



Case Study Narrative

RECR 498 – SUSTAINABLE EVENT

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The first university course in North America to achieve BS-8901 certification

CASE STUDY

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, CHICO

SUSTAINABLE EVENT: RECR 498

Faculty Organizer: Beverly Oviedo



Educating & Achieving New Standards



INTRODUCTION

BS-8901
First New Event Standard in The World

PROBLEM

RECR 498
Did not have a structure in place to implement sustainable development practices

SOLUTION

Adopted BS-8901 Three Phase Planning and Management Criteria for their event

CONCLUSION

The first university class in North America to receive certification for meeting the criteria of BS-8901



MORE INFORMATION

<http://www.scribd.com/doc/15989202/Case-Study-RECR498>

CSU, CHICO

DEPARTMENT OF RECREATION & PARKS MANAGEMENT

RECR 498 Green Meetings and Events:

SUSTAINABLE Planning and Management Practices

CASE STUDY NARRATIVE

The California State University, Chico, Department of Recreation & Parks Management, class RECR 498, taught by Professor Beverly Oviedo, was designed to reveal the principles of Sustainability to the students registered in this online course of study focused on event management. The instructional method used for this online pilot program was based on the principles of Constructivism. The goal was for each student over the semester to construct her or his own knowledge in the form of a Sustainable Meeting Guide for reference and for potential future use in their respective careers, culminating in a sustainable event revealing the economic benefits, environmental stewardship and social responsibilities necessary for Sustainable Development.

Understanding the principles of Sustainable Development provides a base of support for determining the best course of action to attain Sustainability, for there is not a stamped-out approach to planning a Sustainable Event, as each event is unique. Direct communication with stakeholders provides valuable information to satisfy their needs and to engage them in meeting requirements for success in development of a sustainable event. RECR 498 students involved in that communication, with the opportunity to interact directly with other stakeholders participating in the sustainable event, provided them with a foundation to plan and to help them meet their own twin objectives; individually, a Sustainable Events and Meeting Guide, and collectively, a Sustainable Event.

Students in the online RECR 498 class focusing on sustainable meetings and events were armed with two principal “texts:” 1) *Simple Steps to Green Meetings and Events* (ISBN: 987-0-615-16990-3); 2) *A Meeting Planner’s Toolkit* (ISBN: 978-1-4276-3824-3), plus online access to the Convention Industry Council’s Green Meetings Report. These above were used to reveal the necessary academic content beyond that provided by the instructor, also to provide referential access to the professional content in the RECR 498 course of study.

Simple Steps to Green Meetings and Events is substantially a compendium of information relating to the greening of meetings and events. This text includes an array of checklists to help guide meetings and events planners to ascertain the standard of greening accomplished by any organization, venue or destination, or even their own level of greening accomplishment; a handy reference tool. *A Meeting Planner’s Toolkit*, is a contemporary, digital, online e-text containing 240 pages of dynamic content organized in 24 chapters, including on-screen text, graphics, photos, quizzes, videos, a waste management instructional module, interviews, glossary and definitions, and references, with over 330 active web links. This digital tool provided the students with a global out-reach for research into all aspects of Sustainable Development, Sustainability, business management principles, and it also covered the broad array of environmental, economic and social/equity aspects of business, meetings and events.

Because RECR 498 was an elective course available only online and with no pre-requisites for prior knowledge of sustainable meetings and events, the students who registered for this pilot program e-class revealed a range of majors from Business Economics, Hospitality, and Communication. They ranged also in educational accomplishment from sophomore to senior, already carrying a full course load, many with up to 23 units! With only 3 face-to-face meetings throughout the semester (at the beginning; before spring break; and at the sustainable meeting), all RECR 498 course communication was accomplished via e-mail, three telephone conference calls, and a class WIKI developed by the instructor for the students to share information. Students were encouraged to contact each other for assistance, though collaboration was not a requirement.

In culmination at the heart of the course of study are the creation, design, management and implementation of a sustainable event, integrating learning with practice by applying management principles learned in the course to endeavor to satisfy BS-8901 sustainable meeting and event standards. The management actions and goals revealed in the course were found in the guidelines contained in the Convention Industry Council's Green Meetings Report.

As well, the broad array of requirements of the BS-8901 standards informed every approach to satisfy those requirements to accomplish the sustainable event, using the Plan, Do, Act, Check management cycle for continuous improvement. With the BS-8901 standards requirements acting as both a goal to achieve and a beacon to light the way, the contents of the texts aligned with the interaction with stakeholders and the application of management principles by the instructor and by the students formed a cohesion for all efforts to successfully accomplish each task, and to provide potential for continuous improvement.

