

Sustainable  
Development  
Action Group



UNIVERSITÉ  
**BISHOP'S**  
UNIVERSITY



## **Sustainable Development Student Intern (SDSI) Final Report and Recommendations 2017-2018**

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Throughout the 2017-2018 academic year, the Bishop's University community has made great progress in promoting environmental sustainability. Bishop's University is fortunate enough to find itself situated in the confluence of the Massawippi and St-Francis rivers, the epitomes of the unparalleled beauty within the Eastern Townships of southern Québec, and with this, comes the responsibility to practice good stewardship of our land through sustainable innovations. Once again, our close-knit community here at Bishop's has proven to be our strongest asset in promoting sustainable initiatives. Immense amounts of progress have been made in the 2017-2018 year and we expect this trend to continue as more sustainable initiatives on campus benefit from the Green Levy. However, despite the exceptional momentum that we have gained towards creating a more environmentally sustainable campus, it is paramount that we remain humble in our achievements and aspire for greater accomplishments in the future. In the aspirations of becoming a role model amongst our peers for sustainable development in higher education.

# SDSI Final Report and Recommendations 2017-2018

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## Section 1: Overview

### 1.a. Overview of activities during the 2017-2018 academic year

During the 2017-2018 year, the current SDSI has participated in, and coordinated many sustainability projects and awareness-raising events with the help of Residences and Conferences services, the Student Representative Council (SRC) and the Bishop's University Environmental Club as well as the newly-ratified Agro-Bishop's Club. The SDSI is endowed with the responsibility of reviewing and presenting Green Levy project proposals to the Sustainable Development Action Group (SDAG). In the 2017-2018 year, four projects have been approved, one is currently under review and two have been refused funding. The sustainable procurement coordinator at the Université de Sherbrooke was contacted to gather information regarding the reporting framework for Eco-Entreprise, and the required information was collected by coordinating with several departments and relevant stakeholders for the declaration. This year, the SDSI has participated in and presented at two Sustainable development Committee meetings at Bishop's University, and one meeting with the *Réseau Universitaire Québécois en Développement Durable* (RUQDD) at Trois Rivières. This year the Waste Management Program was of paramount importance. The goal of the characterization of residual waste on Bishop's Campus was to identify what specific locations require attention for promoting proper waste disposal. The data collected from the residual waste characterization will be used in the implementation of programs that will aid in the acquisition of waste management certifications and sustainability recognition in international reporting frameworks for higher-education. The characterization of residual waste done in accordance to the framework presented by the *Conseil régional de l'Environnement de l'Éstrie*.

## Section 2. Raising awareness

### 2.a. Raising awareness about the SDAG and sustainability at Bishop's

The awareness raising aspect of the SDSI internship is paramount for generating interest in the student body to pursue sustainability projects on campus through the use of the Green Levy Fund. Last year, there was a struggle to promote the Green Levy since there were several changes within the SDAG. As of this year, a clear and effective framework has been established and working throughout the 2017-2018 year which allowed for the promotional and awareness raising activities to be focused on. Planning of events began in August 2017, when the current SDSI reached out to Nate Beech, the president of the Bishop's University Environmental Club. The planning resulted in the successful co-operation and execution of both Orientation week 2017 and ECO-week 2018 organized by the SDSI and the Environmental Club. Through these events, it was possible to promote sustainability and promote student use of the Green Levy Fund. Funding via the Green Levy was also provided to orientation coordinators within the Environmental club to run sustainable-alternatives to limit the use of non-reusable plastics during orientation-week games.

SDSI business cards were made and given out at the local restaurant L'Original during an Orientation event where hundreds of students were informed about the Green Levy fund, its purpose of promoting sustainability and how to contact the SDSI. L'Original is ran by Bishop's Alumni Elizabeth Clements whom only uses locally grown and organic produce and was chosen as the prime venue for talking to students because of the affinity that the SDSI and Mrs.Clements shared for sustainability and a mutual understanding of the benefits for promoting local, eco-friendly businesses.

