Introduction

Beloit College is committed to sustainability. Sustainability requires that we meet the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs by focusing on the environmental, economic, social and ethical aspects of human decision-making and action. Beloit College realizes its commitment to sustainability through this Sustainability Plan and related programs, which include the Pathways to Sustainability Leadership Program (for more information, see the Beloit College Sustainability homepage).

Dedicated faculty, staff, and students have worked diligently to realize progress in the Beloit College community. Some of the more recent endeavors include the Sustainability Fellows program, a summer research opportunity for students who are paired with staff, faculty, and community mentors, now in its fifth successful year; a LEED-platinum certified Science Center that opened in 2008; the formation of a Sustainability Steering Committee; the hiring of a Sustainability Coordinator; and the establishment and demand for student-led clubs focused on environmental and social issues, such as the Outdoor Environmental Club, Beloit Urban Garden Club, Peace & Justice Club, Geology Club and others. The foundation for these sustainability endeavors is Beloit College’s mission statement, which outlines a living-learning environment for its students:

Beloit College engages the intelligence, imagination, and curiosity of its students, empowering them to lead fulfilling lives marked by high achievement, personal responsibility, and public contribution in a diverse society. Our emphasis on international and interdisciplinary perspectives, the integration of knowledge with experience, and close collaboration among peers, professors, and staff equips our students to approach the complex problems of the world ethically and thoughtfully.

With Beloit College’s demonstrated history and direction, the Sustainability Plan described here provides a structured approach that helps articulate goals and initiatives that span across departments and programs, embedding sustainability into our curriculum, operations and culture. In addition to the college’s mission statement, there are multiple tools and resources that will be utilized to achieve the goals stated within this Plan, as well as support exciting grassroots initiatives as they arise:

- The Sustainability Steering Committee helps guide and support the overall achievement of goals;
- The Sustainability Coordinator offers expertise in sustainability and facilitates vision, planning, and ongoing support for sustainability efforts;
- The Sustainability Hall Director supports sustainability efforts especially in the residential communities;
- The Revolving Loan Fund, also called the Sustainability Project Fund, provides upfront capital for cost-effective sustainable projects on campus;
- A database in development by the Sustainability Coordinator helps track the wide range of projects and outcomes related to sustainability;
- The Pathways to Sustainability Leadership grant provides incentives for courses, internships, and student-staff/faculty teams focused on sustainability issues and projects.
Sustainability goals and initiatives are grouped into three categories: 1. Campus and Community Engagement, 2. Operations, and 3. Planning & Evaluation. However, Beloit College embraces a systems thinking approach to sustainability, consistent with its Liberal Arts in Practice model of student development. Therefore, all goals are pursued concurrently because advances in one goal category are inextricably linked to advances in the other categories.

**Campus and Community Engagement**

This section covers goals directed at raising sustainability literacy through on-campus activities and through the development and strengthening of mutually beneficial community partnerships. It is the intent of the engagement goals to meet members of the Beloit College community where they are in terms of understanding sustainability concepts and to help them build upon their knowledge.

1. Increase sustainability literacy throughout the Beloit College community.
   a. Launch and sustain a multi-faceted communications strategy, driven by the Sustainability Coordinator. Communications will consist of social media utilization, website development, monthly success stories of projects on and off campus, town halls, promotion of sustainability campus events, and sharing best practices and opportunities for involvement to all faculty, staff, and students. These efforts will be documented in a database in development during the 2014-15 academic year by the Sustainability Coordinator.
   b. Include the College’s sustainability goals, initiatives, and progress in new employee training, new student orientation, and campus tours.
   c. Conduct an annual survey and focus groups to determine if the communication strategy is positively affecting sustainability literacy. Surveys and focus groups will be conducted by the Sustainability Hall Director and the Sustainability Coordinator.

2. Execute the Pathways to Sustainability Leadership Program, which aims to:
   - embed sustainability in the liberal learning of our students;
   - prepare our graduates to exercise sustainability leadership in their careers through the development of expertise and individual capacity for action around sustainability;
   - link learning opportunities—including those associated with campus operations, residential living, and the greater Beloit community—with the creation and implementation of solutions in pressing areas of sustainability; and
   - through this synergy, promote an intentional long-term approach to sustainable living more broadly and deeply among our students, faculty, staff, alumni, and the larger community.

Beloit College will accomplish these aims over the next three years by establishing three tiers of increasingly sophisticated project-based student learning pathways: Sustainability Citizens, Sustainability Fellows, and Sustainability Leaders.

   a. Provide four **Sustainability Citizen** opportunities in each of first three years (first year: 2014-15 academic year). Sustainability Citizen opportunities include courses and course modules that empower students with the conceptual, empirical, and creative tools they need to be effective environmental citizens and to develop into responsible and capable leaders.

   b. Provide twelve **Sustainability Fellow** opportunities during the summer of each of the first three years (first year: 2014-15 academic year). The Sustainability Fellows Program
provides students the opportunity to contribute their expertise to a sustainability project on campus or in the Beloit community. Fellows are full-time interns, paired with faculty and community mentors for two months during the summer.

c. Provide four Sustainability Leader Team opportunities each year for first three years (first year: 2014-15 academic year). Sustainability Leader Teams are three- or four-member collaborative teams charged with completing a sustainability project that is usually full-time for two months in the summer or part-time for an entire academic year. Student team members consult regularly with their Faculty and Staff Mentors to discuss their projects, including the ethical, creative, economic, political, and cultural dimensions, as well as how others may be persuaded to pursue their recommended solution(s).