Wilhelm Wang, Marketing Manager, Sustainability, BSI Management Systems, certified EMS Lead Auditor, CPEA, attended this sustainable event as the BS-8901 auditor for Certification. The sustainable event included students presenting the outcomes of their individual research and management activities, an invited community representative (her honor, the mayor of Chico), and a presentation of research by Dr. Joseph Greene for the California Integrated Waste Management Board. Also attending was the Chair of the Dept. of Recreation & Parks Management (James E. Fletcher) with faculty representatives, and Dean of the College of Communication and Education (Dean Phyllis Fernlund).

This sustainable meeting from 10:00 am to 12:00 pm on May, 13, 2009, included a sustainable luncheon and was held in the Bell Memorial Union on the California State University campus in Chico, California. The event was attended by 65 students, faculty and guests; which was 35.4% greater than the number of people originally invited to attend (48). This increase reflected interest generated by the event and success of word-of-mouth and digital electronic promotion on campus.

In keeping with Equity factors of Sustainable Development, of social significance was the positive response of students attending the RECR 498 sustainable event.

These student guest attendees learned directly from the experiences of their RECR 498 student peers through their presentations of the elements and practices of sustainable events management. This content revealed the advanced level of understanding of sustainable events management practices by class RECR 498 students, which caused many of the student guest attendees to regret having missed the opportunity to enroll in this class, but prompted them to want to enroll in a future scheduling of the class.

Additional positive social-aspect outcomes of Sustainable Development Equity factors were seen in the diverse crew of kitchen helpers working as food preparers and servers, all of whom were developmentally disabled members of ARC, a local, non-profit organization providing training/employment opportunities for members of the Association of Retarded Citizens. As well, table decoration centerpieces were live vegetable plants in clay pots donated to the event by a local nursery (Hodges), which were re-directed by RECR 498 students to a local elementary school for planting and study as a garden education project.

This sustainable meeting, intentionally planned to be a **zero waste event**, far exceeded expectations, resulting in only 19 pounds of pre-consumer organic waste and post-consumer plate scrapings directed away from landfill to a local compost facility (GRUB Farms), 6 pounds of vegetables, 6 pounds of rice and 12 leftover pieces of chicken were redirected and donated to a local humanitarian non-profit organization (the Jesus Center) to help feed the homeless, and the entire sum of all other waste was two sheets of note paper, as all presentations were projections on-screen, posters were designed and constructed for reuse, food packaging was cleaned for reuse!

GUIDELINES

The guidelines herein are intended to accompany the data and documentation of all “plan, do, check, act” management actions by the organizer, the students and the principal stakeholders in development, implementation and measurement of the Dept. of Recreation & Parks Management class RECR 498, Green Meetings and Events: Sustainable Planning and Management Practices. These guidelines

also establish a benchmark for others to use to help them create and implement a sustainable event.

TRANPARENCY

This document is published to satisfy our desire for transparency, and to set out the factors leading to accomplishment of BS-8901 Phase 1 (Planning), Phase 2 (Implementation) and Phase 3 (Measurement) standards (pending).

SUSTAINABILITY

Sustainability is the intended result of Sustainable Development, requiring the consideration of Economic benefits, Environmental stewardship and Equity/social responsibility to ensure an equitable present for all inhabitants of our planet earth, with respect for biodiversity and an equal quality of lifestyle for future generations. While many of the conditions of a Sustainable Event overlap the three areas of Sustainability in the integrated bottom line, we have selected the areas most appropriate for our accomplishment, without intending to reduce the importance of those other areas also simultaneously achieved. With regard for that concern, our Sustainable Event included

DESTINATION

- CHICO, CALIFORNIA
 - Range of Sustainable services available
 - Meeting site in close proximity/walking distance to hotels, restaurants and entertainment centers

- Bell Memorial Union
 - ASSOCIATED STUDENTS - catering -- composting pilot program
 - ASSOCIATED STUDENTS - waste management – recycling program

VENUE

- great respect for the environment –
 - ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - Zero waste

Redirected pre- & post-consumer organic materials, no waste of natural resources.

