



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–LA CROSSE STUDENT ASSOCIATION

235 CARTWRIGHT CENTER 1725 STATE STREET LA CROSSE, WI 54601 (608) 785-8717

SA1516-057: Resolution Approving Spring 2016 Green Fund Request, Sustainability Coordinator

DATE: April 20th, 2016

AUTHOR(S): Jeremy Ames

SPONSOR(S): Segregated University Fee Allocation Committee


WHEREAS; The Joint Committee on Environmental Sustainability did not believe this request fulfilled the requirements of the Green Fund, and;

WHEREAS; SUFAC is responsible for submitting recommendations to Student Senate, and;

WHEREAS; after discussion, SUFAC denied the request for funding, and;

WHEREAS; the Student Senate is required to approve all Green Fund Requests.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED; that the Student Senate approve the Sustainability Coordinator funding request at \$0.


Molly Davie
President, Student Senate
Vice-President, Student Association

04-27-2016
Date


Kaylee Otterbacher
President, Student Association

04-27-2016
Date

- Green Fund -

University of Wisconsin-La Crosse
Application for Environmental Sustainably Reserve

Spring 2016

Application must be received by March 21, 2016

Please send completed applications to greenfund@uwlax.edu. You will be sent a confirmation e-mail verifying that the proposal was received.

For more information about the Green Fund or the application process please refer to the following; [Green Fund Bylaws](#), Green Fund [webpage](#) or email us at greenfund@uwlax.edu.



Include the following with this application:

- At least 3 price comparisons of the item(s) or project.
 - Budget Sheet
 - Other supporting documentation
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Contact Information

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Email: ncarmosini@uwlax.edu / mmcdermott@uwlax.edu

Unit/Organization/Department: Faculty, Chemistry & Biochemistry / Faculty, Marketing

Please give a brief overview of the proposed items or project(s) you are requesting funding. What would be the approximate cost?

This proposal seeks funding for a UW-L Sustainability Program Coordinator. The **Sustainability Program Coordinator** would:

- **Expand** academic sustainability programming (seminar series, policy debates, interdisciplinary courses, travel abroad initiatives, etc.) for students.
- **Create/improve sustainability experiences** for UWL students, including expanding “green” residence hall programs and building use of the campus Farmer’s Market.
- **Expand internship** opportunities with local/regional businesses that have a commitment to sustainability.
- **Facilitate collaborations** among students, faculty and staff wishing to work across disciplines on sustainability projects on campus and the community.
- **Increase awareness** of sustainability and commitment to sustainability practices among UW-L students, faculty and staff.
- **Act upon** additional opportunities for improvement identified by STARS.

This proposal is requesting the use of the Green Fund to provide funding for a 25% FTE reassignment of a faculty or academic staff member to coordinate campus sustainability activities. Specifically, this request is for \$18,000 per year for two years.

We realize that current Green Fund bylaws state that these funds cannot be used for faculty or staff salaries. As long-standing members of JCES, we have been in favor of this bylaw in the past; however, given UW-L’s extraordinary budget cuts and our strong need for sustainability coordination, we urge that a single, one-time exemption be granted to provide for sustainability coordination at UW-L.

What is the general timeline for the project? (When do you see this being on campus?)

The person selected to be the sustainability coordinator would assume the position at the start of the 2016-17 academic year and continue in that role for two years. (i.e., 2016-17 and 2017-18)

Please give a detailed explanation on the environmental impact of proposed project? Will this project reduce UW-Ls Carbon Foot print, water usage or electricity consumption? If indirectly please explain how.

The services provided by a Sustainability Program Coordinator are anticipated to have a number of positive impacts upon campus environmental initiatives. Currently, many elements of sustainability (e.g., student organizations, sustainability-emphasis courses, faculty-led research, campus operations) are in place at UW-L, but these elements frequently operate in isolation of one another. The breadth of UW-L's sustainability-related endeavors was finally documented and recognized in June 2015 when our campus was awarded a highly favorable Silver rating for its first submission to STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System), a program that externally evaluates sustainability efforts on college and university campuses, including most UW System campuses. At this point in time, UW-L is at a crossroads where we must decide to either move forward and act upon the opportunities for improvement identified by STARS, or return to our previous way of operating where elements of sustainability were conducted in isolation of one another, yielding less than optimal impacts for our campus. To build upon the momentum STARS established, continued support for sustainability coordination on campus is needed. **The Sustainability Coordinator will provide oversight, continuity and communication – all of which will enhance institutional awareness among students, staff and administrators about elements of sustainability that are occurring throughout our campus, as well as opportunities for involvement.** Indeed, sustainability has great potential for interdisciplinary engagement for the entire campus community; however, without a coordinator in place, this becomes considerably more difficult to carry out.

