

President's Advisory Council on Sustainability Terms of Reference
revised February 2021

1. **Title:** President's Advisory Council on Sustainability.
2. **Definition:** Sustainability: "building an inclusive, sustainable and resilient future for people and the planet and its flora and fauna" (adapted UN Sustainable Development Goal).

3. **Purpose:**

- 3.1. The President's Advisory Council on Sustainability (PACS) provides a forum for students, faculty, administration, and community to provide advice on campus sustainability programs and policies.
- 3.2. Key organizations that regularly report on their activities to the Council include The University Office of Sustainability, the College of Sustainability, and the Student Sustainability Office.

The University Office of Sustainability focuses on campus operations and may serve and link with other Dalhousie initiatives, and local, provincial, regional, Canadian, and international organizations. Key outcomes for the Office include reducing environmental impacts and life-cycle economic costs, involvement of the campus and local community, improving health and social indicators, building reputation, and supporting a culture of sustainability.

The College of Sustainability offers a common place - both virtual and physical - for the study of sustainability at Dalhousie. The College offers academic programs, public lectures, seminars and other community activities.

The Student Sustainability Office exists to promote and facilitate campus sustainability at Dalhousie. The Office communicates concerns or ideas surrounding campus sustainability to the Administrative Office of Sustainability and the Dalhousie Student Union as well as taking an active role in supporting and promoting campus sustainability endeavors.

- 3.3. The Office of Sustainability directly reports to the Vice-President of Finance and Administration. The College of Sustainability has a Council of Deans who report to the Vice-President Academic and Provost. The Student Sustainability Office reports to the Dalhousie Student Union.

3.4. The Council:

- disseminates ideas and proposed directions to representative organizations and the President;
- provides advice on University sustainability goals, plans, reports, and products;
- discusses and creates options for pan-university sustainability approaches;
- enhances understanding and synergy of different groups working on sustainability issues on campus; and
- fulfills an ambassador role in promoting sustainability initiatives on campus.

3.5. Key Council outcomes include:

- increased awareness and understanding of on-campus sustainability challenges and opportunities of Council members, students, faculty and staff;
- the adoption of sustainability policies and programs by faculties, departments, and the university; and
- increased partnership between members of campus community and external organizations working on Dalhousie sustainability initiatives.

3.6. The Council meets as a committee of the whole, and may create working groups, drawn from Council members and others, with specific and limited temporal and topical mandates.

4. **Membership:**

4.1. The Council is made up of students, academic and administrative representatives, and community members.

4.2. The size of the Council can vary from 18-24 participants. Membership shall include representatives from the following groups:

- DSU and DSU Sustainability Office Representatives (2-3)
- Student representatives from student societies and/or student body at large (3)
- Faculty Deans, Associate Deans, faculty members (5-6) or designated representative [with representation from each of the four Dalhousie campuses (Sexton, Carleton, Agricultural, and Studley)].
- Associate Vice-President or Director of Facilities Management (1)
- Executive Director of Environmental Health and Safety or designated representative (1)
- AVP and/or Director of Financial Services (1)
- AVP and/or Director of Ancillary Services (1)
- Dalhousie Communications Staff representative to be appointed by the Assistant VP of Communications (1)
- Associate Vice-President or Director of Research Services (1)
- Director of the College of Sustainability (1)
- Executive Director of the Office of Sustainability (1)
- Optional: Members at Large (up to a maximum of three)

4.3. The Office of Sustainability provides support for the Council and act as a liaison between the Council and senior administration of the University.

4.4. Staff and faculty members are appointed for two- and three-year terms but may be reappointed to serve subsequent terms. Reappoint student positions are for one-term but maybe for subsequent terms. Groups may name alternates who, in the absence of the appointed member, may fully participate in Committee activities. Designated individuals and/or organizations can select alternates.

4.5. Some council membership is designated by job function for Staff. The Vice-President Academic and Provost appoint Deans/Associate Deans. Student representatives are designated by job function for the DSU. The additional three student positions by society or member at large are determined by an open call of interest led by the DSU Sustainability office in August/September. The Council may appoint other members at large.

4.6. The Council Executive shall consist of the Chair, the Executive Director of the Office of Sustainability; the Director of the College of Sustainability, a Dalhousie Student Union representative, and a representative from the Office of Sustainability to assist in meeting preparation and agenda development. The Chair shall be appointed by the President. The Executive may meet between meetings to advance agenda items from Council meetings.

4.7. Working groups may be struck to provide advice on particular topics. A member of the Council shall serve as a member of each working group and provide regular updates to the Council. Other members of the Council may also be members of a working group. Each working group shall have representation from faculty, administration, and students. Representatives from outside the Dalhousie community may be

invited to participate. The smallest working group should be four individuals. Working group members shall be recruited based on advice from the Council.

4.8. The Agricultural campus (AC) shall have a sustainability committee. The AC committee:

- provides advice on AC related sustainability projects;
- disseminates ideas and proposed directions, programs, and policies to the AC campus; and
- enhances understanding and synergy of different groups working on sustainability issues on the AC campus.

The AC committee activities will be reported to the Council through the AC representative on the Council or Executive Director of the Office of Sustainability. The AC representative will be a Dean or Associate Dean as appointed by the Dean of the Faculty of Agriculture. Representation on the AC sustainability committee will include:

- faculty representatives from at least two of the four departments (2-4)
- administration including representatives from Facilities Management and External Relations (communications) (4)
- AC representative on PSAC (1)
- students (up to 4)
- Office of Sustainability(1-3)

The smallest committee size shall be six people. Representatives from outside the Dalhousie community may be invited to participate. Between two to four meetings will be held annually. The Office of Sustainability will actively be implementing and supporting ecolympics, energy and water projects, natural environment and other initiatives each year.

5. Roles and Responsibilities of Council, Working Group, and Committee Members:

5.1. Provide advice on policy, plans, and reports.

5.2. Assist in communicating and gathering support for sustainability goals and activities in both operation and academic units in the University.

5.3. Follow approved procedures.

5.4. The Council will provide an annual briefing to the President at one of the quarterly meetings in the Winter/Spring Term.

6. Operations:

6.1. Meetings shall be conducted by the Chair. Procedural rules developed by the Council shall be used by the Chair to facilitate discussions.

6.2. In addition to written and telephone interaction, the Council shall meet on average quarterly and at such other times as the Chair considers necessary.

6.3. Any member may suggest items for discussion. Members should advise the Executive Committee members in advance of the meeting to allow relevant papers to be circulated and to allow members adequate time for preparation.

- 6.4. At regular meetings, a quorum shall be one half of the appointed representatives. In the absence of a quorum, a Council meeting may continue but no formal votes may be taken.
- 6.5. The Council shall seek to operate by consensus without the need for formal votes. When a member requests a formal vote and when sufficient numbers of members are present to establish a quorum, a motion will be carried when supported by one half plus one of the members present.
- 6.6. Working group meetings shall be structured around availability of members. The Working Groups report to and advise the Council. They are responsible for providing detailed reviews, plans, advice, and/or options on particular issues.

7. Reporting

- 7.1. All meetings shall be documented including attendance, agenda, decisions made, and handouts.
- 7.2. The Council can provide advice on the public reports of the Office of Sustainability, which will be submitted to senior administration of the University for the Board of Governors.