



Sustainable Development Student Intern (SDSI) Final Report and Recommendations

2021-2022

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*This internship is made possible thanks to the generous contributions of the
Elizabeth Harvey Memorial Sustainable Development Fund and the
Kruger Inc. Sustainable Development Internship Fund.*

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1. Summary of Activities

a. The Bishop's University Environmental Club

During the 2020-2021 academic year, I began an impromptu takeover of the Bishop's University (BU) Environmental Club. With in-person activities being prohibited and many of the club leads being in their final year, the club's presence in the Bishop's community had been noticeably lacking. I hoped to renew this presence by taking over the club's social media. I worked hard to increase our following by regularly posting engaging content on our various social media outlets. At the conclusion of contract in 2021, I had almost tripled our following online but had also become the impromptu lead with the graduation of all active club leads. Coming into this academic year, I made it my personal goal to restructure the Environmental Club to ensure its continuation beyond my graduation. Fortunately, I was contacted by a few students who were interested in taking over supplemental executive positions such as social media coordinator and event planner. Danielle Storey and Manu Bissonnette selected as social media coordinator and event planner respectively and would eventually become co-leads in the winter semester. Through my own efforts and support by Ms. Williams, we collectively maintained the Environmental Club's presence and following throughout the year. Although the club was limited by the prohibition of in-person club events for the majority of the year, myself and all club executives continued to promote important environmental initiatives and educational events on campus. These included mobility week, the school's recent fair trade coffee certification, a trash categorization, the BU Community Fridge, Eco-Week 2022, and several educational kiosks.

b. Eco-Week 2022

One of the main events for the year was Eco-Week 2022. As mentioned before, the club was limited in its capacity to put on events due to the prohibition of in-person club events. Nonetheless, Eco-Week was approved as a necessary academic event and was allowed to proceed. Thanks to the organisational tactics of Ms. Williams, planning for Eco-Week started in the Fall semester. In past years, organising Eco-Week has been a rushed, last-minute process resulting in satisfactory execution at best. The early initiation of planning ensured that a large team was put together to

brainstorm ideas and divide tasks accordingly. Entering the winter semester, the team had a good sense of direction and an almost complete schedule. This allowed for development of a social media plan. I dedicated a huge effort in creating content that clearly communicated the schedule of events to our social media community and beyond. The execution of the scheduled events went relatively smoothly and deemed a success. The organisation was key to the success of the execution however there is room for improvement in future Eco-Weeks.

c. The Bishop's University Community Fridge

After being tucked away in storage for the last two years, the BU Community Fridge, the goal of which is for members of the Bishop's community to share fresh food that will not be consumed and would otherwise end up in the garbage, was welcomed back on to campus. I began a weekly routine of stocking the fridge with donations from the well-known local grocery store, *Le Marché 5ieme Saison*. Upon resuming deliveries, the fridge would be quickly emptied within days. Fortunately, I was able to acquire another fridge in the winter semester that increased the quantity of food our fridges could hold. My routine and the fridge's popularity continued until my departure in April. The return of this initiative and its surprising popularity show its potential. Additionally, this the community fridge shows the need for more direct-to-student initiatives.

d. Other Areas of Progress

With this being my fourth and final year, I was limited in my capacity to progress other initiatives. For this reason, I have included a section entirely dedicated to recommendations for future SDSIs. My hope is that this can be used to guide their efforts in the upcoming academic year and beyond.

2. Recommendations

a. Updates to the SDAG & the Green Levy

In my two and half year of being the SDSI Intern, I have led the Sustainable Development Action Group (SDAG)¹ and its associated Green

¹The SDAG is a multi-stakeholder group working towards the promotion and increased awareness of the need for sustainable projects and development on campus. It works to implement ideas and projects concerning sustainable development.

Levy². This year a total of two SDAG meetings occurred. The first was held to discuss how the SDAG could become a more effective tool for enacting positive change at Bishop's. Normally, members of the SDAG have only been called on to allocate the funding of Green Levy applications. There has been an obvious lack of cohesiveness between members of the SDAG as members have tended to work on personal initiatives outside the SDAG rather than working collectively. During this meeting many intriguing suggestions were made as to how this could be achieved. It was concluded that public student forums should be used to inform future SDAG projects and that awareness of the SDAG be increased.

The second meeting was used to provide updates on member projects and delegate funds for two Green Levy applications. I believe there needs to be fundamental changes to the function of the SDAG. Not only do the suggestions of the first meeting need to be integrated, future SDSIs need to create an evaluation grid for Green Levy Applications. This will ensure that all projects are judged fairly, and time will be dedicated to debating the proper usage of the Green Levy. Additionally, I recommend that SDAG meetings that concern Green Levy applications incorporate applicant presentations. I have found that during SDAG meetings where Levy funds are being requested, many members have further questions about the project. Although tasked with leading this process, I found myself lacking enough knowledge of the project to answer specific questions. Incorporating applicant presentations would help members build a better understanding of the project and ensure a more efficient decision-making process.

I believe the SDAG has the potential to be an important body for sustainable development however it has been limited to allocating the Green Levy. Incorporating these changes will help the SDAG conduct itself in a more efficient and effective manner

b. The Gait

1. Recycling

In 2021, the City of Sherbrooke began a voluntary glass recycling pilot project. With support from the sustainable development advisor, I

²The Green Levy is money (\$2.50) taken from student fees each semester, to go towards a fund to complete Sustainability projects on campus.

began a Gait Glass Reduction Project at “The Gait” (the University’s student bar) in an attempt to divert glass bottles from the normal recycling. Upon the resumption of full capacity attendance, I began a weekly routine of sorting through the Gait’s recycling to remove any glass bottles. I would then transport these bottles to one of the pilot project’s recycling bins. During this period, I found the Gait’s recycling practices to be somewhat poor. This issue can easily be resolved by offering training to new Gait staff. The next SDSI should work towards improving the Gait’s recycling practices through training and by providing adequate recycling resources for all Gait Staff. This will require collaboration between the Student Representative Council (SRC), the Gait Managers and the Sustainable Development team.