Operations
This section covers goals directed at improving resource efficiency and responsibility. First and foremost, Beloit College must understand its impacts and therefore many of the goals articulated in this section begin with the creation of a baseline, or a year’s worth of information from which to assess achievement levels. The goals set here are believed to be achievable based on the region and other institutions similar in size. The comfort of faculty, staff, and students is important and through these Operations goals the College seeks to improve comfort levels by implementing energy efficiency measures in its buildings (e.g. adding insulation to walls and attics, upgrading outdated HVAC systems). Tracking the progress of these goals will be accomplished through a close partnership between the Sustainability Coordinator, Physical Plant, Dining Services, Residential Life, Office of Finance, and other relevant departments.

1. Energy
   a. Create a baseline of usage (2013-14 yr) and determine a best-fit energy intensity metric for the College (MMBtu/sq. ft.).
   b. Reduce energy intensity by 2.5% each year for first 3 years (2014-15 yr - 2016-17 yr).

2. Water
   a. Create a baseline of usage (2013-14 yr) and determine a best-fit water intensity metric for the College (gallons/sq. ft.).
   b. Reduce water intensity by 2% each year for first 3 years (2014-15 yr - 2016-17 yr).

3. Waste & Recycling
   a. Create a baseline of trash disposal (2014-15 yr) and determine a best-fit waste intensity metric for the College (tons/sq. ft.).
   b. Create a baseline of Beloit College’s recycling rate (2014-15 yr).
   c. Increase Beloit’s recycling rate by 2.5% each subsequent year (2015-16 yr - 2016-17 yr).

4. Landscaping
   a. Catalog current landscaping practices and create a Beloit College policy of best-practices to further healthy grounds.
b. Increase the area of campus planted with native species over a 3-year period (2014-15 yr - 2016-17 yr).

5. Purchasing
   a. Create and adhere to a Sustainable Purchasing Policy that will promote purchasing options that minimize costs and promote a positive ecological impact.

6. Dining Services
   a. During the 2013-14 academic year, Beloit College Bon Appetit sourced 27% of its food through Bon Appetit Management Company’s Farm to Fork program, a companywide initiative requiring chefs to buy at least 20% of their ingredients from small farmers, ranchers, fishermen, and food producers within 150 miles of their kitchens. Over the next three years, Beloit College Bon Appetit will source 37% of its food through the Farm to Fork program.

b. Beloit College Bon Appetit will purchase all of the Beloit Urban Garden’s (BUG) produce, as long as BUG members are willing.

c. Decrease food waste by 10% over the next three years.
   i. Finalize a baseline of food waste in the 2013-14 academic year.
   ii. Decrease food waste through a combination of education, employee training, community partnerships and technological advances.

7. Transportation
   a. Evaluate low-emission vehicles for current campus fleet replacements as they arise and make low-emission vehicles a first consideration in leasing options.

b. In close collaboration with the Office of Student Engagement and Leadership, promote and better utilize the accessible network of affordable transportation options including but not limited to car-share access, free shuttles into the City of Beloit, and weekend transportation to nearby larger cities.

c. In close collaboration with various student clubs, promote and enhance an accessible network of affordable transportation options for students including but not limited to bike-share access, free bike maintenance, and information about the City of Beloit’s Public Transportation system.

8. Cultural Resources
   a. Create a geospatial database that incorporates extant, historic, and prehistoric structures and feature locations, archaeological testing locations, collections, and associated data.

b. Assess current practices and develop long-term cultural resource conservation plans, preservation plans, and best practices to preserve extant, historic, and prehistoric structures and features.

Planning & Evaluation
This section defines how sustainability will be administered at Beloit College, and how progress will be assessed from year to year.

Beloit College Sustainability Plan, December 2014
1. The interdisciplinary Sustainability Steering Committee will meet every other week to facilitate progress of Sustainability initiatives, events, programs, and goals, and will meet annually to assess the overall progress of this Sustainability Plan. The committee is composed of four faculty members, a student representative, the Sustainability Coordinator, the Sustainability Hall Director, and the Vice President for Human Resources and Operations.

2. The College will submit a STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Reporting System) report by February 2015. STARS is a framework created by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), which is made up of colleges and universities worldwide. It provides institutions with a means of measuring sustainability performance across the following categories:
   - Academics: research and courses
   - Engagement: campus and community
   - Operations: Air & Climate, Buildings, Energy, Dining Services, Grounds, Purchasing, Transportation, Waste, & Water
   - Planning & Administration: Coordination, Planning & Governance, Diversity & Affordability, Health, Wellbeing & Work, and Investment.

Our goal is for Beloit College to achieve a Bronze rating from AASHE by March 2015.