

	Sustainability Policy #13.1
CATEGORY: Human Resources/ Diversity & Equity	APPROVAL DATE: October 22, 2018
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APPROVAL: Executive Team (President, all Vice-Presidents)	
SPONSOR: Vice-President, Administration & Finance	
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PREVIOUS VERSIONS: None	

1. PURPOSE

As an institution that champions imaginative art and design in service to the world, OCAD U has an urgent responsibility to embed a newly defined sustainability in our institutional goals, academic planning, and building operations. OCAD U’s goal is to prepare students with the knowledge, disposition, values, and skills to cultivate a viable future through critical teaching and research, while demonstrating sustainability in University operations and decisions.

OCAD U acknowledges the ancestral and traditional territories of the Mississaugas of the New Credit, the Haudenosaunee, the Anishinaabe and the Huron-Wendat, who are the original custodians of the land on which the University operates. The Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address¹ is a reminder of our (human) responsibilities as stewards to care for all living things and recognizes that all living systems are connected. This message of peace and appreciation of Earth informs the notion of sustainability, asking all decision-makers to consider how our actions affect the welfare of descendants seven generations into the future.

The *Policy* purpose is thus to foster an institutional culture that not only minimizes harm, but produces benefits for planetary health and community wellbeing. The *Policy* defines guiding principles to enhance decision-making and goals set out in the University’s Strategic Plan and serves to develop a shared understanding of sustainability at OCAD U. OCAD U recognizes that sustainability practices must be coordinated, iterative, transparent, and accountable to regular measurement and evaluation.

OCAD U’s Board of Governors unanimously passed the following motion on **June 9th, 2008**: *“That OCAD make environmental sustainability a specific consideration, when*

making decisions including those related to capital expenditures and operating budgets, in order to realize the institutional objectives of reducing environmental impact and advancing responsible environmental practices.”

The *Policy* further supports our existing social and legal obligations and institutional commitments, in particular Dish with One Spoon Wampum Treatyⁱⁱ, the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs), the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Persons (UNDRIP), and the Earth Charter.

2. SCOPE

The *Policy* applies to the members and activities of the University, and invokes the collaborative spirit required to move the University to action. OCAD U’s activities encompass curriculum and research; purchasing and investment; energy and waste management; building design, greenspace, and construction; community engagement; and health and wellbeing.

3. DEFINITIONS

- a) Sustainability: A framework that acknowledges the interdependence of living systems at all scales, from local to planetary, and pursues social and ecological harmony to continue the cycle of life for generations to come. This definition builds on and supports the Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UNSDGs).ⁱⁱⁱ
- b) Environmental sensitivities: Can include adverse reactions to a range of indoor contaminants. Sensitivities/disability can result in severe damage to a person’s health and ability to function. Sensitivities can be episodic, ongoing, and/or non-evident.ⁱⁱ
- c) Lifecycle management and material use: An approach to decision-making and design that considers all costs of a product or system throughout its service life from ideation, through the manufacturing and service life of the product or system, to its disposal and beyond.
- d) Systems thinking: A holistic approach to analysis that interrogates how a system's parts interact/ influence each other, and how those systems function over time.

4. POLICY STATEMENT

OCAD U strives to infuse sustainability into all University activities through the following commitments:

a) Serve current and future generations by advancing sustainability as a cultural and material practice.

Sustainability compels long-term and regenerative relationships between people, resources, and land. The University will be an exemplar and build the capacities of the OCAD U community to go beyond minimizing harm to creating sustainable benefits in academics, administration, and operations.

b) Cultivate systems that are life-sustaining; industrial, economic, social, or otherwise.

University activities will enhance ecological systems and human dignity, applying systems thinking and lifecycle management and material use to understand the full impact of our decisions. Pathways will be created for all OCAD U members to learn about and move towards life-sustaining systems, services, products, and behaviours.

c) Foster inclusive ways of knowing.

OCAD U will encourage decolonial thinking and production outside of the dominant Eurocentric canon. The University will also promote diverse forms of knowledge, freedom of expression, academic freedom, interdisciplinary collaboration, and reciprocal relationships with community and industry partners.

d) Promote high standards and human connection for the mental and physical health of OCAD U and surrounding communities.

As an institution, neighbour, and city-builder, OCAD U will encourage environments that cultivate high morale and community wellbeing. OCAD U will create regular opportunities for input and guidance on implementing the *Policy* aims, will address positive working environments and environmental sensitivities, and promote community awareness and engagement.

e) Establish measurable goals and reporting tools.

