Sharing Information on Progress Report
2012-2014
College of Business and Economics
University of Guelph
Message from the Dean

The University of Guelph, in Ontario, Canada, is dedicated to changing lives and improving life through an enhanced understanding of those things that are essential to the quality of life - water, food, environment, health, community, commerce, culture and learning. The University community, including its 22,000 students, shares a profound sense of social responsibility, an obligation to address global issues and a concern for international development.

The College of Business and Economics, one of seven colleges at the University of Guelph, is home to over 3,000 commerce students and 200 graduate students, and 100 talented and dedicated faculty and staff. Our vision is to be and develop leaders for a sustainable world. We do this through our three pillars of transformational learning, research that counts and community engagement. A proud PRME signatory and recent member of the “Champions” group, we are committed to integrating the Principles of Responsible Management Education in our research, teaching and service. I am personally committed to ensuring that the values and intentions behind these principles continue to help define what makes Guelph’s business school unique.

In addition to our involvement with PRME, we are also active participants in the Globally Responsible Leadership Initiative (GRLI). I personally contributed to the development of the 50 + 20 Management Education for the World initiative and serve on the GRLI “Guardian Group”. We are also engaged with Universities Fighting World Hunger, an association whose concerns are consistent with our focus on “the business of food” and oft stated position that business – practiced sustainably - is the sustainable solution to the world’s most pressing problems (including food safety and security). We have also organized many community and academic events on this theme.

We have also embedded PRME across our curriculum (including in seminal introductory courses in both our BComm and MBA programs), as well as developed specialized required and elective courses in sustainable commerce. Most recently we became the first business school in North America to partner with Micro-Tyco, incorporating responsible value creation and micro-financing in the first semester experience for all ~ 800 incoming BComm students. At the graduate level, this spring we are welcoming the first cohort to our MBA in Sustainable Commerce. Students are also encouraged to learn about sustainability and corporate responsibility through community-based consulting projects and student club activities, helping to address issues of importance to organizations in our local community or much further afield.

These and other select initiatives are highlighted in the report that follows. While we are proud of our accomplishments, we realize we still have much to achieve. This is our first SIP since becoming PRME signatories in 2012.

Dr. Julia Christensen Hughes
Dean, College of Business and Economics
The Principles for Responsible Management Education

As institutions of higher education involved in the development of current and future managers we declare our willingness to progress in the implementation, within our institution, of the following Principles, starting with those that are more relevant to our capacities and mission. We will report on progress to all our stakeholders and exchange effective practices related to these principles with other academic institutions:

**Principle 1 | Purpose:** We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

**Principle 2 | Values:** We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

**Principle 3 | Method:** We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

**Principle 4 | Research:** We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

**Principle 5 | Partnership:** We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

**Principle 6 | Dialogue:** We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organisations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

We understand that our own organisational practices should serve as examples of the values and attitudes we convey to our students.
PRME Principle 1 | Purpose:

We will develop the capabilities of students to be future generators of sustainable value for business and society at large and to work for an inclusive and sustainable global economy.

Micro-Tyco

In 2013, the University of Guelph was the first university in North America to introduce the Micro-Tyco business challenge (http://www.wildheartsinaction.org/microtyco/) to our incoming class of 800+ BComm students. Unlike many student competitions, where business plans are judged, in Micro-Tyco the business plans are judged and executed, where real money changes hands.

Starting with $1 of ‘seed capital’, student teams were challenged to take their ideas, operate the business and generate as much real wealth as (legally) possible within one month. At the end of the month, the proceeds generated through the various business initiatives were turned over to the WildHearts Group in Scotland to invest through micro-finance loans, given primarily to women in developing countries “to help the world’s poorest people work their own way out of poverty with dignity and self-respect”.

In this challenge, our students became entrepreneurs to help fund entrepreneurs in the developing world. They were made to think creatively, critically and forced to move out of their comfort zones. They learned and practiced basic business concepts, succeeding in some, failing in others, all the while continuing to learn from their ideas and actions.