Sustainability events on campus include the co-running of Eco-week in February 2018. Making room reservations for the screening of the documentary "Before the Flood" by climate change activist; Leonardo DiCaprio. This documentary was screened in the Nichols building during EcoWeek2018, for any students that have a profound interest for climate change. The SDSI also had the fortunate opportunity to have a snapchat takeover on the Bishop's University official snapchat channel for the first day of EcoWeek2018. The snapchat takeover granted massive

exposure to the entire Bishop's Community. This allowed for the promotion of the sustainable development action group, the sustainable development student intern position and the initiatives both by the SDAG and the bishops environmental club that were happening on campus. Including the SDAG's past initiatives such as the water bottle ban on campus. During the fall semester of 2017, the SDSI also wrote two articles for the University blog. Now available on the campus website at the following links; <http://blog.ubishops.ca/do-you-know-the-green-levy-fund/>  
<http://blog.ubishops.ca/sustainable-initiatives-at-bishops-university/>

### Section 3: Networking

#### 3.a. Sustainability initiatives within the Maple League

Over the course of summer 2017, the SDSI reached out to all of the universities within the Maple League which consists of Bishop's University, Acadia, Mount Allison and Saint Francis-Xavier University. All interviews were done on the phone with the corresponding sustainability representatives of each partner university within the Maple League. The interview, written by the SDSI, consisted of 9 questions;

1. Do you have a recorded (written down) waste management policy that we could take a look at?
2. Do you have a Recycling/Composting/Garbage system and if so, how extensive is it?
3. Does the campus have a way of measuring waste? How much of your waste is diverted from landfills?
4. Is there any student/staff involvement in the maintenance of any facet of your program?  
ex: Volunteer students run the recycling program?
5. Have you done any promotional/educational campaigns to encourage proper use of the waste systems? Can you offer any examples, of successful or unsuccessful programs?
6. Have you done any work to not just recycle waste, but to reduce general consumption?
7. Have you noticed any actions that improved the efficiency and/or effectiveness of the programs (Best Practices)?
8. What do you do with your food waste? Have you systems to reduce food waste?

9. What are their involvement with the STARS program if any? Is there an interest in incorporating the STARS program throughout the Maple League?

It was found through the interviews with the three universities that they have all strived to implement new initiatives. Acadia University has been focusing on the implementation of a tray-less dining program and having educational campaigns such as their annual waste reduction week and Heap day event to raise awareness of waste generated on their campus and how it can be mitigated. Acadia has also been using STARS in the past as a benchmark for identifying aspects of sustainability practices on their campus, which could be improved, however, they are not a full reporter for the programme at this time.

Mount Allison University has many student-led initiatives including “Blue for Recycle”, a program where students have reached out to a local bottle depot company where participating student receive money back from bottles collected throughout their campus. Mount Allison has a tray free cafeteria. They also have an on-site composting system and student club which uses the compost that is generated on the campus and used for local community gardens. Mount Allison was not aware of the STARS sustainability rating framework for higher education.

St-FX University has made progress in the way of sustainability. They have recently started a sustainability campaign to raise awareness, largely in the form of posters that are hung around the campus. The tips on the posters include unplugging devices to avoid phantom load power, turning off lights, shortening showers, reducing brightness on computer monitors, using less paper towel, etc. Furthermore, all the dining spots on St-FX campus offer discounts to those who bring reusable mugs or reusable bottles. In addition, they have implemented solar panels and changing the defaults of all office computers for sustainable (energy efficient) solutions. St-FX had no comment to make regarding their intentions to adopt the STARS sustainability rating framework at this time.

#### Recommendations:

It is recommended that the next SDSI reach out to the Universities within the Maple League to follow up on any initiatives that they may have implemented within the past year. Reaching out and conducting these interviews also has the added benefit of reinforcing the relationship that Bishop’s University has within the other members of the Maple League.

### 3.b. Sustainability initiatives within the RUQDD

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017, the SDSI attended a meeting with the Réseau Universitaire Québécoise en Développement Durables at the University de Québec à Trois Rivières. During this meeting, residual waste management, Eco-Entreprise, Carbon neutrality and the STARS program were discussed. It is recommended that the next SDSI also attend these meetings as a means of having a broader perspective by listening to the work in the way of environmental sustainability, which is being implemented in other Québec Universities.

## Section 4: Waste Management Program

### 4.a. Objectives and methodology

Due to set backs and lack of volunteers, the characterization of the waste that is generated on the Bishop's campus has been postponed last year. On October 10<sup>th</sup> 2017, with the help of 7 volunteers recruited by the SDSI, and the Conseil Régional de l'Environnement de l'Estrie, the first characterization of the residual waste generated on Bishop's campus was a success. An informal PowerPoint presentation was given to all of the volunteers and SDSI on October 6<sup>th</sup> 2017. Tools. The tools required for the characterization process was provided by the Conseil Régional de l'Environnement the day of the characterization. The key characterization locations on campus were; Dewhurst Dining Hall, Patterson Residence as well as the Student Union Building. The proposed methodology was to open and characterize 10% of the total volume of waste per site.

