**College of Health and Human Development**

**Sustainability Council Charter**

1. **Background:** The Sustainability Institute (SI) at PSU defines Sustainability as **“**The simultaneous pursuit of human health and happiness, environmental quality, and economic well-being for current and future generations”. SI would like to operationalize this approach by working toward the implementation of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the UN Agenda 2030. SI is encouraging Colleges and Campuses to own sustainability activities in their respective units and organically grow them from within. This is being implemented by forming a Sustainability Council, establishing a Sustainability Chair (Champion), and developing a Sustainability Charter at the unit to develop and guide activities.
2. **Vision/Mission:**

The College of Health and Human Development (CHHD) encompasses diverse fields of study with the common goal of enriching the lives of others and strengthening intellectual, social, physical, economic, and emotional wellness. As we see it, sustainability encompasses the environment, climate change, economics, businesses, communities, health, wellness, nutrition, and other related dimensions, which are integral to our college. The vision of this charter is to build on the important work that has taken place in the CHHD in response to the University’s efforts to embrace sustainability as a foundational principle that enriches all its pursuits and missions. This charter will set out plans that have been adopted to pursue and expand sustainability efforts in several key areas of teaching, research, operations and outreach. Our mission is to advance the understanding and resolution of sustainability challenges on campus through faculty, staff and student engagement. Through the identification of sustainability-focused coursework, we will enhance our teaching efforts to produce a greater diversity of knowledgeable graduates who are prepared to fulfill the needs of society while protecting the physical basis of our long-term survival, our environment. Through our research, we will reinforce the strong culture of discovery that exists among our faculty and enrich our college by actively supporting and practicing diversity and sustainability within it. Through outreach, we will work collaboratively with the Sustainability Institute to provide leadership in understanding and implementing sustainable practices within our college. And through our operations, we will strive to model responsible practices that demonstrate our commitment to sustainable development and can be showcased as a model for our students and other stakeholders. This document identifies projects that are important foci of the HHD’s sustainability efforts and establishes a platform for the development of new initiatives and new plans.