The type of learning that takes place through the Micro-Tyco challenge and the efficacy of what it represents on the global stage reflect the core values of our College and University. Our commitment to this unique learning opportunity will most likely evolve from year to year as we seek to engage more people, link into local primary and high schools, and look to support micro-finance initiatives in parts of Canada as well. Overall, as the Micro-Tyco program suggests, this project is about ‘creating compassionate global citizens and inspiring the leaders our world deserves’, which in part is what the College of Business and Economics means by its vision of being and developing ‘Leaders for a Sustainable World’.

PRME Principle 2 | Values:

We will incorporate into our academic activities and curricula the values of global social responsibility as portrayed in international initiatives such as the United Nations Global Compact.

Reflecting our vision, business at Guelph is more than just the theory of the various disciplines that comprise business as a field of study; we take a more holistic approach, look at the bigger picture and prepare the future business leaders the world needs. Starting in 1st year with our Introduction to Business course, our students are challenged to think differently, and explore ethics and efficacy in decision-making. Moving forward, students can then pursue specialist studies in leadership, dig deeper into corporate responsibility and business sustainability, and/or become a business consultant, working with
real world clients through unique business consulting opportunities and our Centre for Business and Social Entrepreneurship.

Our mission is to provide a transformational learning environment that encourages critical reflection, personal growth, community engagement and global awareness, and promotes comprehensive understanding of both traditional and emerging themes in management and economics. We foster social and ethical responsibility and prepare graduates for leadership roles that will improve the effectiveness of their organizations and the well-being of people in Canada and around the world. While many Canadian business schools have begun to appreciate the importance of social and environmental issues in management, the triumvirate of economic, social and environmental concerns, defined more frequently today as ‘sustainability’, have always been central to, and represent the foundation upon which the University of Guelph was originally formed.

PRME Principle 3 | Method:

We will create educational frameworks, materials, processes and environments that enable effective learning experiences for responsible leadership.

Responsible learning and leadership is both fostered and facilitated in the classroom and through a multitude of extra-curricular activities as well. At the graduate level, commencing in 2014, we are launching a new specialist stream in our niche MBA in ‘Sustainable Commerce’. This program will explore what CSR and sustainability mean to an organization, and seek to develop leaders who will inspire positive change in business and society. Key courses include: Sustainable Value Creation; Business Strategies for Sustainability; and Environmental Governance.

In the undergraduate curriculum, we are currently preparing to launch a new ‘Certificate in Sustainability’ which will commence with a general overview of sustainability, examine the three pillars of economy, society and environment from various perspectives, and conclude with a focus on corporate social responsibility as the ‘sustainability’ response from the world of work. In addition, beyond our core business program, we are also partners in an ‘environmental science’ major (environmental economics and policy), which seeks to apply the lens of science and economics to environmental issues. In this program students develop their knowledge and skills to identify, prioritize and solve environmental problems by integrating both scientific and economic realities.

Our Certificate in Leadership presents another opportunity for students (business or otherwise) to develop their understanding and practice of leadership, including 120 hours of documented leadership practice. Much of the learning examines the way in which leadership is represented in our culture and in media and how that shapes individual leaders. The program emphasizes leadership as a mindful, purposeful activity in which leaders are responsible for those they lead and for making the right choices.

As extra-curricular activities, we encourage and support many initiatives, three of which include:

Net Impact

Established in 2009, the Guelph Net Impact Undergraduate Chapter was awarded Silver Chapter status by Net Impact Central in its inaugural year. Today the group has created: a Campus Speaker Series, an
Impact Case Competition, and with the support of a faculty advisor, continues to work with the College to facilitate the advancement of sustainability in the business curriculum and raise awareness about sustainability on campus. In 2012-2013, Guelph finished 4th overall, and 1st for international schools by Net Impact Central. Most recently, the Chapter was active in the “Small Steps, Big Win” global challenge (http://smallsteps.netimpact.org/).

My World, My Choice!

Understanding that environmental, economic, and social well-being are tied together through the choices our communities make every day, ‘My World, My Choice’ is an extra-curricular educational program that teaches students about sustainability and challenges them to grow as leaders in their schools and communities. This program, spearheaded by Professor Lianne Foti, shows them that the choices they make have a lasting impact on our world. Through volunteer initiatives, university students work with local primary schools and has inspired more than 1200 students to create projects designed to help reduce their school’s footprint in ways such as ‘community gardens’, paper and waste management, improved use of school facilities and bottle free lunches.

