

Bulacan Agricultural State College

# SUSTAINABILITY POLICY



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## **INTRODUCTION**

Since 2019, the University has been undertaking some strategic initiatives, programs and projects, which are geared towards institutional sustainability through supporting collaboration, innovation and engagement across the BASC community. It considers governance and management, instruction and learning, research, and extension services.

Over the years, there are gains and successes that can be attributed to some of our sustainability practices. BASC shall ensure sound resource management in order to effectively and efficiently carry out its mandates and to guarantee continuity of its programs. It shall observe accountability, transparency and efficiency in all its operations. The College shall explore public and private partnerships in its investment initiatives as well as other source of funding in order to widen streams of resources. It shall consider environmental sustainability in the planning and implementation of its programs, projects and activities.

We felt the need, however, to put together a Sustainability Policy that will help the university focus on what we can do to reach the highest possible standards of sustainability on our campuses and in our day-to-day activities related to academics and research, student and staff engagement, operations, and community engagement.

## **PURPOSE**

The Sustainable Policy reinforces BASC's commitment to sustainability in human, financial, and environmental context. It is intended to guide the BASC community, individually and collectively in its daily operations and strategic directions.

In particular, this policy will:

1. ensure sustainability through an appropriate balance of resources and activity when setting goals and targets, considering its impact on our human, financial, and environmental resources
2. foster a culture of sustainability throughout the College and broader community by calling upon all campuses, divisions, and units to participate in a continuous and on-going effort to create a sustainable place to learn, teach, conduct research, and to work and live productively

3. ensure that our commitment to sustainability is reflected in our organizational behaviors and policies through the application of effective, long-lasting solutions which integrate the ecological, social and economic facets of sustainability
4. continue to find new and innovative ways to demonstrate leadership in research, teaching, learning, operations, partnerships, and community services to advance sustainability.

## **SCOPE**

This policy applies to all members of the College including faculty, staff, and students, as well as contractors and service providers and to all areas of the College that support teaching, learning, research, and extension services. This is a multi-campus policy and is therefore applicable to all of BASC campuses.

It consists of four main sections: Research towards a Sustainable Future, Teaching and Learning for Sustainability, Sustainable Operating Practices, and Partnership and Community Engagement for Sustainability. Each section describes the appropriate direction its campuses, institutes, divisions, and unit should take as well as some practical steps for meeting the goals of this policy.

Creating a sustainable institution requires the cooperation and dedication of faculty, staff, students, partners and the wider community working collaboratively with each other.

## **DEFINITIONS**

1. Sustainability - It is a holistic approach that considers ecological, social, and economic dimensions, recognizing that all must be considered together to find lasting prosperity. Sustainability as used here is the manner by which the institution operates within the limits of available human, financial, physical, and natural resources in ways that allow the institution to thrive in perpetuity.
2. Sustainable Development- It is the overarching paradigm of the United Nations. The concept of sustainable development was described by as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”

3. BASC/College – It means the Bulacan Agricultural State College and all its extension campuses
4. Green building - An integrated framework of design, construction, and operations practices that encompasses the environmental, economic, and social impacts of buildings. Green building practices recognize the interdependence of the natural and built environments and seek to minimize the use of energy, water, and other natural resources and provide a healthy, productive indoor environment.
5. Recycling - Any process by which solid waste materials are transformed into new products in such a manner that the original products may lose their identity.
6. Recycled - Content Products - Products made from materials that would otherwise have been discarded. Items in this category are made totally or partially from material destined for disposal or recovered from industrial activities.
7. Employee – It refers to both faculty and staff

## **PRINCIPLES AND POLICY STATEMENTS**

The BASC has made a commitment to deliver its sustainable targets. It is committed to upholding the highest standards of governance and ethics, and fully subscribe to the key principles of sustainable development, namely, inclusivity, integrity, stewardship, and transparency. In addition to complying with applicable legal requirements, we will strive to continually improve our sustainability performance.

