GPC Resolution 0809-02

A Resolution Strongly Urging the University of Missouri Administration to Hire a Sustainability Coordinator

PURPOSE: To request that the University of Missouri Administration partially fund a new sustainability office and coordinator position by Fall of 2009.

WHEREAS, The Environmental Affairs Committee has noted the successful environmental sustainability efforts of Solid Waste/Recycling Coordinator Steve Burdic, Environmental Health and Safety Director Peter Ashbrook, Director of Environmental Studies Dr. Jan Weaver, the Campus Facilities Departments of Energy Management, Planning, Design and Construction, and Landscape Services, Campus Dining Services, Residential Life, the Energy Conservation Task Force, the Environmental Affairs Committee, and Sustain Mizzou, and

WHEREAS, While all of these people and departments have done a good job of making our campus more sustainable, the University of Missouri still received only a “C-“ on the College Sustainability Report Card, and

WHEREAS, A “C-“ shows that there is still a need for a coordinator position to oversee and streamline each of these people and departments to improve campus sustainability, and also highlights the need for more extensive and better coordinated communication both internally and externally about sustainability at the University, and

WHEREAS, The Graduate Professional Council passed, a Joint Resolution to Facilitate an MU Sustainability Plan in 2006, and

WHEREAS, In this resolution, GPC endorsed the creation and adoption of a comprehensive sustainability plan and the creation of an ad hoc committee consisting of faculty, staff, and MSA, RHA, and GPC student representatives, and

WHEREAS, This ad hoc committee has met regularly over the past year and should have its final report finished by Spring semester of 2009, and

WHEREAS, Sustain Mizzou representatives submitted a proposal, Fall 2008, for the Rocky Mountain Institute, an independent nonprofit organization that shows businesses, communities, individuals, and governments how to create more wealth and employment, protect and enhance natural and human capital, increase profit and competitive advantage, and enjoy other benefits through sustainability, and

WHEREAS, The proposal was accepted and Rocky Mountain Institute representatives are scheduled to come to the University of Missouri to give further sustainability recommendations in December 2008/January 2009, and
WHEREAS, With these two reports finished by Spring of 2009, a coordinator hired by the Fall of 2009 would have a long list of projects to begin and improvements to implement immediately, and

WHEREAS, Multiple universities such as Missouri University of Science & Technology, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, the University of Kansas, Kansas State University, the University of Colorado at Boulder, the University of Texas at Austin, Arizona State University, Duke University, Harvard University, Illinois State University, Michigan State University, Ohio State University, Oregon State University, University of Arkansas, and Washington University have a sustainability coordinator or director position and a sustainability office, and

WHEREAS, Many of these sustainability positions and offices were established before 2006, and

WHEREAS, This shows that the University of Missouri is behind other universities in terms of leadership for sustainability issues, and

WHEREAS, Sustainability student groups such as Sustain Mizzou, the Student Energy Conservation Society, Emerging Green Builders, MU Environmental Science Club, Weatherization 4 Winds, Tigers for Tigers, and Greeks Going Green have taken on numerous projects throughout the years and have even assisted in writing sustainability grants for the University of Missouri, such as the RMI grant, and

WHEREAS, Students should work towards improving sustainability on campus, but it should not be the primary responsibility of students to improve sustainability on campus due to their competing priorities with class work and their high turnover rate, and

WHEREAS, This responsibility should fall upon the coordinator as an institutionalized entity within the campus administration to ensure consistency, growth, improvement, and continued education regarding sustainability, and

WHEREAS, Students have stressed the need for a sustainability coordinator position for a great deal of time, and a sustainability coordinator could work with each of these student groups on a regular basis and serve as a general educational resource for students, and

WHEREAS, The coordinator would act as the primary contact for sustainability questions and be the main agent in promoting and improving the sustainability initiatives already in place on campus, and

WHEREAS, In 2007 Solid Waste and Recycling saved $95,584 by recycling material from campus, in the Environmental Affairs Committee’s 2006 Report of the Impact of Campus Activities on the Environment Energy Management reported saving $3.8 million during FY 2006, and Environmental Health and Safety’s chemical recycling efforts resulted in cost avoidance of $136,500 during FY 2006, and
WHEREAS, A sustainability coordinator should also work closely with the Solid Waste/Recycling coordinator to help save the university more money in the long run, yet a sustainability coordinator should not replace the Solid Waste/Recycling coordinator position, and

WHEREAS, The coordinator’s salary should be approximately $55,000 in order to be competitive with other universities in the nation, and a coordinator’s yearly budget should increase that amount by another $5,000 to pay for office supplies and travel to conferences, and

THEREFORE, Be it resolved that the Graduate Professional Council strongly urges the University of Missouri administration to fund a sustainability coordinator position and office, and

THEREFORE, be it further resolved that the administration hires a sustainability coordinator no later than Fall of 2009.

Respectfully Submitted,

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