UGSRP

The University of Guelph Sustainable Restaurant Project (UGSRP), created by Professor Bruce McAdams, is a movement within our hospitality business program that seeks to develop a better understanding of sustainability within the food services sector, including environmental social and economic issues (http://restaurantsustainability.wordpress.com/). For its 3rd annual ‘Sustainability Talk’ in 2013, Professor McAdams, along with guests Robin Poirier of Ocean Wise and Jonathan Bloom, food commentator and author of “American Wasteland”, explored the contemporary issues of food waste, sustainable harvesting and food packaging to a packed house of students, faculty, industry and members of the local community.

PRME Principle 4| Research:

We will engage in conceptual and empirical research that advances our understanding about the role, dynamics, and impact of corporations in the creation of sustainable social, environmental and economic value.

Integral to our mission, we believe in supporting ‘research that counts’, not only in terms of top-class international peer reviewed publications, but also in terms of practical application. We seek to challenge current practice, alter behavior and influence decision-makers to consider alternatives to the status quo. This means not only ensuring that we are pursuing questions of relevance and importance in our disciplines, industries and communities, but also in terms of translation and transference of this knowledge to the classroom, through student research and affecting industry practice.


University of Guelph faculty hosted a workshop in Tanzania on improving social, economic and environmental sustainability in East Africa through research collaboration (http://www.uoguelph.ca/research/guelpheastafrica/about.php). The goal was to strengthen Guelph’s long-standing connections, and to explore multi-stakeholder collaboration models for research and education to help solve critical issues in the region.
First PRME Canada Regional Meeting

In association with colleagues from Concordia University in Quebec and MacEwan University in Alberta, we co-convened the first PRME Canada Regional Meeting in 2013. As a proud signatory to the PRME, the College of Business and Economics is committed to embedding issues of corporate social responsibility and sustainability in our research and teaching, and this meeting presented a unique opportunity to participate and engage in the debate. Both faculty and students from the University of Guelph attended and presented papers.

Research that Counts: Select Publications and Research Grants

For us, research that counts builds on the freedom to explore promising ideas, a broad understanding of historical context, strong theoretical framework and an engagement with business and society to harness the benefits of new knowledge. We are committed to all aspects of the research process. A few examples of our ‘sustainability’ and ‘PRME’ research output and activity over the past couple of years includes:


Selected Sample: Research Grants

• Charlebois, S., Understanding Canada’s Role in Global Food Security, SSHRC Connection Grant

• Londerville, J., Do Landlords Discriminate against Families with Children? SSHRC Institutional Grant, CTG

• Noseworthy, T., How Functional Foods Lead to Over Consumption, SSHRC Insight Grant

PRME Principle 5 | Partnership:

We will interact with managers of business corporations to extend our knowledge of their challenges in meeting social and environmental responsibilities and to explore jointly effective approaches to meeting these challenges.

The College of Business & Economics is committed to engaging in authentic and meaningful partnerships with community members, businesses and associations with whom we share a common vision and
interests. We frequently serve on local, national and international committees, governing bodies and editorial boards, while students engage with the community through applied learning opportunities, student competitions, research projects and volunteerism. Some specific examples of our partnerships include:

**Sustainable Food Strategies**

In 2013, we hosted an event in Toronto on sustainable food systems and the role Canadian business can play in addressing world hunger. The panel discussion was moderated by George Stroumboulopoulos, Canada’s Ambassador against Hunger to the United Nations World Food Programme (WFP). Panellists included Professor Sylvain Charlebois, College of Business and Economics’ Associate Dean (Research), and Professor Evan Fraser, Canada Research Chair in Global Human Security, and Gawaher Atif, WFP’s deputy director of private sector partnerships.

Fraser, a geographer with an interest in food security under economic globalization and climate change, discussed the gravity of the global food crisis and strategies and solutions. Charlebois, an expert in food distribution and policy, talked about positive changes that have already taken place, such as trade and agricultural policies and innovations. The University of Guelph is proud to be known as Canada's food university and strives to be a leader for change within the food industry. At events such as this, we seek to underscore our commitment to developing leaders for a sustainable world, reflecting our belief that business can and should be a powerful force for positive change in the world.

