

# **Institutional Sustainable Development Policy**

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Prepared by	The Office of the Vice-Rector for Executive and Development
Revised by	The Office of the Vice-Rector for Executive and Development
Approved by	The Board of Governors
Legal framework	Université Laval Charter, article 3; Université Laval Statutes, articles 67, paragraphs 1 and 3; 106, paragraph 6; and 147, paragraph 2



## **Foreword**

As an important player in Québec society, Université Laval (hereafter referred to as “the University”) is directly concerned by the numerous challenges that sustainable development represents for the University

- (i) As a place for developing competent and responsible individuals who contribute to society;
- (ii) As a source of new knowledge and innovation;
- (iii) As a social and economic institution involved in its community; and
- (iv) As a living environment for tens of thousands of people.

Imbued since its beginnings with this sense of corporate and civic responsibility, the University wishes to continue acting to preserve and improve the quality of life of its members without compromising that of people outside the University community or of the generations to come. Faced with the important environmental, social, cultural and economic issues raised by sustainable development, the University’s aims include

- (i) Continuing to offer a high-quality academic education and cutting-edge research activities in all fields of knowledge;
- (ii) Ensuring the sustainability of its activities and reducing its ecological footprint by applying sound operating, management and governance practices; and
- (iii) Promoting an exchange of expertise on the regional, national and international scenes and contributing to the development of innovative approaches in the area of sustainable development.

This has been the University’s perspective while putting in place the sustainable development policy outlined herein, with the goal of building, for and with its members, a sustainable and responsible future, reflecting a concern for equity both within and across the generations.

## **1. Objectives**

The University’s Sustainable Development Policy is designed to

- 1.1 Ensure that the institutional actions established in the area of sustainable development are comprehensive and effective, in conjunction with its members and its various local and regional partners, in accordance with all institutional policies and regulations and respecting the laws in force.
- 1.2 Foster among members of the University community an adherence to the values of sustainable development and an appropriation of the Policy and its objectives, so as to elicit their engagement through concrete action.

- 1.3 Call upon the rigour, audacity and creativity of all members of the University community in such a way that these forces are reflected in sustainable achievements in its teaching, learning, research and knowledge-transfer activities, as well as in its community and student life, current operations and campus development.
- 1.4 Help solve problems connected with sustainable development in the University community and society as a whole while helping the University become a leader in the area.
- 1.5 Guide the University in its choice of actions to implement its sustainable development strategy and reach its objectives.

## 2. Definitions

### 2.1 *University activity*

All research, teaching, evaluation or internship activity; all school-related or extracurricular meetings of any sort whatsoever; as well as any other activity connected with the work of members of the University community, held on the University premises for the benefit of members of the University community, excluding businesses or firms operating on the University campus. The Policy is also applicable to any activity that may be held outside the University, so long as it is connected with a University activity.

### 2.2 *Sustainable development*

Sustainable development is *development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs*.<sup>1</sup> At the University it is expressed through the sustainability of the quality of life of individuals and their communities and is established through a balance between efforts invested in the living environment (environment), lifestyle (society) and standard of living (economy).

The aim of sustainable development is that the interaction and complementarity of social, economic and environmental issues be taken into account by governments, organizations and individuals in their decision-making procedures, as well as through the applications and actions that result from such procedures.

### 2.3 *University space*

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<sup>1</sup> World Environment and Development Commission, *Report of the World Environment and Development Commission, Our Common Future (Brundtland Report)*, 1987.

Any building, piece of land, office or room for which the University is responsible pursuant to a right of property, lease or special agreement, as well as any other space where a University activity is held. This term also refers to a space where, for the benefit of members of the University, a University activity takes place outside of the actual University premises so long as the said activity has a link with the place of work or study of any member of the University.

#### 2.4 *Members of the University community*

Members of the University, users of services offered by the University, as well as organizations, businesses and firms operating on the University campus, are referred to as members of the University community.

#### 2.5 *Members of the University*

Any individual qualifying as a member of the University as defined in Book II of the *Université Laval Statutes*.

### **3. Field of application**

The present Policy applies to all of the University's administrative, teaching and research units, as well as to members of the University community.

The University applies the Policy as part of its mission, within the limits of its field of action and while respecting the laws and regulations in force.

### **4. Guiding principles**

#### 4.1 *Contribution to the community and to society as a whole*

By being rooted in the community and through the contribution of its teaching, learning and research activities, the University helps to manage the present and to conceive of the future in a sustainable manner. The University takes on a leadership position in the area of sustainable development and participates in the progress of both its own community and society as a whole, in conjunction with its many partners.

The University wishes to serve as a testing ground for sustainable development, where it invites the collaboration of society's various actors for the purposes of testing and implementing new approaches, technologies or practices.

#### 4.2 *Institutional pledge with respect to sustainable development*

The planning and institutional strategic objectives of the University take into account its commitment to act in a sustainable manner, with a view to ensuring its own viability, the flourishing of its members, and a respect for and fulfilment of its mission.

#### *4.3 Understanding, commitment and participation*

The sustainable development process is based on an understanding, on the part of members of the University community, of the various economic, social and environmental issues at stake, on their commitment to the approach put forward by the University, and on their participation in the actions implemented as the Policy is applied.

Moreover, appeals to the expertise of members of the University community, wherever such expertise is to be found, is encouraged as a means of evaluating a given problem and of proposing solutions. If and when this expertise is lacking, its development is promoted.

