



2010
CAMPUS AND COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY CONFERENCE
Educational Alliance for a Sustainable Florida
A program of the
Sustainable Florida – Collins Center

Feasibility Study

In October 2006, in conjunction with national Campus Sustainability Day, the University of Florida hosted the inaugural conference of Campus and Community Sustainability: *Sharing Best Practices and Visions for Florida's Future*.

The conference provided a venue for the exchange of best practices and visions among Florida's universities, colleges, and communities. Speakers and panel discussions focused on fostering strong relationships between institutions and their communities and emphasized the role of higher education in creating a more sustainable future. More than 250 business professionals, university administrators, faculty, students and government leaders attended the two-day event.

The Sustainable Florida – Collins Center accepted the responsibility of carrying this event forward by identifying a host campus for the 2007 event and ensuring this becomes an annual tradition.

In the fall of 2007, Florida State University hosted the event in Tallahassee. More than 300 attended the program which featured presenters from Wal-Mart, Starbucks, Shaw and Anheuser Busch. The University of Central Florida hosted the 2008 event where more than 300 university, government, private sector and student leaders came from across Florida.

The following tool helps evaluate the ability and willingness of an organization considering hosting the event. Use this as a guide and add to it as necessary.

Overview

The University of Florida created a Host Committee composed of two co-chairs and the chairs of each subcommittee – Program/Speakers, Reception/Logistics, Communications/Public Relations, Fundraising/Exhibits and Tours. Each committee had representation from various levels of the university administration, faculty, students and community groups. The Florida State organizers used their Sustainability Executive Committee to organize and execute the event.

Conference website, online and mail-in registration and sponsorships for both events were handled for a fee by the TREEO Center (<http://www.treeo.ufl.edu/>), an environmental training conference management group at the University of Florida.

The 2007 conference program featured six-break out tracks including Energy; Land Use, Planning and Policy; Personal Transformation; Landscaping and Conservation; Campus Sustainability; and Community Transformation. Panel sessions were moderated. A similar format was used by Florida State. Due to space constraints on campus and a desire to open up other options, five classroom-style tracks will run concurrently while they will also offer a “site-visit/tour” track.

Various registration fees were available for students and general participants. Meals were priced separately except for a continental breakfast each morning in 2007. The registration fee was inclusive of all meals (a total of five plus a break) for 2007.

Limited on-campus parking was made available adjacent to student unions. Nearby hotels were within reasonable walking distance of the UF Union. Florida State did not have a walking option. Neither will UCF.

The event has grown to more than 300 attendees plus volunteers in addition to more than 25 exhibitors.

A formal write up of the process used by the University of Florida has been prepared. The UF Sustainability Office is available to assist as well as the FSU Conference and the University of Central Florida Conference Chairs in developing the 2009 program. See <http://www.sustainable.ufl.edu/conference/index.asp> for more details of the 2006 event.

Feasibility Questions

- What is the essence of the project? (There can be more than one. Each should be clearly defined. Possible examples include)
 - *A conference to educate attendees and encourage adoption and implementation of sustainable development principals*
 - *Showcase the university and its unique colleges and programs*
 - *Position _____ as a leader in the field of sustainability*
- What is the market?
 - *Faculty, staff, and students of Florida's academic institutions*
 - *Community leaders from government, NGO's, and business*
 - *Planning and development staff*
 - *Florida citizens interested in developing stronger, local sustainability initiatives*
- How will the project benefit the university, the students, the local community and the state? Have the potential members determined the need or are others promoting it?
- What is the support by university, community, and potential sponsors?
- What will be included in the project – reception, meals, special events, tours, etc?
- What is the competitive outlook – who or what are major competitors?
- What will be the revenue and costs? What will excess revenue be used for?
- What is the anticipated participation?
- What is the size of the market?
- Will the group use strategic alliances to accomplish its goals?
- What are the organizational needs for the project?
- What are the capital needs and possible sources of this capital? How much money is needed?
- What are the budgeting and financial needs? What are possible sources for financing?
- What are the legal requirements? What documents or agreements are needed?
- What facilities are needed for accommodations, receptions, plenary and break out workshops, etc.?
 - *Convention and Visitors Bureau may be a resource*

- What off-campus and on-campus transportation issues will need to be addressed?
 - *Park-and-go shuttle services and special reserved parking for in-out speakers*
- What are management requirements? What skills will the cooperative require of a management team? What will this management cost?

The answers to these and other questions should be presented in a report to the university administration representatives necessary to endorse the conference as an official university-sanctioned event.

Sustainable Florida - Collins Center stand ready to assist in the feasibility study, organizing and hosting the conference.

Thank you for evaluating your ability to host the 2009 Campus and Community Sustainability Conference.