**Garden2Table**

Founded in 2009, Garden2Table is an experiential learning program which pairs University of Guelph students with local primary schools. Each year, an interdisciplinary team of students work on an educational ‘hands on healthy food’ initiative with local school children. Since its inception, over 1000 children have been introduced to organic farming and honey production, alongside learning basic culinary skills as well as simple and healthy alternatives to common processed and packaged foods.

**Sustainability Solutions**

Recently, four graduate students (two from the College of Business and Economics and two from the Department of Integrative Biology) combined their interests in sustainability to learn from each other and gain further insight into their own fields of study. Based on their combined research, a collaborative paper, entitled “Paradox and Dialogue: Ecology, Management and Food Sustainability”, was presented at the Agriculture, Food and Human Value Society Annual Conference. The four originally met through the ‘Sustainability Journal Club’, where they read and explored articles from each other’s disciplines on sustainability. The group quickly realized complex problems such as sustainability require interdisciplinary work, and began to explore where they could harness their individual expertise to bring new insights into this particular area of study.

**Farm to Fork - Applied Community Project**

The goal of this project was to change the way people think about food security in our community by allowing emergency food providers to communicate directly with their donors. Three upper year students developed a marketing strategy to assist in promoting “Farm to Fork” throughout the region, which included defining how best to target and engage core user groups, with a limited communications budget.
**Guelph East Africa Connections: Agriculture and AgriBusiness Workshop, 2014**

Organised and co-facilitated by Guelph business Professor R. Dhalla and Dr. K. Hall, VP (Research and External Partnerships), this workshop created an opportunity for dialogue and potential collaboration on agriculture/agribusiness related issues in East Africa.

**Youth Led Innovation Challenge, 2014**

In partnership with our local enterprise organisation (Innovation Guelph), a group of 46 students worked in teams to co-create a design solution to support youth (ages 18-25) engagement within the community. Topic areas included mental health, skill development, entrepreneurship, education, employment, voting and volunteerism. The topics were chosen in consultation with the local community organizations. The teams had 90 minutes to craft a solution, prepare an elevator pitch, and present their pitch to the group. The team tackling mental health created “Smash the Stigma”, a blog used to inspire conversation, raise awareness and ultimately change the identity of mental illness by encouraging youth to go online and share their story.

**PRME Principle 6| Dialogue:**

We will facilitate and support dialog and debate among educators, students, business, government, consumers, media, civil society organizations and other interested groups and stakeholders on critical issues related to global social responsibility and sustainability.

Faculty in the College of Business and Economics are actively engaged in hosting events that attract stakeholders from a variety of areas and foster cross-disciplinary dialogue and understanding around critical social issues:

- Professor Sara Mann hosted the first Canadian AgHR Roundtable in July 2012 (funded by SSHRC), which included representatives from food and agribusiness organizations as well as academics from across North America and New Zealand to discuss and debate the challenges of human resources management in the global agricultural industry.

- In association with the Campbell Centre for the Study of Animal Welfare, the College of Business and Economics hosted the **Tim Hortons Sustainable Food Management Summit: Animal Welfare and the Restaurant Industry**. The summit provided a forum to discuss the growing movement towards establishing animal welfare and sustainability standards in today’s food system and allowed stakeholders to address the opportunities and challenges for establishing these value chains. The main objectives of the summit were to: provide European and North American perspectives on current and past experiences with trying to establish animal welfare and sustainable value chains; improve the ability of stakeholders to work together in addressing and identifying the challenges of establishing animal welfare and sustainable value chains in today’s food system; and share new research by University of Guelph faculty to gain a better understanding of the science of animal welfare and consumer perceptions of animal welfare and sustainability in food service and retail.

- Professor Miana Plesca, and funded by a SSHRC knowledge synthesis grant, the University hosted a workshop entitled "**Skills and Productivity in the Canadian Economy**". The workshop was designed to facilitate awareness and stimulate discussion regarding the future needs of the Canadian economy with respect to the skills and resulting productivity of the labour force.
The College of Business and Economics hosted a dinner and panel discussion on The Politics of Leadership: Role Models, Media and Corruption. Faculty, a corporate leader, a journalist and the city’s Mayor offered their views on ethical leadership. The audience included students in our MA Leadership program as well as members of the local business community.