Mindful of the kind of future we are leaving for the next generation, the BASC shall instill sustainability into the many aspects of College life, on our campuses and in the larger community of which we are part. Sustainability shall find its way into teaching and learning, research, community services, and the operations that support them.

Together, these commitments combine into a vision for sustainability where:

- research, teaching and action for sustainability are actively encouraged and supported
- faculty members are attracted to the BASC to research, teach and practice sustainability
- students are attracted to the BASC to learn, research and contribute to sustainability

- risks are minimized by providing a safe and healthy environment for faculty, staff and students in accordance with the BASC's policies
- collaborative approach to sustainable management of BASC resources is adopted
- ideas and concepts around sustainability are germinated in the College and taken in a broader community.

## **RESEARCH TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE**

While the BASC recognizes the intrinsic value of high-quality research across all disciplines, it also recognizes the critical and urgent need to find solutions to the challenges faced in pursuit of sustainability. It is necessary therefore to:

1. create a pool of researches who collaborate across disciplines and institutions to generate and disseminate the knowledge necessary to achieve sustainability
2. demonstrate sound sustainable development practices and policies based on research and monitoring
3. expand existing researches related to sustainability
4. promote innovative, high-visibility research projects focused on sustainability and energy efficiency to inform campus operations as a whole as well as the broader community
5. Research products and practices to be used in the normal and the unique programs of the BASC that can be used to further sustainability goals
6. promote collaborative projects that include faculty research undertaken in partnership with operations staff, students, public entities, community organizations, and industry.

## **TEACHING AND LEARNING FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

The BASC recognizes that the most significant impact we have on society results from the enhanced capabilities of our graduates. We must ensure that the education our students receive includes opportunities for understanding the role that all of their chosen fields have to play in the pursuit of sustainability, and they develop the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute towards sustainable societies.

Specifically, the BASC shall:

1. aim to ensure that all students are aware of and active in issues relating to sustainability through academic programs and activities
2. expand existing academic programs that is sustainability-focused
3. provide education and training for faculty, staff, and students to make a full contribution to the BASC's agenda for sustainability and to study, work and live a sustainability conscious and responsible way
4. raise sustainability awareness among faculty, staff and students about the BASC's environmental impact, activities and performance at the individual, College, and community levels
5. identify and pursue opportunities to incorporate the principles of sustainability, disaster preparedness, and environmental literacy into course curriculum
6. strengthen academic programs related to disaster and emergency preparedness

## **SUSTAINABLE OPERATING PRACTICES**

The BASC recognizes that we cannot deprive the future in order to pay for the present and is committed to ensuring that we have a sustainable organization that will endure. BASC will continue to build a strong and sustainable university operation, high quality infrastructure, and a healthy environment. It will adopt sustainable practices involving all of our staff and students in on-going improvement in our performance.

Generally, this includes:

1. a continuous improvement process that seeks to meet the operational performance targets, goals, and objectives designed to achieve sustainability and environmental improvements
2. a sustainability goals that inform administrative policies and procedures in the areas of planning, decision-making, execution, assessment, reporting, and alignment
3. managing the risks and opportunities associated with its activities to prevent harm to people, assets and the environment
4. optimize the use of BASC's financial resources in support of the academic, research, and extension services goals through responsible and accountable financial management

5. ensuring compliance with current legal requirements, as well as those others that the organization subscribes to
6. establishing targets to help achieve those established in the Sustainable Development Goals
7. develop a culture of sustainability and transferring such culture to the entire value chain: clients, partners, suppliers, and other stakeholders

Specifically:

1. On environment- There is a need to monitor workplace practices, procedures and material use, and promote those providing the greatest reduction of energy, water and materials; and reduce employee exposure to toxic substances and harm to the environment. The BASC shall reduce the consumption of materials, energy and water used in the normal course of business. Materials, procedures and equipment shall be selected first to improve the condition of the built and natural environment and improve employee health; and secondly to reduce environmental harm and minimize employee and environmental exposure to toxic substances.

