes: boreal needle leaf forests in the north and temperate broadleaf forest in the south. It also includes wetland complexes, cliff faces, slopes and aquatic ecosystems.

Sustainable Niagara: A Regional Municipality of Niagara plan that describes the community's vision for what Niagara could look like in 2060, the goals we can work towards, and the actions that will get us there; a guide in making decisions around a common vision of what Niagara can be for generations to come; a framework for measuring our progress.

Policy

As a comprehensive university and dynamic post-secondary institution, we endeavor to make a difference in the lives of individuals, the Niagara region, Canada and the world; display leadership; and pursue excellence in research, scholarship, and creativity. Increasing our environmental sustainability through our teaching, research, operations and management will help us to achieve this goal. Sustainability provides us with a transdisciplinary space for transformative change. Brock University will focus on increasing sustainability by:

- a. Developing a sustainability strategy and action plan in alignment with the COU Statement on Creating a Sustainable Environment to guide our efforts and evaluate our progress.

- b. Identifying and establishing goals and measurable objectives for sustainability that support Sustainable Niagara.
- c. Encouraging transparency and accountability by communicating specific goals and objectives against which progress can be regularly monitored.
- d. Incorporating the spirit of sustainability in pursuing our mission by promoting practices that maximize the beneficial effects and minimize the harmful impacts in relation to waste, energy, water, transportation, procurement, construction, and climate change.
- e. Fostering a collaborative approach to sustainable management throughout the University community and adopting best practices and guidelines as facilitated by the University's Sustainability Coordinating Committee.
- f. Promoting sustainability through transdisciplinary teaching, learning, research, innovation, participation and the sharing of knowledge in both academic and community domains.

Review

The University will conduct a review of this policy annually and recommend any necessary changes to the Board of Trustees.

References

Brock University Integrated Strategic Plan
 Brock University Integrated Strategic Plan - Priorities to Actions
 Brock University Strategic Mandate Agreement Submission
 Council of Ontario Universities - A Pledge from the Executive Heads, November 2009

Related policies

Amendments (revision history)

Date revised	Responsible
Enter date	Enter position/title