- valuable functions for the developmentally disabled
EQUITY/SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – inclusion in important daily activities as worthwhile contributors with community involvement
ECONOMIC BENEFIT – fair employment and earned support for a useful work career
- inclusivity of stakeholders in planning, development, implementation
EQUITY/SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY – all stakeholders were equal in importance to satisfy BS-8901 standards and Sustainable Development requirements

ECONOMIC BENEFITS -- stakeholder participation created a “partnership” condition, ensuring the appropriate costs basis factors/cost savings/benefits.
- reusable dinnerware, linens, service-ware, food packaging and table decorations
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – reduced consumption of natural resources by eliminating throwaway packaging, and all plastics.

TRANSPORTATION

- site, location and safe conditions reflecting ease of access by walking, biking or using public transport
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP - Substantially reduced CO² emissions per participant
- local public transportation uses clean-burning compressed natural gas (CNG),. University campus transportation is electric.
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – significant reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions.

FOOD & BEVERAGE

- local provisioners and agriculture supplied foods for a healthy sustainable luncheon with a significant reduction in food miles from farm to fork
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – local “organic” agriculture foodstuffs were eco-sensitive in their growing. They came from nearby local sources, significantly reducing food miles from farm to fork.
- local city water provided in pitchers eliminated the necessity to use bottled water delivered a great distance in plastic bottles.
ECONOMIC BENEFITS – eliminated unnecessary consumption of natural resources and energy, and significantly reduced costs and impact on the environment.

ACCOMODATIONS

- linen re-use program in place
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – saved energy, saved fresh water and cleaning agents.
- recycling program
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – recycled paper, glass, metal, plastics

EXHIBITION

- satisfactory learning experience for participants, attendees and guests
EQUITY/SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES – revealed Principles of Sustainable Development to attendees, educating and motivating them to change their behavior and to be more thoughtful and considerate of the three areas of Sustainability.

- strong encouragement for continued individual sustainable behavior respectful of the environment and other peoples-
EQUITY/SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITIES – inclusion of all stakeholders and participants equally in the event revealed collective responsibility.
- digital picture frame
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – digital promotion photo display underscored diversity of life forms to be respected

COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

- electronic registration, on-line luncheon fees payment, and communication
ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP – eliminated paper consumption and conserved natural resources and energy.
- almost total elimination of paper and printing
ECONOMIC BENEFITS – eliminated materials cost, printing, mailing and shipping

ON-SITE OFFICE PROCEDURES –

- paperless
- reduced energy consumption
- controlled and redirected waste streams to eliminate waste
- website for all communication

ADDITIONAL SOCIAL/EQUITY ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- social development outreach into the local community and globally
- significant and successful collaborative experiences for the students
- collective success in accomplishing the goals set out to be achieved
- peer-to-peer educational experiences
- noteworthy examples of positive behavior by older students on younger
- a benchmark legacy of excellence establishing new standards for others to follow demonstrating sustainable practices throughout all stages of the sustainable event

GUIDELINES - MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK

The following three-stage outline will aid project leaders to plan, implement and successfully achieve sustainable events:

1. **PLANNING:**

Identify relevant issues and potential negative impacts

Select targets, define elements, and organize an action plan

2. **IMPLEMENTATION:**

Set up structure, move plans into action, record results

Communicate results

3. **MEASUREMENT & EVALUATION:**

Measure results, document outcomes and conclusions,

Seek feedback for future planning

The above three stages of management planning consideration and action are also to be equally reflected in all stakeholder buy-in planning and implementation of like-minded businesses supporting the sustainable event to the highest degree possible.

The above framework reveals a “plan, do, check, act” management cycle for continuous improvement, and provides a process where we can continuously review our own performance for future improvements to be reflected in revisions of these guidelines, as appropriate.

CIC Guidelines/MeetGreen checklists “ADDRESSED” in Class RECR 498 Sustainable event planning, management development and implementation.

1. **DESTINATION SELECTION:**

- a) “Consider destinations compatible with the event’s purpose and the demographics of the attendees. When choosing a destination requiring extensive attendee travel, consider using carbon offset programs.”

NOTE: Bell Memorial Union is the Associated Students central multi-purpose facility on the CSU, Chico campus. Attendee online registration forms for the RECR 498 Sustainable Event included a survey to identify transportation to be used to attend the event at Bell Memorial Union – 90% of all registered attendees indicated they would walk to the meeting!

The BS-8901 auditor, Wil Wang, traveled by air and rented auto; carbon offset credits were purchased to offset his carbon footprint.