### 4.b. Observations

Immediately after the characterization was finished, all the members regrouped at the Student Union Building and reported their findings as well as returned their borrowed equipment from the CREE. It was found that amongst all the characterized sites, the amount of compostable organic waste in the garbage bags behind the Paterson Building was the highest of the three characterized locations (45%) despite the presence of an easily accessible composting bin outside, within ten meters of the trash container. The results obtained by this study highlighted the need for a composting program to be implemented within the residences of Bishop's University.

#### 4.c. Sustainable Development Assistants at Patterson Residence

The SDA program is meant to facilitate the incorporation and maintenance of a low-cost, volunteer-based composting program at the on-campus residences. The SDA's responsibility is to ensure the cleanliness of the floor(s) for which they are responsible, promoting environmental sustainability, as well as informing students of the three-disposal system (garbage, compost and recycling) which are already available at Patterson. The SDAs are required to work a total of 5 hours per week. The SDA volunteers are to be compensated for their hours of work with the recognition of their volunteer hours through the Leadership and Extra Curricular Activity Profile program (L.E.A.P). SDAs are to report to the SDSI and Residence and Conferences Student Life Coordinator on a bi-weekly basis to confirm hours completed and eligibility for the L.E.A.P accreditation. A sign-up sheet for 44 small countertop composting bins has been filled by residents at the Paterson residence during the first day of EcoWeek2018 with the help of the Paterson residence's Eco-Floor R.A; Joshua Hoekstra. The Green Levy fund application to acquire the 44 counter-top composting bins was approved and the bins have been purchased and are currently in storage in Paterson. The SDA composting program is set to launch in September 2018, lead by the next SDSI.

#### 4.d. Recommendations

It is to be noted for future reference that the teams of volunteers must take photos of the entire characterization process and not forget to characterize the recycling containers. The next SDSI should make an exceptional effort to assist in the management and maintenance of the waste management program as well as act as resource person for all SDA volunteers. Additionally, the SDSI should provide educational material and/or resources to aid SDA educational activities at the Paterson residence.

## Section 5: Éco Entreprise Québec

### 5.a. Completed tasks

In Québec, companies or institutions that place containers, packaging and printed matter on the market are responsible for financing the municipal recycling services that collect these materials. Several departments within Bishop's University were contacted to discern who creates promotional printed material or packaging, which falls under the list of materials to take into consideration for EEQ.

### 5.b. Recommendations

It is recommended that the next SDSI make this one of his first priorities during the summer months because it is a very time-consuming process. Finding physical copies of all printed material that falls under the relevant list of materials for the EEQ report is not an easy task. The next SDSI should coordinate with involved departments at Bishop's to have a pre-determined date every summer where all the needed material can be sent to the SDSI in advance make the process quicker.

## Section 6: Green Levy Fund

### 6.a. Applications

In the 2017-2018 year, we have received 7 project proposals for the Green Levy Fund. Out of the 7 that were proposed, 4 were approved, 1 is conditionally approved, and 2 projects were refused funding from the Green Levy Fund. Amongst the projects that were approved for funding using the Green levy, these include the 44 compost bins for the Paterson residence that will be used in the next phase of the Waste Management Program. This program is reinforced by the newly created SDA volunteer program. Another approved project is the purchase of compostable red solo cups for the Bishop's University Environmental Club, who used the cups during their Orientation activities in September 2017. The Conference and residences services also ceded funding from the Green Levy for the purchase of 8 new 21-speed lightweight bicycles. Which were purchased from Sport-transaction in Sherbrooke at a discounted rate. Provisionary repair and maintenance fees were also taken out of the Green Levy in support of this project as it presents a healthy and