This may include:

- keep energy usage low. For example, making use of low energy light bulbs throughout and ensuring that computers are shut down after work.
- make it a practice to turn off lights when you leave a room that is not being used
- turn off monitors when leaving work area for an extended period of time throughout the workday
- use coffee cups that can be washed and reused instead of paper cups
- purchase paper products made out of recycled material
- offer employees the opportunity to work from home once a week
- encourage employees to commute or join a carpool
- recycle as much waste material as possible
- avoid the use of paper wherever possible. For example, sending documents via email as PDF files
- recycling equipment that is no longer of use to the College. For example, giving away items through deed of donation such as computers and printers that we no longer use



- reuse waste paper (from the printer) where possible, making use of the blank side for notes, etc.
- develop programs and policies that minimize resource and material demands of College activities
- establish systems to monitor and measure our environmental performance.
- comply with the policies outlined in this document

2. Disposal of Waste-The BASC shall implement a coordinated solid waste, recycling and reuse program within its facilities and service areas. It shall eliminate, whenever practicable, the use of products requiring specialized waste handling, Hazardous, special or biological waste shall be handled in accordance with all existing regulations.

When disposing of waste, the BASC shall follow the hierarchy of Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, prior to hauling and sending to landfill. Whenever practicable, it shall reduce the amount of solid waste generated, reuse material for its original purpose, and recycle material not suited for reuse. The BASC must also ensure that surplus property is not disposed prior to thorough efforts to find other uses for the material.

3. On Procurement-As a matter of policy, the BASC shall develop guidelines towards the adoption of “green procurement” standards and other cost-efficient measures that may include, among others, the following:

- purchase products made with recycled paper, like paper towels toilet paper, printer paper, etc.
- purchase products with a lower environmental impact
- ensure that BASC procurement policies and procedures incorporate an assessment of environmental impact of purchases throughout their life-cycle and encourage the use of producers and suppliers who follow environmentally responsible practices.
- write procurement specifications and contract language ensuring contractors, suppliers and College departments use resources in the most sustainable manner
- educate and monitor staff in the use of sustainable purchasing/procurement procedures

- fully implement the e-procurement guidelines for efficient electronic procurement processes, with the ultimate goal of eliminating hardcopy generation
- ensure surplus material and equipment from each department is put to its highest and best use.
- develop a list of institutions/offices eligible to receive College surplus property. Send notification to this list prior to any other dispensation of surplus property.
- provide employees with information, at least annually, regarding all of the options available to dispense with surplus property.
- ensure surplus property is not disposed prior to thorough efforts to find other uses for the material
- assess, wherever possible through all life cycle phases, the sustainable impact of all purchases, in terms of raw materials, manufacture, distribution, use and disposal, and to assess suppliers in a number of areas

4. The General Services and Facility Management Office shall:

- review building maintenance contracts, remodeling and new building construction proposals, and internal work plans. Revise as appropriate to ensure the BASC conserves resources and uses non-toxic materials
- assist with the development of sustainable operations
- promote the use of sustainable modes of transport
- provide all departments with collection service of recyclable and reusable items.
- provide appropriate disposal services for special and hazardous wastes.

5. The Environment Management Unit shall

- identify opportunities to reduce water consumption, implement water conservation measures where possible and establish programs that promote the efficient use of water and identify opportunities to reduce energy consumption
- implement energy conservation measures where possible and establish programs that promote the efficient use of energy among faculty, staff and students
- maintain the records pertinent to the recycling collection activities of the BASC.

6. The Records Management Office shall:

- implement state-of-the-art electronic document management technologies, using electronic forms processing, and promoting electronic capture and maintenance of records resulting in the reduction of paper consumption and storage requirements
- educate and monitor BASC staff in the use of these technologies
- determine the applicability and legality of electronic signatures that would promote a reduction in hardcopy generation of files and forms.