#### *4.4 Creativity, innovation and analysis*

Improving current procedures and practices, innovation, and creativity in management practices and operations are the cornerstones of sustainable development and are constantly being prioritized and developed.

#### *4.5 Protecting, promoting and developing heritage*

Protecting, promoting and developing the natural, built, cultural and intellectual heritage of the University are part of a sustainable development perspective.

#### *4.6 Health and quality of life*

All individuals are stakeholders of sustainable development and, as such, maintaining and improving their health and quality of life is an essential concern.

#### *4.7 Efficient and responsible use of resources*

The acquisition, production, use and disposal of the resources required for the smooth functioning of University activities must all be devised in an efficient manner and in such a way as to reduce their ecological footprint and unfavourable impact on the community environment to a minimum.

#### *4.8 Continual improvement*

The University undertakes regular assessments of its institutional performances in the area of sustainable development and aims at continual performance improvement.

#### *4.9 Acquisition and transfer of knowledge on sustainable development*

The University aims to maintain and enhance its ability to develop and acquire knowledge on sustainable development, disseminate, teach and transfer such knowledge to the University community and society and apply such knowledge to its operations and living environment.

The University aims to be a forum for learning and acquiring the skills and competencies individuals need to be agents of change with respect to sustainable development.

## **5. Lines of intervention**

### 5.1 Governance and integration of the sustainable development initiative into institutional guidelines

- 5.1.1 Take into account sustainable development and its issues when developing and applying strategic institutional guidelines so as to make them an intrinsic value of the University community.
- 5.1.2 Collaborate with the University's various partners to promote a sustainable development approach and invite them to consider the University a testing ground for experimenting with and implementing new approaches, technologies or practices.
- 5.1.3 Educate members of the University community about sustainable development issues and encourage them to get involved in promoting sustainable development, carrying out projects and taking individual and collective action in this regard.

### 5.2 Sustainable development training and knowledge transfer

- 5.2.1 Foster the integration of sustainable development concepts into the University's training and learning activities and student projects.
- 5.2.2 Promote the dissemination and transmission of knowledge on sustainable development to members of the University community and the community.
- 5.2.3 Encourage the acquisition, conversion and application of knowledge on sustainable development in the University's operations and in the development of the University living environment.

### 5.3 Research and innovation in sustainable development

- 5.3.1 Encourage research in the various fields of knowledge involving sustainable development to promote innovative ideas and applications related to its issues.
- 5.3.2 Promote the introduction of research practices inspired by the Policy's objectives and principles.

### 5.4 University's standard of living and operations

- 5.4.1 Preserve the University's long term economic viability through responsible and efficient management, promoting the use of existing resources, developing a distinctive value in its training, research and innovation activities and establishing innovative partnerships with the community.

- 5.4.2 Aim at acquiring and using goods and services responsibly by taking into account aspects such as their lifecycle and total costs of ownership so as to minimize their ecological footprint.
  - 5.4.3 Incorporate the notion of sustainable development into the University's plans for the development of natural, built, cultural, land and intellectual heritage.
  - 5.4.4 Incorporate sustainable development criteria into the University's processes for building construction and renovation, building and equipment maintenance and land use planning.
  - 5.4.5 Manage the University's water consumption responsibly.
  - 5.4.6 Properly manage the University's energy consumption by promoting energy efficiency, energy savings and the use of energy sources with low emissions of harmful gases and pollutants.
  - 5.4.7 Limit the amount of greenhouse and other harmful gases emitted by the University and members of the University community so as to ensure optimal air quality while helping reduce the impact of these gases on the environment.
- 5.5 Lifestyle and living environment of the University community
- 5.5.1 Convey the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, a good diet, stress management and exercise to the members of the University community.
  - 5.5.2 Encourage and support the participation of University community members in their different forms of commitment to various social and humanitarian causes at the University and in society.
  - 5.5.3 Promote health and safety and improve the quality of the University's work, study and living environments.
  - 5.5.4 Promote sustainable means of travel among members of the University community.
  - 5.5.5 Promote University actions that provide members of the University community with global outlook and diversity, access to cross-border experiences and contact with sustainable development approaches and practices from outside Québec.
  - 5.5.6 Promote sustainable development as a feature of the University's culture and a value of the University community.



## **6. Policy implementation**

The following actions must be carried out in order for Policy objectives to be reached:

6.1 In conjunction with the various University units concerned, proposing to the University's Executive Committee a set of institutional sustainable development targets linked to the Policy, along with performance indicators designed to measure progress in meeting these targets. To this effect, the Issue Table on Sustainable Development is recognized as the institutional mechanism for consultation during the Policy-implementation process.

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6.2 Presenting the University's Executive Committee with a biennial action plan which allocates, to the greatest extent possible, the human, material and financial resources required to carry out the Policy. The plan is to be drawn up in conjunction with the various units concerned and is intended to present the different actions proposed for reaching institutional targets in the area of sustainable development.

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6.3 Presenting the University's Executive Committee with an annual report demonstrating the progress made towards reaching institutional targets in the area of sustainable development.

6.4 Educating members of the University community concerning the importance of reaching the Policy's objectives.

## **7. Responsibility**

The Vice-Rector for Executive and Development will oversee the application of the Policy.

## **8. Review**

The Policy may be reviewed at any time, if need be. In any case, it will be reviewed on a triennial basis, i.e. every three years from its date of adoption.

## **9. Date of application**

The Policy will enter in force as of the date it is adopted by the University Board of Governors.