OCAD U will create and be accountable to specific targets, actions, and timetables. Each Vice-President is responsible for sustainability in their areas, and will conduct regular sustainability evaluation and reporting.

APPENDIX 1: SUSTAINABILITY POLICY PROCEDURES

1.0 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The **Vice-President Finance & Administration** is responsible for administrating the *Policy* and coordinating implementation with other Vice-Presidents.

- a) **Vice-Presidents** collectively represent the University and are responsible for incorporating the Sustainability Policy and related programs into their operational mandates, as well as overseeing the achievement of *Policy*-related directives in their respective departments. Vice-Presidents will provide leadership by:
 - i. considering targets, actions, and funding to implement plans and initiatives relating to the *Policy*, in coordination with a university-wide sustainability strategy;
 - ii. advancing the *Policy* principles through the Academic Plan, Strategic Plan, and other elements of institutional planning.
 - iii. monitoring and evaluating progression of the *Policy* and related procedures, and embed sustainability into institutional reporting
 - iv. ensuring mechanisms are in place for input and advice on *Policy* implementation from the OCAD U community, in collaboration with the Sustainability Committee

- b) **Deans, Departmental Directors, and Program Chairs** will provide leadership by:
 - i. advancing the *Policy* principles by developing faculty- or unit- specific sustainability goals in their academic and/or institutional planning in support of the *Policy*;
 - ii. contributing to annual institutional sustainability reporting where appropriate and supporting internal and external communications;
 - iii. communicating the *Policy* to all management staff for its promotion in daily operations;
 - iv. encouraging participation by staff and faculty in sustainability training and initiatives.

- c) **Faculty** from all departments play key roles through teaching, learning, and the daily operations of the University in advancing a culture of sustainability in scholarship and student engagement.

- d) **Staff** from all departments play key roles in providing frontline student services, and can demonstrate leadership through daily behaviours and student engagement to shape a culture of sustainability

- e) **Students** are key members of the university community and will be included in conversations about the *Policy*, and are invited and encouraged to support the *Policy*.
- f) **The Sustainability Committee** will act as a resource to assist departments in developing and implementing their sustainability targets and action plans.

Sustainability Committee Terms of Reference: <http://www.ocadu.ca/sustainability>

2.0 TARGETS AND ACTION PLANS

- a) All units will develop action plans with clear sustainability targets, in coordination with the Academic Plan and/or institutional plans. Unit plans will include evaluation and reporting mechanisms, and a communications strategy.
- b) The Sustainability Committee will work with departments to document and assess current sustainability-related activities, using the [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System](#) as a resource.
- c) The Vice President responsible for the department will review drafted targets and action plans for approval of actions, timing, and resources.

RELATED POLICIES

AODA Customer Service Policy
Health & Safety Policy
Purchasing Policies & Procedure Manual
Respectful Work & Learning Environment Policy

RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Canadian Environmental Protection Act (1999);
Federal Sustainable Development Act (2010);
Resource Recovery and Circular Economy Act (2016)

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- ⁱ Six Nations Indian Museum, (1993). "Haudenosaunee Thanksgiving Address" [Online]. Available: nmai.si.edu/environment/pdf/01_02_Thanksgiving_Address.pdf. Accessed 14 Oct. 2018.
- ⁱⁱ Lytwyn, V.P. "A Dish With One Spoon: The Shared Hunting Grounds Agreement in the Great Lakes and St. Lawrence Valley Region," in David H. Pentland (Ed.), *Papers of the 28th Algonquian Conference* (Winnipeg, Manitoba: University of Manitoba, 1997): 210-27. Available: <https://ojs.library.carleton.ca/index.php/ALGQP/article/download/507/409/>. Accessed 14 Oct. 2018.
- ⁱⁱⁱ United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs. "Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform" [Online]. Updated 2017. Available: <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/sdgs>. Accessed 14 Oct. 2018.
- ^{iv} Public Service Commission of Canada. "Environmental Sensitivities" [Online]. Updated Aug. 15, 2007. Available: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-service-commission/services/public-service-hiring-guides/guide-assessing-persons-disabilities/guide-assessing-persons-disabilities/guide-assessing-persons-disabilities-determine-implement-assessment-accommodations-environmental-sensitivities.html>. Accessed 14 Oct. 2018.