



UofL Sustainability Council FY 2012-2013 Report

Major Milestones in the University of Louisville's Sustainability Initiatives July 2012 – June 2013

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The Sustainability Council and its associated committees continue to support and develop a great diversity of initiatives across the full spectrum of sustainability, designed to enhance the university's environmental, social and economic stewardship. These efforts involve faculty, staff, and students from a wide variety of units across the university. The percentage and diversity of our UofL community directly engaged in seeking sustainable solutions continues to grow as we strive to integrate sustainability into everything that we do at UofL.

After five years, the Sustainability Council and its committees have moved well beyond initial baby-steps and matured into a highly effective body for planning, coordination, and education about sustainability initiatives across the university. Though the Council will always provide valuable guidance, recommendations, and support, by its very nature, sustainability demands decentralized, diverse solutions that fit the context of place and community.

We are, therefore, pleased to report that sustainability initiatives at UofL are taking shape through a highly collaborative process involving a wide variety of administrators, staff, faculty, students, and members of the broader community. As such, neither the Sustainability Council nor its committees can claim sole credit for the accomplishments summarized below. On the contrary, credit belongs to the many people across our campuses who have been working diligently on these varied initiatives. We extend our sincere thanks to them, and our deep gratitude to the many dedicated individuals volunteering their time and talents to serve on the Council and its committees.

The following list of accomplishments is by no means exhaustive; rather, it is a brief sampling of a few major milestones from FY 2012-2013. With this annual report, we hope to provide a brief overview of sustainability initiatives at UofL and to whet your appetite to learn more and to get involved. Further details, photos, videos, contextualization, and documentation can be found at the [UofL Sustainability website](#) or by clicking the [links](#) underlined in blue throughout.

Rankings & Awards

- UofL received a new [STARS Silver rating \(58.29 points\)](#) from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), increasing our overall rating 8.18% and giving UofL the highest STARS rating in Kentucky. (Feb. 2013)
- We also improved our overall score by nearly 11.5% in the [Sierra Club's Cool Schools ranking](#) (from 510.89 in 2012 to 625.74 in 2013, out of a possible 1000). UofL continues to hold the top position in the state, ranking 53rd out of 162 schools nationally. (Aug. 2013)
- [UofL received the Kentucky Department for Environmental Protection's 2013 Resource Caretaker Award](#) at the 37th Governor's Conference on Energy & the Environment in Lexington, KY. (Sept. 2013)

Education / Awareness / Behavior Change

- The Council launched a new [Eco-Reps Program](#) for peer-to-peer sustainability education and advocacy across the university, along with new [professional development programs in sustainability](#).
- **RecycleMania 2013**: UofL finished first in the state in Waste Minimization and 20th out of 168 nationally; finished 2nd in the state in the Grand Champion category and 37th out of 274 nationally, with an overall Recycling Rate of 48.87% during the 8-week competition Feb. - March, 2013.
- Recent [Sustainability Events](#): Welcome Week SOUL sustainability projects, Car-Free Trip to Farmers' Market, Involvement Fair, [Pedal with the President](#); [PARK\(ing\) Day](#); Ecologist [Diana Wall](#) lectures; Solar Decathlon Open House; Local Food/Local Fuel authors; Rain Gardens Workshop; [Sustainable City Series: Tactical Urbanism \(plus Block Party & Salon\)](#); [Renewable Energy and Environmental Stewardship - UofL in Atlanta](#); [Prescription Drug Toss](#); [Louisville Bike Month Challenge](#); [Spring Sustainability Week](#); [Campus Conservation Nationals](#); etc.

Energy & Buildings

- Our latest Model Green Room renovation was completed – a [Model Green Office](#) based on student designs which received a profile on local TV news.
- Our energy-savings performance contract with Siemens [exceeded projected savings](#), with Belknap Campus **reducing fuel use 48%, electricity use 27%, and water use 31%** (FY2012).

Food

- **Local food purchases in UofL Dining increased** to just over 25% (summer 2013), with more direct-farm impact and most local producers now within 100 miles (in collaboration with Louisville Farm-to-Table).
- UofL's [Gray Street Farmers' Market](#) began a new series of weekly [20-minute mini-workshops](#) for 2013 to educate consumers about sustainable food, eating, and farming.
- **Belknap experimented with a new weekly mobile farmers' market** ([The Root Mobile](#)) for walk-up purchases and [special deliveries](#) in the University Club Parking Lot, Thursdays 3-5pm mid-June through October.
- **A new campus garden was created** during summer 2013 by students, staff, and faculty. The [Urban & Public Affairs Horticulture Zone](#) replaced an under-utilized, fossil-fuel maintained lawn with four raised beds for vegetables, 15 fruit trees, herbs and native in-ground plantings, a no-mow clover zone. It demonstrates permaculture principles and sustainable systems including three rain barrels, two compost bins, organic practices, and wildlife habitat.

Recycling

- We **reduced our annual waste generation** by over 1.5 million pounds (18.3% reduction from 2011), and increased our overall landfill diversion rate to 41.3%.
- UofL **increased food waste composting 66%** and our community composting program expanded to capture more food waste from area sources and provide free organic fertilizer to campus and community projects.
- The Sustainability Council formed a new **Solid Waste Reduction Committee** which is finalizing a Zero Waste Plan for UofL.
- UofL opened a permanent [Free Store](#) in fall 2013, for the on-going exchange of clean, durable items like clothing, electronics, school supplies, furniture, and more. The store is run by student volunteers and is open to all UofL students and employees on Fridays afternoons in the basement of Unitas Hall.

Research

- The Council launched a new **Sustainability Scholars Roundtable** program to facilitate networking and collaborative, interdisciplinary work and grant-seeking amongst faculty, staff, and graduate students engaged in research related to sustainability.

Transportation

- Now in its 2nd year, the **Earn-A-Bike Program** has attracted 1550 UofL students, faculty, and staff willing to give up their right to a parking permit for at least two years. 800 of these have received \$400 bike shop vouchers after turning in any current permits and receiving mandatory training in bike safety and transportation cycling.
- After two years of advocacy and community meetings organized by the Sustainability Council, Louisville Metro installed **new bike lanes** on Brook and First streets through Old Louisville, providing Belknap Campus with its first north-bound bike facility and improved connectivity with HSC. (Aug. 2013)
- The Council expanded the **UofL Bikeshare Program** with free daily bike check-out now available to everyone at UofL from five different campus locations.
- We also recently equipped six Physical Plant foremen and two parking officers with **work bikes** for getting around campus instead of golf carts or other motorized vehicles. The Council also equipped the Office of Health Promotion with an industrial tricycle for health advocates to use in hauling items across campus and raising awareness at campus events.
- The Council installed No-Idling Signs at dozens of priority locations around Belknap and HSC to raise the profile of our **No-Idling Policy**. (Aug. 2013)
- In partnership with Institutional Research and the Department of Urban & Public Affairs, the Sustainability Council conducted a spring 2013 follow-up **transportation survey** of faculty, staff, and students to monitor changes in commuting habits and willingness to consider alternatives since our 2010 survey. Data is currently being analyzed.

Find out more about these and many other UofL sustainability initiatives at our [UofL Sustainability website: louisville.edu/sustainability](http://louisville.edu/sustainability)

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