

Environmental Caucus Leadership Transition Proposal

5/3/11

Recommendation for New Structure.

The Environmental Caucus Steering Committee recommends the following leadership selection process:

- The Steering Committee is limited to ten members to provide for diversity, continuity and representation, plus the Chair, Associate Chair and Sustainability Coordinator.
- One third of the Steering Committee is replaced by new members each year who have not served on the Steering Committee in the past year.
- The Steering Committee will serve as a nominations group with responsibility to recruit individuals to serve as action team leaders and steering committee members. The Steering Committee will seek endorsement by the Caucus for the slate of candidates.
- The Steering Committee will be responsible for the selection of the Chair and Associate Chair, requesting nominations from the Environmental Caucus.
- The Student Environmental Caucus will select two students to serve as student representatives on the Steering Committee. At least one of these students will be an undergraduate.
- The Caucus chair and Associate Chair serve a two-year term, and can serve a second consecutive term. The Caucus Chair and Associate Chair cannot serve a third consecutive term.
- It is preferred, but not mandatory, that the new Caucus chair has served previously as Associate Chair.

Background Information.

Current Leadership Structure

Environmental Caucus members have been:

- Self selecting
- Non hierarchical
- Grassroots oriented
- Action oriented
- Self governing
 - Through a steering committee and
 - Chairperson

EC Steering Committee members have also been self-selected, and many were volunteers early in the creation of the caucus who assisted in the formation and development of the Caucus, together with the Chair and the Associate Chair.

The EC has developed rapidly and now seeks to more formally (but not bureaucratically) create a system that encourages greater involvement in the steering committee and to ensure a diverse and dynamic group of members in the leadership role.

The stated goal for formalizing steering committee inclusion and chairperson selection is to:

- Broaden the active involvement of members in leading the caucus
- Provide for a transition to meet the continuing needs and effectiveness of the caucus
- Provide opportunities for leadership to new members.
- Broaden the diversity of the caucus

Currently, there are 12 members of the Steering Committee. Current representatives can be found at www.nau.edu/envcaucus under “Contact Us”.

Mission Statement

The Environmental Caucus facilitates creative and strategic communication across campus to advance the institutional commitment to sustainability and to promote education, research, and collaboration on the environment.

Operating Principles

Focus: The scope and responsibilities of the caucus are defined by participants, with an overarching goal to add value to existing programs and to bring benefits to NAU’s many environmental programs and activities.

Participation: The Caucus is open to faculty, staff, students and environmental partners of NAU, and operates through consensus-based decision making. The Caucus has been constituted by the will of participants and is not directed by a particular university office or department.

Leadership: Our inter-disciplinary work is guided by the leadership of a steering committee, with members approved by Caucus participants for two-year staggered terms.

Implementation: Action Teams develop recommendations and oversee implementation of projects. Recommendations are reviewed by the Steering Committee and brought to the Caucus for approval at monthly meetings. (Current Action Teams are listed under “Initiatives” at www.nau.edu/envcaucus)

Diversity: We value multi-cultural perspectives and engagement from diverse cultural, social and economic communities, believing this to be critical to promoting and healing the environment. We welcome participation and leadership from all ages and levels of experience on campus. The Caucus also seeks broad representation across university departments and divisions.