The UW-L Sustainability Coordinator will be instrumental in advancing sustainability practices in areas that the STARS report identified as opportunities for improvement. A relatively recent report from the Princeton Review (College Hopes and Worries Survey, 2008) found that 63% of over 10,000 respondents value a college's commitment to the environment. Thus, remaining competitive with peer UW-System campuses can help contribute to UW-L ability to recruit prospective students. In our first STARS report, UW-L did not score above 66% in any of the four STARS general categories (Table 1), and there is substantial room for improvement in most of the 73 STARS subcategories.

Table 1. Performance by STARS Category*

Category	UW-La Crosse (Silver)	UW-Green Bay (Silver)	UW-Oshkosh (Gold)
Academics	66%	64%	83%
Campus/Community Engagement	56%	44%	92%
Operations	40%	39%	46%
Planning/Administration	65%	56%	87%

*Percentages reflect points earned divided by points available in each category.

From a logistical perspective, substantially improving our Operations performance may be relatively costly and challenging due to the degree to which it is controlled at the State level. However, UW-L should be able to improve its performance in many subcategories within Academics, Engagement, and Planning/Administration. Examples of areas in which UW-L was rated poorly include new student/new student orientation, sustainability literacy assessment, community service, and sustainability signage. We suggest that improving our performance in several of these areas would be fairly straightforward and we think it is possible for UW-L to earn a Gold rating in future STARS submissions. However, achieving these goals requires the dedicated leadership from a Sustainability Coordinator at a minimum of 25% FTE reassignment. To serve in the role of STARS coordinator, Ms. Nowicki was given a 25% FTE reassignment for three semesters to prepare UW-L's first STARS report. In addition, Dr. Rob Tyser (Biology; currently Professor Emeritus) volunteered additional support (ca. 25% FTE) to assist in this process. A STARS core team, made up of eight additional students, staff, and faculty, was also created and was assigned a variety of unique and essential tasks that facilitated the submission of UWL's STARS report.

How will this project increase student understanding of environmental issues or actions? Will it be visible to students?

The UWL Sustainability Coordinator, as stated above, will help expand academic sustainability programming, improve and create more sustainability experiences for students, develop internship opportunities, and increase awareness of sustainability and commitment to sustainability practices among UW-L students, faculty and staff, all while offering continuity and communication for all stakeholder groups. All of these activities will directly impact students and can lead to a greater understanding of not only environmental issues, but also the other two parts of the triple bottom line: social and economic.

To elaborate a bit more, by working with the sustainability coordinator there will be opportunities for students to be involved, first hand, with process improvements in

what our initial STARS submission identified as weak areas (see comments under question #2). In addition, from improving these weak areas, we hope there will be the opportunity for students to assist in collecting data for the next STARS submission.

Finally, engaging in sustainability practices, and quantitatively measuring the success of these practices, is becoming increasingly common in the UW System and in colleges and universities across the U.S. Sustainability accounting is also increasingly common among government agencies and progressive businesses -- the kinds of places in which we hope our students find employment. Thus, having participated in STARS and hoping this position is funded so we can make improvements and go thru the STARS process again, not only encourages good practices on campus, it helps prepare our students for their postgraduate lives. It is our feeling that not having a sustainability coordinator nor participating in STARS would be a missed opportunity for our students -- an opportunity that is provided for students at other colleges and universities.

Do you plan to collaborate with other entities? This includes, planning, executing the project through student or community organizations and university departments/offices.

A focused subcommittee of UW-L personnel within JCES (see below) is working to identify collaborative university partners (e.g., CBA, CSH, CLS) and sustainability-minded regional businesses to establish funding for this position beyond the two years requested in this proposal. In addition, discussions have been initiated with the UW-L Foundation to obtain guidance on how best to establish these partnerships.

Large and complex projects require UWL staff member(s) to be involved, please list designated personnel who are involved in the proposed project or have been contacted to verify project viability.

Name(s): This grant is being submitted by UWL staff members, N. Carmosini and M. McDermott (see above)

Email(s):

Are you receiving additional funding from other university or non-university entities?

YES: NO:

If yes, please state the other sources of funding that you are receiving and the amount received.

Is there any other relevant information that you would like to add?

The budget information is provided here rather than as an additional separate sheet. We have calculated that the estimated dollar amount to replace a faculty or staff member at 25% FTE reassignment is \$18,000 per year. This includes salary and benefits.

The chart below provides a comparison of the % FTE allotted to sustainability coordination at other UW-System campuses.