1. **Purpose:** The purpose of the Sustainability Council will be to deepen and expand the commitment to sustainability within HHD through teaching, research, operations, and outreach involving faculty, staff and students. With the support of the Dean, the HHD Sustainability Council will engage in activities that may include inventorying current sustainability courses and research activities to establish baselines, benchmarking, establishing Key Performance Indicators (KPI’s), and other actions as identified by the Council. The Council will also consider ways of expanding access to and HHD enrollments in the Sustainability Leadership Minor, which is currently housed in HHD, across the university’s campuses whether through on-line options and/or identification of additional coursework relevant to the minor. Additionally, the Council will identify new sustainability focused activities in teaching research, operations, and outreach, and work with college units and college administration and be a resource to help implement them.
2. **Objectives:** The council will identify objectives under each of the focal activities in context of the diversity of the departments and schools in the College of Health and Human Development to ensure equity and inclusion.
   1. **Through our teaching**, we will enhance the understanding of sustainability, especially as it relates to health, wellness, economic and community development, climate change, environment, and human development, and enhance the knowledge of our graduates to apply the concepts and practices in their professional, personal and civic lives. We will accomplish this through curricular and co-curricular activities that explicitly incorporate the principles of sustainable development.
   2. **Through our research**, we will create and disseminate knowledge that focuses on sustainable health and wellness behaviors in context of their impact on society as whole. We will do this by actively engaging faculty to incorporate sustainability in their areas of research, and by leveraging the strong culture of research and inquiry that exists among the diverse group of HHD faculty.
   3. **Through our outreach**, we will work with industry partners and other external stakeholders to collaboratively provide thought leadership in understanding and implementing sustainable health and wellness practices that will positively impact the accomplishment of sustainable development indicators broadly in the society. We will do this by actively engaging with these stakeholders in each of our focal activities.
   4. **Through our operations,** we will be aware of the environmental and other impacts on sustainability of our operational practices. We will enhance our understanding of the impact these operational activities have on the environment, climate change, and other aspects of sustainability. As feasible and appropriate, we will be the resource to identify changes needed and their implementation to make our operations incrementally more sustainable over time.
3. **Goals**
   1. Think more broadly than within the boundaries of our units and our university.
   2. To investigate best practices that might enhance our college’s and campus’ sustainability and minimize their impact in terms of resource extraction and use and the associated impacts on health and wellness.
   3. Recognize faculty, staff, and students in their sustainability efforts.
   4. Assist the community (alumni, industry partners, local communities, and others) to recognize the complex relationship between the environment, health, and inequities.
4. **Membership**
   1. The Council is composed of a Chair, faculty representatives from each department in the College of Health and Human Development, along with a staff advisory council representative, a graduate student, and an undergraduate student representative.
   2. Terms of members:
      1. The Chair is a 3-year term that is renewable for a second term.
      2. Member terms: two-year, staggered terms.
      3. The terms for staff members might follow the Staff Advisory Council bylaws.
   3. Stakeholders: The dean’s office and the Sustainability Institute, along with the college and the university at large, are viewed as internal stakeholders. The alumni, industry partners, and local communities are viewed as external stakeholders.
   4. Council Members
      1. The Chair is appointed by the Dean of the College of HHD for a 3-year term that is renewable for a second term.
      2. One faculty representative is solicited either by the Dean or the Chair from each Department Head in the College of HHD. The Chair may also serve as a representative for their home department.
      3. One graduate and an undergraduate student will be appointed by the Council to serve on the council, representing different college units on a revolving basis.
      4. One staff member will be appointed by the Council on the recommendation by the Dean of the College of Health and Human Development.
   5. Member Responsibilities:
      1. Attend HHD Sustainability Council meetings:
         1. In order to best vitalize the collaborative work being done, Council representatives are strongly encouraged to participate in all monthly meetings during the academic year.
         2. A minimum attendance of six Council meetings per academic year is required to maintain membership for the next academic year.
      2. Maintain a visible role as a representative of the Council for sustainability efforts in their home department in the areas of teaching, research, outreach, and operations. This effort includes relaying Council activities to their Department Head, faculty and staff members at least once per semester, and relaying their department’s activities back to the Council. Representatives will also:
         1. **Act as an ambassador** for sustainability leadership and for sustainable health and human development within and beyond the College, both listening for ideas and input, as well as informing and advocating where appropriate (e.g., at departmental meetings, classrooms, student clubs, other committees, professional and academic societies, etc.);
         2. **Represent the expertise, unique interests, and needs of each department** while considering how to advance the College’s efforts in sustainability;
         3. **Contribute ideas** for new collaborative and cross-disciplinary initiatives that involve faculty, students, staff, and alumni from multiple departments as well as other colleges; and
         4. **Connect the college to appropriate people, groups, and resources** in their network to provide expertise, funding, connections, and opportunities for faculty, students, staff, and alumni.
      3. The Council depends upon every member to actively serve and contribute to Council activities throughout the academic year.
   6. Chair Responsibilities:
      1. Represent the Council and the College at the University level.
      2. Interface with Department Heads directly regarding appointment of Council representatives as needed.
      3. Schedule meetings with Council representatives at the beginning of each semester via an online scheduling application to select the best date and time for the majority.
      4. Remind the Council representatives about meetings via email and embedded scheduling reminders in Outlook.
      5. Plan and distribute meeting agendas and keep a record of meeting minutes.
      6. Conduct meetings.
      7. Follow-up with representatives as needed regarding completion of activities.
      8. Report Council activities and recommendations to the Dean of the College of Health and Human Development and the Chief Sustainability Officer at Penn State annually, or more frequently if required/requested.
      9. Appoint sub-committee and task forces as necessary to achieve the Council’s objectives.

**Council Operations**

1. **Meetings**
   1. **Schedule:** The Council meets once per month, but may meet more frequently in order to address current responsibilities.
   2. **Attendance:** Council representatives are expected to attend all meetings. If a member may not be able to physically attend a meeting, alternative methods of participation may be configured (e.g., having an alternate representative from their department or participation via a video/audio connection).
   3. **Agenda and Minutes:** Prior to a Council meeting, the Chair prepares and distributes an agenda to all members. The minutes (including any presentations and/or handouts) are recorded by the Chair and archived on a shared drive accessible to all members, the Dean of the College of HHD, and the Chief Sustainability Officer of Penn State. Minutes may be distributed to others upon request.
2. **Budget:** The Council’s budget is at the discretion of the Dean of the College of Health and Human Development.
3. **Decision Making:** The Council seeks to make decisions by consensus. To accomplish this, the members work together to create a collaborative, inclusive, and supportive environment. When unanimity cannot be reached on a certain issue, voting is undertaken, adhering to the following guidelines:
   1. Out of a Council of 13 representatives (including the Chair), a majority of 7 representatives must be present to vote.
   2. A majority ‘yes’ is required for a resolution to pass.
   3. In the case of a tie vote among an even numbered majority, the Chair acts as tie-breaker utilizing the perspectives of the group and working in the best interest of the college.
   4. The Chair determines the appropriate method of voting.
4. **Transitions**
   1. Members who are absent without a reasonable cause from three annual meetings of council or a working group will be assumed occupied by other priorities and unable to fulfill their duties as a sustainability council member. Their position on the council or working group will be refilled as soon as possible.
   2. If a member does not make a reasonable, good faith effort to fulfill his/her responsibilities set forth in this charter that will also be a reason, at the discretion of the Council chair, for removal from the council. Their position on the council will be refilled as soon as possible.
5. **Review, Amendments, and Changes to the Charter**
   1. Amendments and changes to the Charter require a 2/3rd majority vote in compliance with Robert’s Rules of Order.