sustainable alternative to driving to campus for the Bishop's community. Finally, the fourth project to cede funding during the 2017-2018 academic year was Bishop's Bees. Bishop's Bees is a beekeeping project located on campus and originally started by a Bishop's student as a Build a Better Purple fund project, they have seen great success since their beginnings in 2015 and have quickly grown to one of the most popular SRC clubs on campus. Their honey is sold at the Doolittles bookstore on campus and they recently made an application to the Green Levy to expand their project by starting a fundraiser. For their fundraiser, they will be purchasing Nelgente BPA-free, reusable water bottles and selling them at the Doolittles bookstore. Profits will be used to reimburse the amount loaned to Bishop's Bees by the Green Levy. Additionally, the managers of Bishop's Bees have agreed to host open events for the students at Bishop's, to educate the community about the ecological implications of bee conservation and the role of pollinators as perpetuators of ecosystem health. The total amount of funds used for the 4 approved projects comes out to a grand total of \$5,821.98 CAD. The project that has been conditionally approved by the SDAG is the Community Fridge project proposed by Camie LeMarche, a Bishop's University alumni. She proposed this project on the premises that food waste has serious economic, environmental and social consequences that society is only starting to address. A community fridge on campus will benefit the well-being of Bishop's students and staff both mentally and physically. In addition, a community fridge will reduce food insecurity within our student body and will help them get access to food on a regular basis. Her project is currently being reviewed by buildings and grounds department and granted approval, could be implemented as early as Orientation week 2018.

## 6.b. Recommendations

Through the process of approving and ceding funding for the above-mentioned projects, one problem that reoccurred frequently was the lack of detailed budgets with applications to cede Green Levy funding. Erin Mallory, the SRC's liaison for the Green Levy, needs to have an original invoice or confirmation of the amount that the project will cost. Preferably provided by the companies that the equipment, services or material will be purchased from.

## Section 7: Gaiter Gears

### 7.a. Program reinstatement and ownership solution

Biking is one of the most sustainable modes of traveling. Instead of driving out to Sherbrooke or North Hatley, students and other members of the Bishop's community can now choose this more environmentally friendly alternative with the Gaiter Gears program. Biking will allow them to discover this region in a new and more intimate way through the multitude of trails that pass through Lennoxville. The Gaiter Gears program presents an exceptionally well organized and sustainable alternative for the student body that live on the Bishop's University campus. Enabling them to travel into the downtown Lennoxville borough or to any of the other areas in Sherbrooke. The Eastern Townships offers an immense amount of bike paths that are open to the public. A grand total of 125 square kilometers of bike trail is available for student leisure and enjoyment through the Grandes Fourches bike path network. The Grande Fourches' bike path network is amongst the largest and most complete bike path networks within the whole province of Québec.

The Gaiter Gears program was initiated in 2010 using the Green Levy fund by a Bishop's student in the past, however lack of maintenance and the bikes being at the end of their lifetime resulted in a temporary shut down of the program until these new bikes were purchased from sports transaction in winter 2018. During the winter semester of 2018, The SDSI participated and assisted in the coordination of several meetings with several stakeholders. Including; Ms Karine Boutin, the Facilities Manager at Residence and Conference Services, Ms. Deborah Langford the Director Residence & Conference Services, Ms Ann-Catherine Lemonde, the former Residence Life Coordinator and Stephanie Thomas, the SRC general operations manager. With this team, the SDSI, SRC and Residence and Conferences services were able to solve the ownership details about the Gaiter Gears program. It was decided to transfer all responsibilities of the management of Gaiter Gears and storing the equipment with the Residences and Conferences services. The SRC collects profits for the bike rental program and helps the Residence and Conferences coordinator repair and pay repair bills. Due to there being a new SDSI every year, Residence and Conferences

will now be responsible for storing the bikes and making sure they are out in time for the first warm days to maximize profits.

## 7.b. Recommendations

It is recommended that the next SDSI stay in touch with Conferences and residences services to maintain a good relationship and remain involved in the Gaiter Gears program. With the re-instatement of this bike rental program, there are new possibilities to organize fundraising events and health and environmental awareness events. The next SDSI is strongly encouraged to reach out to the current Residence Life coordinator, Ms. Kirstin Robinson.

## Section 8: Agro-Bishop's

### 8.a. Ratification of Agro-Bishop's club and potential projects

During the 2017-2018 year, the SDSI reached out to Arthi-Erika Jeyamohan, the former president of the Agro-Bishop's SRC club to get the project started again. Agro-Bishops was initially a Green levy fund application for a community garden which was ultimately refused due to concerns from Buildings and Grounds department and regarding produce quality and SODEXO clauses. This year, Agro-Bishop's was reinvented into an SRC club that focuses on creating a sustainable food initiative at Bishop's University through partnerships with local organic-certified farms. With the collaboration that AgroBishop;s had with local organic markets, Arthi was able to organize the deliveries of several Veggie baskets to the Diversity centre of the Student Union Building. The main goal is project is to create an innovative and eco-friendly alternative for students on campus. Inadvertently encouraging the consumption of sustainable and affordable alternatives to overpriced grocery store produce. This initiative simultaneously reduces food insecurity amongst the Bishop's University community. Agro-Bishop's has agreed to co-manage the community Fridge Green Levy Project with the Bishop's University Environmental Club if the project is approved by Buildings and Grounds department. Since Arthi has graduated this year, the new contact person for Agro-Bishop's in the upcoming year is Michaela Norgren, and can be contacted via email at:

