

# **2012 Appalachian Energy Summit**

## **Western Carolina University Campus Action Planning**



### **WCU Initiatives:**

#### **1. Development of a transportation plan**

- Development of a transportation plan will outline best practices goals for addressing on-campus, to/from campus commuting and parking on campus.
  - ✓ This plan will identify goals for reducing petroleum resource use, as required by our Petroleum Displacement Plan, and will address strategies for improving awareness and changing human behaviors needed to achieve the goals.
  - ✓ The plan will provide direct connections to the WCU Strategic Plan and will be a part of the Master Plan under development.
  - ✓ The plan will also leverage student research and class projects to assist with data collection. For example, ES495 Senior Capstone Project will help collect on-campus data and research alternative strategies that have been successful at campuses similar to WCU.
  - ✓ Development of a transportation plan will be organized by Facilities Management.

#### **2. Development of a sustainable energy plan**

- WCU currently addresses many components of sustainability initiatives discussed during Tuesday's working group sessions. However, most of our efforts are not very well integrated into a long term master plan, nor do they fully integrate across academic and non-academic areas on campus. Therefore, we feel the best strategy to holistically address Tuesday's working group session initiatives is to include faculty, staff, students and administrators in the development of some long-term plans to facilitate achieving sustainability goals into the future.
  - ✓ We think the creation of an office of sustainability on campus is a critical part of this plan. Details to determine include personnel, reporting structure, funding needed, mission and scope for this new office. This office will help coordinate sustainability efforts on campus.
  - ✓ Development of this plan will outline best practices goals for addressing climate action, carbon neutrality, a greenhouse gas inventory, and an aggressive plan for metering/measuring/tracking building energy use in ways that are visible to faculty, staff, administrators and students.
  - ✓ This Plan will be incorporated into the WCU Master Plan under development, and will include an energy policy and sustainability mission statement for WCU, will address how actions outlined in the plan can be integrated into academics, and will include direct connections to the new WCU Strategic Plan.
  - ✓ Development of the plan will be organized by Facilities Management.

### **3. Creation of a clean energy initiative (CEI).**

- The student body has already approved a student fee to go toward renewable energy initiatives on campus but the CEI needs to work its way through student government and our budget process to be implemented.
  - ✓ A resolution at SGA will be presented regarding the CEI and assuming it passes, it will move forward to the Chancellor, Board of Trustees and Board of Governors for final approvals.
  - ✓ Approval of a student-based CEI will promote buy-in from the students regarding renewable energy initiatives on campus.
  - ✓ The goal is to have this completed within the next year assuming deadlines can be met regarding presentation of the CEI at required groups.
  - ✓ This initiative will be led by the President of the Student Government Association.

### **4. Support initiative to change state policy to retain money from energy savings.**

- WCU would like to be a part of a system-wide effort to continue moving forward on energy savings that are realized in dollars and carbon footprints.
  - ✓ Dr. Belcher will work with Chancellors from all UNC campuses to develop an initiative to change the policy whereby individual campuses can retain monetary savings realized from energy savings.

### **Next steps to achieve above initiatives:**

- Energy Summit attendees should meet within the next month (August 2012) as a group to clarify and organize our next steps regarding our initiatives. This will include developing a strategy to promote campus-wide “buy in” for our initiatives, identification of steps and responsible parties.

### **What are the Barriers?**

- The rural and relatively isolated geographic location of WCU presents many challenges, including the opening of our new campus in Asheville at Biltmore Park (50 miles from the Cullowhee campus).
- Prioritizing funding toward sustainability initiatives when budgets are already limited to the point where academic programs can barely be delivered.
- Current human attitudes and behavior will limit success. We must continually educate and promote awareness among the revolving student population, but also as faculty and staff turnover.
- Town-gown relationships with Cullowhee, Sylva and surrounding communities need to be strengthened and included in the planning of sustainability initiatives.