2. The Gait Sustainability Fund

The Gait has regularly applied to the Green Levy to fund purchases of items such as reusable glassware or compostable cups. It was decided that the Green Levy should not be used to absorb costs that are inherent to the bar. Alternatively, I recommend the establishment of a “Gait Sustainability Fund”. A very small percentage of each beverage purchased would go into a fund that would be used to make environmentally conscious purchases like reusable glassware and compostable cups. Furthermore, this fund could be used to support future upgrades. The SDSI should look to work with the SRC to explore whether such an initiative would be possible.

c. SRC

The SRC plays an extremely important role in fostering positive and sustainable change in the student community. The next SDSI should attempt to work closely with the SRC while continuing to hold them accountable. This can be addressed by working with the SRC Environmental representative, continuing to update the SRC Environmental policy and integrating the Orientation Week Green Initiatives.

d. Eco-Week 2023

Eco-Week 2022 had both its successes and failures. The main area of success was our preparation. In past years, as was mentioned earlier, planning for Eco-Week had been a rushed, last-minute process. This year, planning was initiated early on with the help of the sustainable development advisor. Important stakeholders such as the SRC environmental

representative, the Environmental Club's executive team and the Boralex intern, were gathered to help brainstorm ideas and plan events. Planning well in advance also allowed for the development of a social media calendar. This was another highlight of this past Eco-Week. A huge effort was dedicated to communicating the event via social media to the community. Nonetheless, attendance to Eco-Week events was low. This is an area that must be improved as this should be a main event for the University.

For Eco-Week 2023, I recommend that the planning process should begin early on so as to allow for changes and appropriate promotion. During the planning process, specific events should attempt to be engaging and where possible, incentivised. During Eco-Week 2021, the Environmental Club offered chances to win environmentally friendly prizes for participating in online events. This had a noticeable impact on attendance. In general, events must compel students and staff to want to take time out of their day to attend them. For example, this might mean avoiding guest lectures. Although these can be very interesting, it is unlikely that a student who has spent most of their day in lectures will want to attend another lecture. This of course can be avoided if a very influential lecturer is brought in (for example Donald Lecture Series guest Jane Goodall) or lectures are made mandatory for classes. The SDSI and other Eco-Week planners should also attempt to engage and notify teachers of events so they can pass on this information to their students. Eco-Week should aim to engage the entire Bishop's community, not just the student community.

e. The Bishop's University Community Fridge

The return of the BU Community Fridge has been immensely successful. The next SDSI should continue routine weekly deliveries. This can be done by making a phone call to *Le Marché 5ieme Saison* and requesting a donation box. The SDSI should also work on engaging more food suppliers like Provigo or Sodexo. This would help respond to the consistent demand for food by community fridge supporters. Once relationships with more suppliers have been developed, the SDSI should work with the sustainable development advisor to add another fridge to the community fridge collection.

f. The Bishop's University Environmental Club

It has been my longstanding goal to grow the BU Environmental Club. I have managed to get it to a better place but there is still much work to be done to unlock the full potential of the BU Environmental Club. The next SDSI should continue to support the club's executive team through collaboration and effective planning. One of the most significant aspects of the environmental club that is lacking is events. The SDSI and the executive team should take time to develop a semesterly or yearly events calendar. Events should be engaging, incentivised where possible and in collaboration with other clubs and student groups at Bishop's. These include but are not limited to the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems (SAFS) Club, Bishop's Bees, the Outdoors Club, the Vegan Club, the Doolittles Co-op, other academic clubs, and university sports teams.

g. Orientation Week Environmental Initiatives

During the 2022/2023 Orientation Week, the Eco-Tour will be an interactive event similar to traditional academic tours. We intend this event to be mandatory for all incoming students and orientation week participants as a way to familiarize students with environmental initiatives happening on campus. The tour will be led by leaders who will take their groups to different stations around campus. Each station will have a judge on standby where they will have a brief script that will inform visitors about the details pertinent to the location. Some of the stations will also have interactive games. Ideally, after rotating through all the stations, the groups would end at Club Day where student could engage with clubs that have some relationship to the environment such as the BU Outdoors Club, the BU Environmental Club and the SAFS Club. The next SDSI should continue to work with the SRC, the Director of Events and Vice-Principal of Student Affairs, Dr. Linden-Andersen to ensure the Orientation Week environmental initiatives are correctly implemented.

3. Conclusion & Thanks

It has been an honor to be the SDSI here at Bishop's for the last two and a half years. I would like to thank both Josée Lamoureux and Laurence Williams for supporting me throughout this past year. This position has taught me a lot and for that I am grateful to the Elizabeth Harvey Memorial Sustainable Development Fund and the Kruger Inc. Sustainable Development Internship Fund.

I would also like to thank my fellow students Danielle Storey, Manu Bissonnette, Ariane Horrall, Tanya O'Reilly and everyone who has worked with me in the past few years. You have all helped me further sustainable development here at Bishop's. I wish good luck to those attempting to improve Bishop's in the realm of sustainable development and beyond.