Professor Paulette Padanyi held a symposium entitled: Food and Healthcare: Does Local Fit? The symposium was designed to provide government decision-makers and senior hospital and long-term care personnel with the results of a research project focused on the use of local foods in institutional food settings, presenting the opportunity to objectively discuss local food in Ontario’s healthcare system.

Professor Ross McKitrick, organised the 1st International Workshop on Econometric Applications in Climatology. The workshop brought together an international group of economists and climate scientists to share expertise and build opportunities for collaboration. Many economists are becoming interested in applying econometric methods (especially time series analysis) to geophysical and climatic data sets. In addition, many climate scientists are recognizing the value of developing and applying increasingly rigorous empirical methods to the rich data sets available in the Earth sciences.

Several business faculty participated in "The Future of Food: Advancing Health and Food Security. This event involved an interactive discussion about research efforts underway to address food insecurity, including innovations in food packaging; confusion surrounding best-before dates and shelf life of food; and emerging technological innovations.

The University’s Food Institute hosted a second National Food Security Forum. The forum was designed to showcase Canada's expertise in global food security as well as to explore and address the physical, biological and socio-economic constraints that limit food production and the ability of people to access a healthy diet. The Guelph forum united Canadian academics, industry professionals and other speakers to explore issues of food processing, retailing, distribution and consumer trends in the food industry and extend discussions of the food continuum.
The University’s Commitment to Sustainability

The College of Business and Economics is part of the University of Guelph, which adopted a commitment to sustainable resource use many years ago. Recent changes throughout the campus have led to a significant reduction in our environmental footprint. Sustainable actions are monitored regularly and areas of potential are identified through an annual campus wide resource audit conducted by an independent consultant. The University and its students have committed $8 million (over 4 years) to addressing issues associated with resource optimization.

As a result, in the past two years there has been a 35% reduction in water use, a 5% increase in gas use while building area increased by 20%, and a 20% reduction in electricity during an 8% increase in population. As well there are now over 65 courses with a significant focus on sustainability offered across the University. These courses expose students to the concepts and values surrounding sustainability. Students work in groups to address common problems thus modeling the trans-disciplinary approach that is required to solve complex issues. Students also develop an understanding on how they can personally contribute to the resolution of important social issues.

The University is a national leader in insuring our intellectual strength not only addresses the environmental/resource aspects of sustainability but also the social, economic and cultural imperatives that are critical to a vibrant world. All departments are encouraged to include such issues in their courses and focused seminars and financial assistance is provided to faculty to help them implement such changes in curriculum and pedagogy.
Moving Forward

We will continue to integrate PRME principles in our curriculum through new programs such as the MBA Sustainable Commerce, Certificate in Sustainability and the Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences, a collaborative initiative with the Department of Food, Agricultural and Resource Economics.

Our faculty will continue to engage in community partnerships through our involvement in collaborative activities such as IMPACT! Youth Conference for Sustainability Leadership to be held at University of Guelph in May, 2014, student projects under the leadership of The Co-operators Centre for Business and Social Entrepreneurship (CBaSE) and global, multi stakeholder, collaboration initiatives such as the Guelph East Africa Connections.

We will strive to create global experiences for our graduate and undergraduate students. For example, MBA students will be offered an option to participate in a course called "Managing around the World: International Leadership Round Tables for Practising Managers" taking place at the Universidad del Rosario, Bogotá, Colombia with world renowned business faculty.

We will continue to help our students to become ‘Leaders for a Sustainable World’ and stewards of our planet through our programs, research, community outreach and student leadership activities. Food security and waste, agribusiness, sustainable tourism, responsible governance, social enterprise, leadership and responsible management practices are just a few of the areas of concern to our researchers. We will continue to look for opportunities to collaborate with business, civil society, and government to find sustainable solutions to changing lives and improving life.

Finally, we value our association with PRME and look forward to both sharing with and learning from the other signatories, in the months and years ahead.