

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY FACULTY SENATE ACADEMIC AND APPELLATE COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT

2021-2022 Academic Year COMMITTEE: University Environment Committee

Membership (include ex-officio members). Regular members: Susan Pearce (Chair), Tammy Lee (Vice-Chair), Alison Swift (secretary), Lisa Beth Robinson, Marc Peterson, Kerry Sewell, Akshat Kapoor. Ex-officio members: Bill Koch, Tim Christensen, Gregory Kearney, Dean Smith, Thompson Forbes, Chad Carwein, David Leese, Lucas Snyder (student body representative)

Meeting Dates and Members Present:

September 23, 2021. Regular Members in Attendance: Susan Pearce, Tammy Lee, Lisa Beth Robinson, Marc Petersen, Kerry Sewell, Akshat Kapoor, Alison Swift. Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Dean Smith, Chad Carwein, Greg Kearney, Bill Koch. Others in Attendance: Puri Martinez, Rachel Baker

October 28, 2021. Regular Members In Attendance: Susan Pearce, Tammy Lee, Kerry Sewell, Akshat Kapoor, Alison Swift. Ex-Officio Members In Attendance: Thompson Forbes, Chad Carwein, Greg Kearney, Bill Koch, David Leese. Others In Attendance: N/A

November 18, 2021. Regular Members in Attendance: Susan Pearce, Tammy Lee, Kerry Sewell, Alison Swift, Lisa Beth Robinson, Marc Petersen. Ex-Officio Members In Attendance: Chad Carwein, Bill Koch, David Leese, Dean Smith, Brooke Pacheco. Others In Attendance: Heather Mauzy (Student), Jonathan Hurst (Student), Jacob Coman (Student), Rachel Baker

January 20, 2022. Regular Members in Attendance: Susan Pearce, Kerry Sewell, Alison Swift, Lisa Beth Robinson, Akshat Kapoor. Ex-Officio Members In Attendance: Chad Carwein, Bill Koch, David Leese, Dean Smith, Tim Christensen, Gregory Kearney. Others In Attendance: Rachel Baker

February 24, 2022. Regular Members in Attendance: Susan Pearce, Tammy Lee, Kerry Sewell, Lisa Beth Robinson, Akshat Kapoor, Marc Petersen, Logan Harrison (ECCURPC Guest), Thompson Forbes. Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Chad Carwein, Dean Smith, Tim Christensen. Others in Attendance: Rachel Baker

March 24, 2022. Regular Members in Attendance: Susan Pearce, Kerry Sewell, Alison Swift, Lisa Beth Robinson, Akshat Kapoor, Tammy Lee. Ex-Officio Members In Attendance: Chad Carwein, Bill Koch, Tim Christensen, Gregory Kearney, Marc Peterson, Thompson Forbes. Others In Attendance: Rachel Baker, Reide Corbett (Guest)

April 28, 2022. Regular members in attendance: Susan Pearce, Kerry Sewell, Alison Swift, Lisa Beth Robinson, Akshat Kapoor, Tammy Lee. Ex-Officio Members in Attendance: Gregory Kearney, Marc Peterson, Thompson Forbes, Dean Smith. Others in Attendance: Rachel Baker

Accomplishments during the year.

The committee supported and helped publicize the important work of Mr. Chad Carwein, including the Sustainability Film Series and other initiatives.

Building health: Following the news of a faculty member's death from pancreatic cancer in 2021, whose office was in the Brewster building, Wing A, and growing awareness and concern by employees of the building due to previous pancreatic cancer deaths, the committee took several initiatives:

- 1) With the direction of Dean Allison Dannell of the Harriot College of Arts and sciences, the committee organized a panel discussion on pancreatic cancer with medical and public health professionals to answer questions from the university community (transcript is available at <https://oehs.ecu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/375/2019/03/Building-Health-QA-Recording-and-Transcript-November-17-2021.pdf>);
- 2) The committee received regular reports from committee member Bill Koch on the status of the study of the building; and
- 3) In response to questions about the procedures for reporting building health risks, the committee recommended that the Office of Environmental Health and Safety website include a general portal for reporting concerns if the employee does not know the specific source of the problem (air, water, etc.). This has been done.

The link to documents regarding the Brewster studies are available at <https://oehs.ecu.edu/2021/12/brewster-a-wing-updates/>

To the committee's knowledge this is the status of the Brewster building studies as of May 2022: A walk-through by representatives from the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services (NCDHHS) found no obvious conditions that could have negative impacts on the indoor environmental quality of the Brewster Building – A Wing, and an assessment by ECU's Environmental and Safety team did not find any obvious risk factors. A third-party consultant, Terracon, assessed the asbestos in the building, and only found asbestos in vinyl floor tiles, which do not crumble, and the asbestos is not accessible to building occupants. The report states: "To date, no building-related health concerns have been identified, but EH&S will wait for NIOSH to complete its assessment and provide a final report before drawing any conclusions." The detailed report is available at: <https://oehs.ecu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/375/2019/03/Memo-to-Campus-November-30-2021.pdf>

Evidence of cigarette smoking was found in one Brewster office. The committee discussed strategies for enforcing the no-smoking law. However, we learned that North Carolina state law prevents assessing a fine higher than \$25.00 for violation of this law.