- b) “Use a list of environmental criteria of the Destination Selection” found on pages 19 through 25, Chapter 3, in *Simple Steps to Green Meetings and Events*.

NOTE: All of these criteria were considered when determining the destination, as applicable.

- c) “The questionnaire is a helpful tool to use in gaining information about a destination’s environmental practices.”

NOTE: Two destinations were considered for the RECR 498 sustainable event, both significantly “green” in operations and conditions, though not equal. Among other considerations, the destination facility not used would have required a significant increase in automotive travel by all attendees, thereby increasing CO² emissions.

2. ACCOMMODATIONS SELECTION

- a) “Consider venues willing to offer at a minimum the following services (include the list in the environmental requests section of the event contract):
- A linen and towel use program is in place. Place cards in guest rooms offering guests the option to use linens/towels again. Housekeeping staff are fully trained to follow guest’s wishes.”

NOTE: This practice is available at the Diamond Hotel in Chico, the accommodations location arranged for the BSI auditor, the only attendee from a distant location.

3. EVENT VENUE SELECTION

- a) “Inform vendors/suppliers of the environmental strategies the event is considering and ask about their environmental practices. If no literature is available from the property, ask for any current plan that will lead to such policies/practices to be presented in writing. Or, have the venue complete a venue checklist to detail their environmental performance.” See Chapter 5, pages 45 through 47 in *Simple Steps to Green Meetings and Events* for the minimum guidelines.

NOTE: Done first by the instructor to set up stakeholder contact, subsequently researched by class RECR 498 students who determined applicability of and consolidated for use in their Sustainable, zero waste event.

- b) “Consider venues willing to offer at a minimum the following services (include them in the environmental requests section of your contract):
- Recycling program includes paper, metal, glass and plastic products
 - Staff is instructed to shut blinds, turn off lights, and turn down the heating/air conditioning when rooms are vacant.
 - Leftover food is donated to a food bank.

NOTE: Done, as appropriate, in various areas of the sustainable event.

4. TRANSPORTATION SELECTION

Ground Transportation

- a) “Ask providers if they follow environmentally responsible maintenance and recycle used oil, batteries, anti-freeze and tires.”

NOTE: Chico State University campus transport vehicles are electric. City of Chico Bus transport vehicles are clean-burning compressed

natural gas (CNG) powered. All environmentally responsible maintenance and product use practices are applied by both entities.

Many students at CSU, Chico use bicycles

5. FOOD & BEVERAGE

- a) "Inform vendors/suppliers of the environmental strategies the event management is considering and ask about their environmental purchasing and practices."

NOTE: Vendors/Suppliers provided organic, local foods only for the RECR 498 sustainable luncheon, transported in recycled reusable containers packaging, and served on reusable service ware for consumption on reusable dinnerware. Filtered city water and tea was pitched on each dining table, refilled as necessary, with large glass tumblers for individual use; no individual plastic packaging of water or tea was available for use by attendees at the luncheon.

NOTE: "Local" is by our definition not more than 1 day of travel, effectively 400 to 500 miles from farm to fork, significantly reducing food miles (commonly averaged at 1500 miles).

- b) "Include a clause in the contract with caterer/vendor that states their commitment to comply with event organizer's environment requests."

NOTE: Full compliance with our environment requests was achieved with all facilities management and vendor/food supply stakeholders.

6. EXHIBITION PRODUCTION

- a) "Inform facilities and decorators of the environmental strategies the event is considering and ask about their environmental practices."

NOTE: All stakeholders were fully informed of the environmental requirements. All table decorations for the class RECR 498 Sustainable event were donated by Hodges Nursery, and after the

event were turned over by RECR 498 students to a local elementary school garden education project!

- b) "Include a digital signage clause in the agreement with the facility and/or decorator, also to:
- Ensure clean-up crews are trained to keep recyclable and reusable items out of the garbage.
 - Choose decorations and display materials that can be reused and/or are made out of recycled materials." (SEE ABOVE)

NOTE: There was nothing remaining for the venue facilities cleanup crew to deal with from the RECR 498 event, as all physical elements relevant to the Sustainable event had been re-directed, been removed for re-use elsewhere, returned to the kitchen and laundry for washing and sterilization, bundled for recycling, or collected for composting!

7. COMMUNICATION & MARKETING

- a) "Ensure staff is informed of the event planning environmental strategies and initiatives.

NOTE: Staff of all stakeholders was intimately involved in support of environmental strategies and initiatives of this sustainable event.

