Are methods deployed by other institutions feasible for UVic?

Many North American universities have undertaken innovative and successful waste management initiatives. Below is a review of various waste-related sustainability initiatives that UVic may consider for further improvement on our system.

University of Texas at Austin [1]

<https://housing.utexas.edu/sustainability>

The University of Texas (UT) has implemented policies and procedures that support the decrease of the organization's ecological footprint and make sustainability awareness and practices guiding principles:

· Eco2Go: provides BPA-free, dishwasher-safe Eco2Go containers which are reusable, recyclable and even microwave-safe.

· UT Farm Stand: grows and sources healthy, local foods and educates others about the journey from farm to table to waste.

· Sustainability infographic: offers free infographic poster to foster a living and learning experience of environmental stewardship and sustainability awareness.

University of Waterloo [2]

<https://uwaterloo.ca/sustainability/projects-and-initiatives>

Waterloo is expanding programming to ensure students and employees know how to use the systems in place

· Sustainability Certificate: session dedicated to reducing your material footprint

· Zero Waste Week: Sort-A-Thon (waste sorting challenge) pop-up booths and other outreach activities to build awareness and knowledge

· Surplus sale: Central Store maintains a surplus inventory of University furniture, equipment, and supplies and operates a surplus sale for those assets that are still in working condition

· SCI Clothing Sale: Campus Initiative collects used clothing from residences and academic buildings, and resells them to the campus at affordable prices.

University of British Columbia [3]

<https://sustain.ubc.ca/teaching-applied-learning/seeds-sustainability-program>

SEEDS (Social Ecological Economic Development Studies) Sustainability Program creates applied research and interdisciplinary partnerships between students, faculty, staff and community partners to advance sustainability ideas, policies, and practices and create societal impacts by using the Campus as a Living Laboratory.

What sort of education system to implement: face to face or online?

The results of online research and survey provided some interesting insights into the UVic community’s waste behaviours, attitudes and knowledge. From this information a number of recommendations have been proposed to further improve campus waste diversion. The recommendations centre on education and communication. These recommendations are outlined in greater detail below.

**Online**

Website

For user-friendliness and ease of accessibility it is recommended that all waste-related information be placed on a visually appealing page. All the recycling and sorting guide should be placed on the home page or with easy accessible link. Many other North American schools have implemented such websites, so they may be looked to as a model. A waste wizard function, similar to that found on the City of Toronto website (https://www.toronto.ca/services-payments/recycling-organics-garbage/waste-wizard/), that would allow users to type in a waste item and be given the proper disposal method would also be beneficial.

Social media

Get students involved – filling the “sustainable student role model” niche that currently does not seem to exist in residences, and using social networking sites like Facebook to spread awareness of the need for recycling.

Visual aids

Create themed graphics have been developed for the specific purpose of assisting all current efforts towards sustainability awareness and to help further encourage positive wellness/lifestyle choices for all residents. These graphic can be promoted on the website as well as social media to attract more attention from UVic community. A primary example can be found at the University of Texas, where students can get these themed posters for free.

Some samples of the posters:<https://housing.utexas.edu/sustain/info-graphics>

**Face to face**

Orientation waste lesson

Waste management orientation should be provided during residence and program orientation week. The waste lesson needs to be short and engaging, and could take one of two forms. The first form is the Waste Challenge. The Challenge engaged community members in a timed competition that had them deposit everyday waste items into the correct waste bins. The challenges need to be both entertaining and educational, it should help students take the time afterward to identify what was correctly placed and what was not. The second form could be through a train the trainer format where residence dons and program orientation leaders are trained on campus waste management, and then they pass their learning onto their trainees. On a bigger scale this orientation challenges or train the trainer format could be led by a group of students.

Reusable shopping bags

Reusable shopping bags can be given away to new students and parents during student academic orientation, homecoming, and special events.

Improving waste bin labeling

There is great confusion over what can be placed in the waste bins on campus. Clearer labels for waste bins would help improve their participation in waste reduction. Regardless of this, it may be worthwhile to complete focus groups with the Uvic community to evaluate current labels, and determine the changes (if any) that need to be made to make the labels user-friendlier. In the least, labels should be reviewed when program changes occur.

After the label being designed, there should be a guide with graphic details.

Visual aids

The themed graphics mentioned above are printed as fliers and posters to put on bulletin boards in order to spread and promote the program, as well as explain why students should recycle, what is and is not recyclable, and how students can get involved. As a result, UVic community can get the word out about the new program through campaign flyers, morning announcements, posters, signs, labels and more.

By educating the UVic community on proper waste habits, they can work towards improving not only their own behaviour, but also their fellow community members’ behaviour through leading example.

When implementing programs, be sure to monitor, track, and document the hard work being accomplished.

Keep a record of how much recycling is collected, or how much waste is being reduced through the program.

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<https://sustain.ubc.ca/sites/default/files/files/ASR-2017-2018-2.pdf>

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<https://sustain.ubc.ca/get-involved/campaigns/sort-it-out>

The University of Texas at Austin has earned a STARS Silver rating in 2018 in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

<https://sustainability.utexas.edu/news/ut-austin-receives-stars-silver-rating-sustainability-achievements>

# UT Austin Receives STARS Silver Rating for Sustainability Achievements

Waterloo

#5 Global ranking for University Impact on Climate Action by Times Higher Education

351 Faculty members conducting research related to Environmental Sustainability

489 Faculty members conducting Research advancing the UN Sustainable Development Goals

TOP 10 Ranking for the Water Institute among water research institutes globally

<https://uwaterloo.ca/sustainability/sites/ca.sustainability/files/uploads/files/sustainability_summary_report_2019-accessible_pdf-final.pdf>