[mnorgren15@ubishops.ca](mailto:mnorgren15@ubishops.ca)

## 8.b. Recommendations

It is highly recommended that the next SDSI communicate with Michaela Norgen to ensure that the duties for the general maintenance of the Community Fridge project are included in the mandate of the Agro-Bishop's club for the upcoming year. And to establish an effective communications plan, ready to be implemented the week preceding Orientation week 2018 if the project is approved by Buildings and Grounds.

## Section 9: Sustainable Food Systems and Agriculture B.A and B.Sc by Dr. Bardati

### 9.a. Sustainable Food Systems and Agriculture courses.

As of Spring 2018, Dr. Darren Bardati, a full professor and chairperson for the department of Environmental Studies and Geography has finished the program proposal for Sustainable Food Systems and Agriculture courses. This new program, if approved, will be offered as both a Bachelor of Arts degree and Bachelor of Science with integrated internships at local farms. With this program, Dr. Bardati would have a farm built on Bishop's University property. The two programs would integrate courses that are currently offered in the Biology department, and Environmental studies and Geography. It would also include multiple new Sustainable Agriculture courses specific to this program. The program syllabus is currently being reviewed by the Board of Governors of Bishop's University. A decision will be made by December 2018 regarding the approval of this program. It is highly encouraged that the next SDSI stay in contact with Dr. Bardati regarding this program as it will greatly attribute to the sustainability of Bishop's as a whole and has the potential to be of great importance for obtaining environmental sustainability certifications in the near future.

## Section 10: STARS Sustainability Rating Framework

### 10.a. Description of the framework

The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) is a self-reporting framework by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education, created for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. The rating that the participating universities acquire using this program is dependent on multiple factors, and is made

public on the AASHE stars website. Accreditation comes in four different levels of distinction (from lowest to highest) which are Bronze, Silver, Gold and finally the highest STARS rating, Platinum. Institutions can also opt to be a reporter. Which allows for institutions to report their sustainability initiatives for free but are not rated. Research was conducted by the SDSI in the summer of 2017 and again in the Spring of 2018 to discern what information would need to be collected from the multiple departments of Bishop's University to become a reporter, or to become a member in the STARS program. It was found that STARS is organized into five main categories; Academics (AC), Engagement (EN), Operations (OP), Planning & Administration (PA) and an optional fifth category; Innovation & Leadership (IN). Each category contains two or more subcategories which define specific sustainability impact areas. For example, the Academics category contains the Curriculum and Research subcategories.

## 10.b. Implementation plan

There are two methods that can be used in approaching this project. Either become a STARS reporter for free, or pay to have the full membership to the STARS program which would cost approximately \$1,742.00 initially, and then cost \$875.00 for annual re-subscriptions provided that the subscription is renewed/purchased prior to, or within 90 days of expiration. Funding for the membership could be used by the Green Levy fund. The difference between being a reporter and becoming a full member of the STARS program is the ability to export data pertaining to the STARS rating system to be used internally. Bishop's, if we became a full member, would also have AASHE staff support, and be able to distinguish ourselves with global recognition for sustainability efforts (bronze, silver, gold or platinum). Bishop's University could also benefit from the AASHE's social media platforms as well as obtain a mention in AASHE's annual Sustainable Campus Index.

With the basic access, Bishop's University can be evaluated on the points system in various areas of interest regarding sustainable development. It would also be possible to use the STARS Reporting Tool to evaluate what are Bishop's University's strengths and identify areas that require improvement. However, as a reporter, Bishop's University will have no access to the data that is shared by other universities whom are members of the AASHE's STARS program. Université Laval and McGill University are both members who have attained Gold recognition within this

program. The current SDSI will be working on acquiring information from the relevant stakeholders within Bishop's University during summer of 2018, to eventually be able to report and participate in the aashe STARS program. It has yet to be decided whether Bishop's should become a reporter or become a full member, however the advantages of becoming a full member should be carefully considered, given all the preceding information about the benefits this may entail.

For more information the reporting process can be found at;  
<https://stars.aashe.org/pages/participate/reporting-process.html>