- b) Communicate the event's greening initiatives to attendees, stakeholders and the media."

NOTE: All stakeholders and attendees were fully informed about the greening initiatives of this sustainable event. Local TV (KRCR TV, CH 7) and the Enterprise Record News Press covered the RECR 498 sustainable event.

- c) "Reduce paper use as much as possible by using the web and e-mail to promote the event, offering electronic registration, and providing the event itinerary and proceedings on-line (including speaker notes and handouts)."

NOTE: All communication pertaining to the planning, promotion and implementation of the RECR 498 sustainable event was electronic digital onscreen online, on the web, on a wiki, on computer screens, or via e-mail.

The Agenda and the Code of Ethics, the only printed item given to each attendee were printed double-sided on recycled, hand-made seeded paper for retention and planting in each attendee's garden.

Registered attendees names were written on wooden clothes pins that could be re-used.

Attendee Registration and payment for lunch was digital online, using credit cards into a secure account set up for the project.

Promotional video signage was an electronic digital picture frame at the check-in desk.

8. GENERAL OFFICE PROCEDURES

- a) "Shift written communications (i.e., rooming lists and layouts, event orders, settlement of accounts and other contractual documentation) to e-mail whenever possible."

NOTE: As this Sustainable Event presented by RECR 498 was developed and managed by the instructor and students in an online pilot program for RECR 498, everything, every area of inter-communication between instructor and students, every aspect of the development and management of the RECR 498 sustainable event was conducted online, on a class wiki, via e-mail, on computer screens and in telephone conference calls... everything! Thereby, virtually eliminating paper as the principal medium used for formal written documentation and communication.

- b) "When printing is required, use double-sided copies and post-consumer recycled content paper with soy-based inks."

NOTE: Done, as recommended!

DOCUMENTS/RECORDS MANAGEMENT

A university-managed Sustainable Project Accounts file containing all financial records and stakeholder contracts has been established through the California State University, Chico, Research Foundation and by the University Foundation

A Google Site, under contractual agreement with the university, managed by Peter DiFalco, Instructional Technology Consultant, Academic Technologies - Technology and Learning Program, provides a secure site for present and future sensitive data and potential future development.

A web page on the California State University Department of Recreation and Parks Management server, established by Don Penland, Director of the Center for the Study of Computers and Education, will archive and provide university access to the entire RECR 498 WIKI, including “Sustainable Meeting Guides.” All open files are active and can be downloaded for research and review.

CONCLUSIONS

The above management decisions and actions relative to Sustainable Development demonstrated at a minimum the best practices in Sustainability that are absolutely necessary to develop an event planned to be Sustainable -- environmentally sensitive, economically positive, and socially/equitably inclusive.

The “plan, do, check, act” management cycle for continuous improvement is fundamental to achievement of Sustainability in the satisfaction of the new, global event standards established by BS-8901.

The accomplishment of this RECR 498 Sustainable Event reduced wasteful consumption of natural resources, supported equity/social factors in the local community, and significantly reduced Greenhouse Gas Emissions (GHG) per participant. Thereby, it strode lightly upon the environment while raising awareness of Sustainable Event best practices, and achieving the goal for a sustainable event.

The California State University, Chico, Dept. of Recreation and Parks Management, RECR 498 Sustainable Event achieved all of its goals, to become the **first university course/class sustainable event** in North America to earn certification for meeting the criteria of the new, BS-8901 event standards.

AFTERWORD REMARKS/RESPONSE

Dr. Jeff Jiang, Dept. of Recreation & Parks Management faculty – e-mail, 5/14/09:

“Congratulations to you and your students, Beverly! It was by all means a very successful event to the extent that it helped change the attendees’ attitude, career choices and lifestyles positively. The impact of this small meeting is phenomenal. It has set a higher standard for planning our future events.”

Fred G. Thorne – Fthorne@CreativeCommunicatonsCo.com

Certificate of Registration

SUSTAINABLE EVENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

This is to certify that:

California State University, Chico
400 West First Street
Chico
California
95929
USA

Holds Certificate No: **SEMS 550367**

and operates a Sustainable Event Management System which complies with the requirements of BS 8901:2007 for the following scope:

California State University, Chico RECR 498 Sustainable Meeting Event has been planned and implemented in compliance with BS 8901:2007, Phase 1 and Phase 2.

For and on behalf of BSI:



President, BSI Management Systems America, Inc.

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