A memo to the campus community summarizing these studies was distributed on November 30, 2021, and is available here: <https://oehs.ecu.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/375/2019/03/Memo-to-Campus-November-30-2021.pdf>

The University Environment Committee has remained in communication with Faculty Senate leadership regarding the ongoing studies, and is aware that the ECU Chapter of the AAUP has remained in touch with the Environmental Health and Safety Office.

NIOSH: The next prong of the building study, to be carried out by CDC's NIOSH, has yet to begin, given that COVID-19 has taken priority. This study will include an environmental assessment as well as epidemiological studies of the cancer cases.

Continued concerns: The committee is aware of continued concerns by employees of the building as they await the results of the CDC NIOSH study through occasional individuals reaching out to the committee. At least one faculty member has chosen to relocate their office to another building. Some faculty limit their time in the building, and some bring their own water to their offices. Since there has not been a report released to the ECU community during spring semester 2022, we learned anecdotally that some employees are under the impression that all building studies have been completed. We have responded to those employees individually but have not released any general communiques to the campus community other than the announcement of the transcript of the November Q&A. There may be a need for an update to the campus community to clarify the status of the studies.

ECU Natural Areas: Otter Creek site: Under Mr. Carwein's direction, the committee was able to re-open this site for faculty, staff, and student use for research, teaching, and creative activity. Mr. Carwein led student volunteers in the trail-marking and clearing. The committee hosted a grand re-opening in April, 2022, with a ribbon-cutting directed by Interim Provost Grant Hayes. Plans are in progress for a reservation system and guidelines to ensure safe use of the space.

Confetti: The committee continued to proactively address the problem of with confetti strewn on campus for graduation photos and celebration. Chad Carwein continued to work with the nai. Given that the confetti problem continued, we recommend that this campaign continue for AY 2022-2023.

Divestment from Fossil Fuels: The committee researched the potential for disinvesting university investments from fossil-fuel-based companies. We gathered background information, including recent research and reports, as well as other campus models. Several members of the committee joined a virtual meeting with UNC system students who are involved in divestment activism to learn about their goals and strategies.

Energy Sustainability for Campus Buildings: The committee produced a draft report assessing the opportunities and needs for proactive planning toward energy sustainability for campus buildings and operations. This might include such measures as expanding solar energy usage. We combined our research and recommendations about divestment and renewable energy to produce a draft report for university administration to consider, and in anticipation of the hiring of a new Energy manager.

Reports from Student Groups: The committee received reports from and offered support for students' environmental initiatives on campus. For example, the student-led Edible Landscape initiative has been established and is now operational. The committee followed the news of student protests on campus against a proposed cryptocurrency firm for Greenville.

Outer-Banks Campus: At the March 2022 meeting, guest Reide Corbett, Executive Director of the Coastal Studies Institute and Dean of the Integrated Coastal Programs, ECU, spoke to the committee about the teaching and research at the Outer-Banks campus. The committee discussed common interest in sustainable energy and coastal vulnerabilities with Dr. Corbett and an interest in keeping conversations going.

Reports to the Faculty Senate (include dates and resolution numbers). No resolutions this year. Instead, we chose to write a draft report for the Chancellor's consideration regarding environmental sustainability.

Business carried over to next year (list in priority order).

1. Continue to collaborate with university administration regarding building health issues, with particular attention to the study of the Brewster building.
2. Continue conversations with ECU administration regarding future measures toward an environmentally sustainable campus.
3. Continue working toward publicizing the potential use of the Otter Creek site as well as the procedures and rules for its use.
4. Continue to plan for more easily accessible communiques to the campus community about sustainability, including recycling, building health, etc.
5. Continue plans to reduce littering and safety concerns associated with graduation confetti

Evaluation of the committee (include anything that hindered or assisted the committee's work during the year).


1. Charge: no concerns noted
2. Personnel: no concerns
3. Attendance: all meetings were reasonably well attended. All meetings were held


virtually, given the pandemic restrictions. Our student representative had a class schedule conflict during spring semester and was not able to attend the spring meetings.

4. Responsibilities: this committee differs from most in that it has no specific responsibilities that are set forth, which allows freedom to pursue different avenues of work but also puts a responsibility on the committee to initiate projects
5. Activities: the committee was able to move several initiatives forward this year.

Suggestion(s) to the Chair of the Faculty for improving the effectiveness of the committee. No suggestions

Does the Committee's organizational meeting next year need to be earlier than the date set this year? No

Signed: Chairperson Susan C. Pearce 

Vice Chair Tammy D. Lee 

Scribe Allison Swift 

Please forward the completed, approved annual report to the Faculty Senate office via email (facultysenate@ecu.edu) no later than May 15, 2022.
