MEMORANDUM

June 4, 2014

TO:  Andrés Oswill
CC:  Joe Abraham, Karen Wood, Monique Bourque, Jan Gardner (or designee), Ken Pifer (or designee), Maya Kaup
FR:  David Douglass
RE:  Charge to Working Group on Green Initiative Fee

The student referendum on a Green Initiative Fund (GIF) and the ASWU-generated Constitution for the Committee on Student Sustainability represent two important steps toward a vital new set of opportunities for Willamette students. When fully implemented, this fund and the committee that will administer it will support a range of student initiatives related to sustainability, providing for transformative educational experiences and “greening” Willamette in the process.

What remains to be done prior to the anticipated start date for program this fall semester is largely a matter of detail—the creation of operating policies and procedures for the committee and a host of other important generative steps that will ensure the smooth function of the program during its inaugural cycle. I am writing to invite you to form and lead an ad hoc work group to address these matters over the next two months.

Specifically, the group would be charged with resolving the remaining operational issues related to the administration of the GIF, including:

- Creating an operating budget for the standing committee, including allocations for student staff, materials and other internal operating expenses
- Conceiving and providing written descriptions of the committee’s major funding options (e.g., research grants, travel grants, educational grants, direct expense funding, mini-grants, etc.), including procedures for requesting proposals, criteria for evaluation and selection of proposals, and recipient accountability (e.g., reports or other work products)
- Establishing bylaws and operating procedures for the standing committee, including a meeting schedule, funding cycles, member roles and responsibilities (e.g., treasurer, secretary, etc.), and so forth
Creating a communications plan, to include identification of stakeholder groups, core messages, preferred media and distribution schedule, in order to facilitate positive reception of the GIF, educate the Willamette community regarding its functions, and advertise funding opportunities for stakeholder groups

Establishing a web presence to serve as archive for committee documents, hub for communications, and anchor for GIF identity

Naturally, the products of this work group should be conceived as preliminary and tentative, to be amended by the standing committee within the framework established by the student referendum and the Constitution as needed going forward. Some of the specific items identified in the list above may be shifted to the standing committee itself if that appears warranted as you progress. However, you should seek to complete all work necessary for the standing committee to begin functioning at the start of the fall semester without impediment.

Finally, I would mention two values that should guide the efforts of the work group and the committee that follows: The first of these is transparency. The GIF will be the first student-fee generated fund of its type at Willamette, and its newness, together with its fee-based origin, will generate attention and possibly controversy. It will be important to anticipate these dynamics and adhere to transparency as an operating principle from the outset. Share as much of your work—and the manifest benefits of the program at large—with stakeholder groups as often and in as much detail as possible. A second value is accountability. This initiative will generate large sums of money drawn from students, and a commensurate level of responsibility exists for the working group and committee members to conduct their business with care and integrity, taking their jobs seriously.

If you agree to this charge, please communicate with the potential committee members copied in this memo, and determine their interest in service. Generate minutes from committee meetings and summarize the product of the group’s efforts in a report to me and the standing committee (yet to be formed) no later than August 15, 2014.