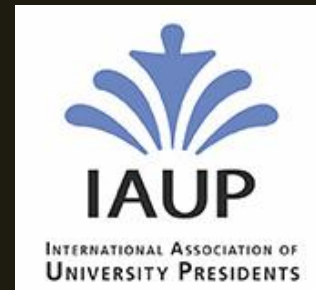


# IAUP Semi-Annual Meeting

## **Sustainability across Academic Institutions:**

### **A North American Perspective**

Dr. Fernando León García  
CETYS University  
May 21, 2016  
Universidad Alcalá de Henares, Spain



# Background

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- Event held in Mexicali, México (Representatives from US, México, and Spain).
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education.
- Topic more diverse than just the environment's preservation and its corresponding issues.
- Exposure to considerable number of practices.
- Room for impact/reflection about what can be done in different areas.

# AASHE Review:

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- More frequent initiatives – Operations (Energy, Waste, Buildings, Water); Engagement (Student, Public)
- Less frequent initiatives – Planning and Administration (Funding, Coordination/Planning, Assessments/Ratings); Academics (Curriculum, Research)
- **Top Five:**
  - ❖ Energy
  - ❖ Student Engagement
  - ❖ Waste
  - ❖ Funding
  - ❖ Buildings



# Case Study by Fernando Galván Reula President of Universidad Alcalá de Henares (Spain)

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- Not sporadic actions but rather long term effort.
- Generated ample development of Sustainability in a more university-wide structured and strategic approach.
- Received several awards and generated impact due the logistical operation of a department of sustainability.
  - ❖ Raised awareness on topic.
  - ❖ Detailed view of the impact caused in the management, feasibility, communication strategy and the promotional strategy of the concept deployed in a university.

# Case Study by Fernando Galván Reula President of Universidad Alcalá de Henares (Spain)

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- Council for Environmental Quality, Sustainable Development, and Prevention of Risks (CADEP).
- Program for Environmental Quality.
  - ❖ Office of Eco-Campus.
  - ❖ Energy, Water, Recycling, Transportation.
  - ❖ Programs, Majors, and Curriculum.
- Research.
- Communication: Rankings and External Recognition.



## Case Study by Geoff Chase Formerly with SDSU, now with WASC (USA)

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- Center for Regional Sustainability.
  - ❖ Regional collaborations in higher education, research, stewardship and outreach to ensure that generations of students will gain the skills and abilities that will allow the region to grow, prosper, and sustain itself in the long term.
  - ❖ Community Engagement for Sustainable Cities program focuses existing SDSU courses on sustainability projects, giving students the opportunity to gain real-world experience while making a difference in the local community.
- Aztec Student Union - Sustainability into governance and efforts to finance LEED platinum-certified center.

## Case Study by Geoff Chase Formerly with SDSU, now with WASC (USA)

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- Shared how they are taking steps in integrating Sustainability in the curriculum.
- Designing an undergraduate academic program or major championed by the Institute of Sustainability.
  - ❖ Offered through the College of Arts and Letters. Is instructed by faculty from across SDSU, working to address some of the most critical environmental and social challenges of our time.
- Seeks via faculty input to merge/embed the concept in the curriculum.

## Case Study by Geoff Chase Formerly with SDSU, now with WASC (USA)

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- Presented steps for walking the path towards the concept as such:
  - ❖ If we want to change paradigms and mindsets we must secure and/or procure involvement of community, local and regional context, to actively look for connections and environment sensitivity.
  - ❖ Must seek through knowledge not only the expertise/learning itself but action.
- Book on “Sustainability in Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Transformation.”
  - ❖ Short stories of leaders from 24 colleges and universities – including SDSU – that discuss institutional and personal transformation.



# Case Study by Isaac Azuz

## Professor of Engineering, CETYS Universidad (México)

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- Current stance and efforts centered around assuming responsibility.
- Actions can be translated to numerous connections and further efforts.
- Ensure that these are ultimately/intimately linked to what universities are doing in terms of curriculum.
- CETYS Vision 2020, 1 of 4 cornerstones, and 1 of 6 institutional learning outcomes.



# Case Study by Isaac Azuz Professor of Engineering, CETYS Universidad (México)

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- Specific courses focusing on and/or incorporating Sustainability.
  - ❖ One course in each level to include sustainability material.
  - ❖ Short-term training for professors who teach course selected.
  - ❖ All the class materials available for the professor and students in PPT, BB and You Tube (or similar platform).
  - ❖ Assessment on sustainability will be applied (different for each academic level).
- Project with University of Texas El Paso (100K for the Americas).
  - ❖ Sustainability of wine producing community (Ensenada, México).
- Engineering program in Renewable Energy with compulsory short term session at Universidad Alcalá de Henares.

# **Case Study by Joseph Abraham Director of the Willamette University Sustainability Institute (USA)**

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- Shared the advantages, contrast of organizational culture, and the approach between two different settings:
  - ❖ A large research university.
  - ❖ A small private university.
- Concluded that, with deliberate efforts and leadership, planning and agendas can move forward on Sustainability.

# Case Study by Joseph Abraham Director of the Willamette University Sustainability Institute (USA)

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- Campus Living Lab.
  - ❖ University of Arizona (Office of Sustainability).
  - ❖ Willamette University (Sustainability Institute).
- Lessons for Building and Maintaining.
  - ❖ Working Across Facilities & Planning, Academic, and Student Life Divisions.
  - ❖ Supporting Student-Staff-Faculty Collaboration.
  - ❖ Building on Previous Work.

# AASHE Cases:

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- **Concordia University (Canada)** – Network of 15 universities collaborating on smart net-zero energy buildings and technology. Graduate level course involving lectures, labs and mini-project working on designs promoting energy efficiency and renewable energy.
- **University of Maryland, College Park (USA)** – Program called Partnership for Action Learning in Sustainability (PALS) for students to tackle specific sustainability-related community challenges through action learning initiatives (e.g., City of Frederick, College Park).
- **McGill University (Canada)** – Extensive consultation involving students, faculty, and staff leading to Vision 2020, a sustainability strategy designed to guide the institution over coming years. Embraces role in cultivating commitment toward sustainability among community while creating knowledge to make this a reality.

# Preliminary Conclusions

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- Sustainability very important matter, must not be ignored, and begins with each and every one of us assuming responsibility as individuals.
- Should not be nor it is an individual effort but we must seek a collective spread regardless of the hardships we may face, such as the use of technology among others.
- Those willing to be evangelizers, share a same concept/vision, and that within their range, serve as detonators.
  - ❖ Students.
  - ❖ Faculty.
  - ❖ Presidents and their offices are not relevant detonators, the more Presidents and staff involved, better.

# Awareness of Universities in Several Fronts:

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- Review actions towards the community and our regional/local environment.
- Review within campus, its operation and the norms by which it's currently operating.
- Bottom-line: as universities must find a way to tie the concept to the curriculum, whether it's by modifying the course contents, inclusion of case studies or the design of courses that generate the biggest impact on the student body.
- Concept broadening: from sensitivity and awareness regarding environment, to the way we do things (e.g., quality, long term).
- Can impact as much we desire with our actions as an institution but it is through deliberate and measurable impact in students that we stand a chance in making a difference in society.

