

**UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY**

**Terms of Reference  
OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY  
ACADEMIC ADVISORY COMMITTEE (OSAAC)**

**1. Purpose**

The Office of Sustainability Academic Advisory Committee (OSAAC) advises the Office of Sustainability regarding work priorities for the Academic arm of the Office of Sustainability (see Figure 1). It ensures balance across disciplines and constituencies that exist on all five campuses.

The primary purpose of the OSAAC is to provide advice that guides the academic community in developing, seeding, modeling and integrating sustainability into the University's scholarship and research. Through these activities, the Academic arm of the Office of Sustainability will steer the University of Alberta towards being a global leader in sustainable thinking and action, establishing its students, staff, and faculty as effective global citizens.

**2. Duties/Roles**

The OSAAC is a diversely constituted group that advises the Office of Sustainability on the academic plan of work for the Office of Sustainability. The OSAAC has five essential functions foundational to the purpose of the Office:

1. Issue identification, and priority and goal setting;
2. Sounding board for the Academic Coordinator on activities such as strategic planning, annual plans of work and evaluation;
3. Advocate to extend the reach and effectiveness of the Academic arm of the Office of Sustainability for enhanced teaching and learning about sustainability, requiring strategies for reframing and integrating teaching across all academic units;
4. Advise on potential funding and leveraging opportunities; and
5. Serve on sub-committees of the Office to help in developing initiatives.

**3. Areas of Emphasis**

The following four interdependent areas are among those to be addressed by the OSAAC. Specific goals will be developed and evaluated annually.

***Area #1: Information and Advice***

To provide information and advice and make suggestions to the Office of Sustainability and the Academic Coordinator about

- Core academic initiatives of the Office of Sustainability related to formal, informal, and experiential learning and research;
- Potential links to the Operations and Outreach arms of the Office of Sustainability;
- How to model and test innovative and socially sustainable forms of engagement and collaboration in pursuing the objectives of the academic arm of the Office of Sustainability;

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- Discipline-specific and interdisciplinary research relevant to the topic of sustainability;
- Corporate-sponsorship possibilities;
- Promoting sustainability services, programs and projects provincially or regionally;
- Ways to extend the work of the Office of Sustainability;
- Content of publications emerging from the Office of Sustainability;
- Speakers for workshops, conferences, and presentations;
- Topics as goals for each year or for special initiatives of a public nature advanced by the Office of Sustainability.

**Area #2: Changes in Policy**

To keep the Director and Academic Coordinator informed about changes in policies (e.g. university, provincial, federal) that may affect the Office of Sustainability's mandate. To recommend and champion policy changes that will further the University's sustainability objectives.

**Area #3: Networks and integration**

To sustain strong networks of communication with groups and constituencies relevant to teaching, learning, and research around sustainability, and to demonstrate responsiveness to diversity of voices with an interest in sustainability.

**Area #4: Funding Opportunities**

To identify and refer funding opportunities with potential value for advancing and/or leveraging the role and functions of all arms of the the Office of Sustainability.

## **4. Procedures**

### **4.1 Establishing the Academic Advisory Committee (OSAAC)**

The Deputy Provost is responsible for ensuring that an OSAAC is established and operated in accordance with the above-stated purpose, duties and areas of emphasis.

### **4.2 Composition/Terms of Appointment of the Academic Advisory Committee**

The OSAAC will initially be small and representative of a diversity of views and constituencies. This initial arrangement will be re-examined after the first year of its operation. Selection of members is done by the Deputy Provost through a consultation process with Deans and Chairs, and in consultation with the Academic Coordinator of the Office of Sustainability.

The OSAAC includes the following:

- Academic Coordinator, Office of Sustainability (Chair) – *ex officio*
- Deputy Provost - *ex officio*
- Director of the Office of Sustainability – *ex officio*
- Dean of Students - *ex officio*
- Decanal appointment
- Selected individuals from diverse constituencies with expertise as well as an established reputation and passion for the area of sustainability (not to exceed 8 members, with a minimum of 6 faculty members);
- Graduate student liaison;
- Undergraduate student liaison;

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Student members will be appointed for two-year terms and other members for three-year terms (terms may be shorter where members' circumstances so dictate). Initial committee membership will be for varying terms to stagger committee turnover. All annual terms coincide with the Office of Sustainability's year-end (March 31).

#### 4.3 *Electing/Appointing an Academic Advisory Committee (OSAAC) Chair*

The Chair of the OSAAC will be the Academic Coordinator, Office of Sustainability.

#### 4.4 *Reporting*

The Office of Sustainability's Academic Coordinator will submit a written annual report on the OSAAC's activities and plans of work for the forthcoming year to the Director of the Office of Sustainability each February. The Director will review any recommendations coming from the OSAAC.

#### 4.5 *Frequency of Meetings*

The OSAAC will hold a minimum of six meetings per year at the call of the Chair.

Figure 1. Organization chart showing the alignment of the OSAAC with the Office of Sustainability at the University of Alberta.