7. The Management and Information System Office shall:

- coordinate and implement state-of-the-art electronic document management technologies using electronic forms processing, and promoting electronic capture and maintenance of records that result in the reduction of paper consumption and storage requirements
- educate and monitor BASC staff in the use of these technologies
- investigate the use of computer technology to perform daily tasks that result in the reduction of resource use, such as paper and electricity
- train/inform staff about conserving resources when using available technology

8. The Medical Services Office shall:

- promote and integrate sustainable food systems within campus operations by supporting local, organic, and healthy options.
- educate employees for healthy living
- implement programs to enhance the general health and well-being of faculty and staff

9. All Employees/Institutes/Divisions/Units shall:

- cooperate with the Center for Sustainable Development by providing information and assistance necessary to meet the goals and objectives of this policy and the annual plans
- implement the recommendations necessary to meet the goals and objectives of this policy and the annual plans
- continue to draw on knowledge and experience within and beyond the College to fully understand and embrace the sustainable development goals

## 10. On Infrastructure

- apply sustainability principles to the design, building, refurbishment and operation of our buildings and to the management of our campuses, including effective use of space and maximizing health and well-being
- promote a healthy and productive environment by providing students, faculty and staff with safe, functional, and sustainable facilities
- integrate sustainable features into new and existing building design and application.
- build and renovate facilities in accordance with energy efficiency and sustainability principles.
- use ecological landscaping methods and preserve green space.
- review parking requirements and policies in terms of volume to support and provide alternative transportation options to faculty, staff and students
- maintain sustainability design standards for major projects that will enable the BASC to work towards green building standards for new build, and introduce principles of sustainable construction, renovations and landscape design

## 11. The College shall:

- convene the Sustainable Development Committee at least quarterly or more frequently as needed.
- coordinate and monitor the annual plan to meet the goals and objectives established for the selected policy areas.
- inform each department about the annual plan and their involvement in meeting the goals and objectives of the plan.
- create an annual report in partnership with the Sustainable Development Committee.

## **PARTNERSHIP AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINABILITY**

The BASC is committed to maintaining partnerships that advances shared aims and aspirations. It also recognizes that many communities contribute to and draw upon our research, teaching and ideas and we are committed to developing and enhancing partnerships that will advance sustainability.

Capacity building and networking is necessary to advance sustainability. The BASC believes that we cannot achieve our aspiration of being a full-pledged agricultural university of global standing in isolation, and that we need to build our relationships with leading universities which share our commitment to excellence.

It is necessary to:

- collaborate and cooperate with universities that are leaders in sustainability, and to learning from and sharing experiences in research, teaching and learning, as well as sustainable operating practices
- engage with other institutions and the wider community to share environmental best practices and to demonstrate environmental responsibility
- carry out our operation in a way that is sensitive to our neighbors and interested parties
- develop a team program in order to build a network of sustainability-focused individuals across the BASC and beyond
- ensure representation and active participation by the BASC on relevant steering committees and associations in order to promote awareness of sustainability issues and determine how they can be addressed
- further partnerships with the local community and government organizations to progress sustainable development goals
- communicate with the outside community about the BASC's sustainability performance and activities

## **COMPLIANCE AND REPORTING**

The College shall monitor compliance with the Policy, with advice and/or observations provided by the Sustainable Development Committee based in the periodic report of its implementation. Reporting will be included in the annual reporting on the BASC's sustainability-related plans and activities Annual Report The Sustainability Development Committee shall prepare an annual report that shall be provided to the Management Committee for review. The final report will then be presented to the President of the BASC for information to the Board of Trustees.

## Accountability

As established by the Office of the President, the Sustainability Development Officer shall report to, coordinate and consult with Sustainable Development Committee to develop indicators and measures of success in the implementation of this policy in consultation with appropriate faculty, staff, students, and experts in the broader community.

## **KEY RELEVANT DOCUMENTS**

- Values, Vision, Mission and Guiding Principles
- Academic Plan
- LUDIP
- Sustainability Action Plan (not yet available)
- Revised Organizational Structure Management Processes and Procedures

**EFFECTIVITY-** This Policy shall be made effective immediately after its approval by the BASC Board of Trustees