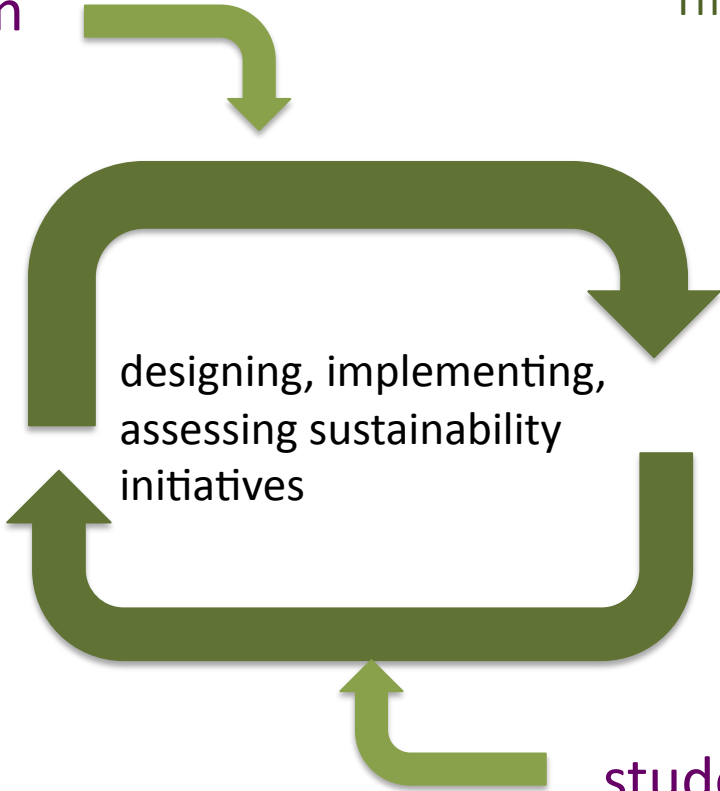


Grassroots Participation in Sustainability Decision Making: How Top-down and Bottom-up Can Meet in the Middle

Rod Parnell, Scott Perelstein NAU
Thomas Williams Scottsdale CC

senior administration



students faculty staff

Workshop goal: to promote grassroots participation in sustainability decision making that support originality and creativity, using your own experiences

1. Introduction and case studies: 30 minutes

Rod Parnell: How has top-down planning influence the structure and function of sustainability activities across NAU's Flagstaff Campus ?

Scott Perelstein: How has bottom up, grassroots, activism affected sustainability activities at NAU?

Thomas Williams: Involving students, faculty and staff in sustainability activities across community college campuses

2. Create a Power Map that is distinct to the work that you do in your institution. How does power in your institution influence your actions? How might power affect interdisciplinary work? **(20 minutes)**

3. Share your map in the group from your institution: (10 minutes)

4. Full group discussion: observations of patterns: (10 minutes)

Opportunities Challenges Blockers Tactics/mechanisms

5. Full group discussion: What are the best routes to success? **(5 minutes)**

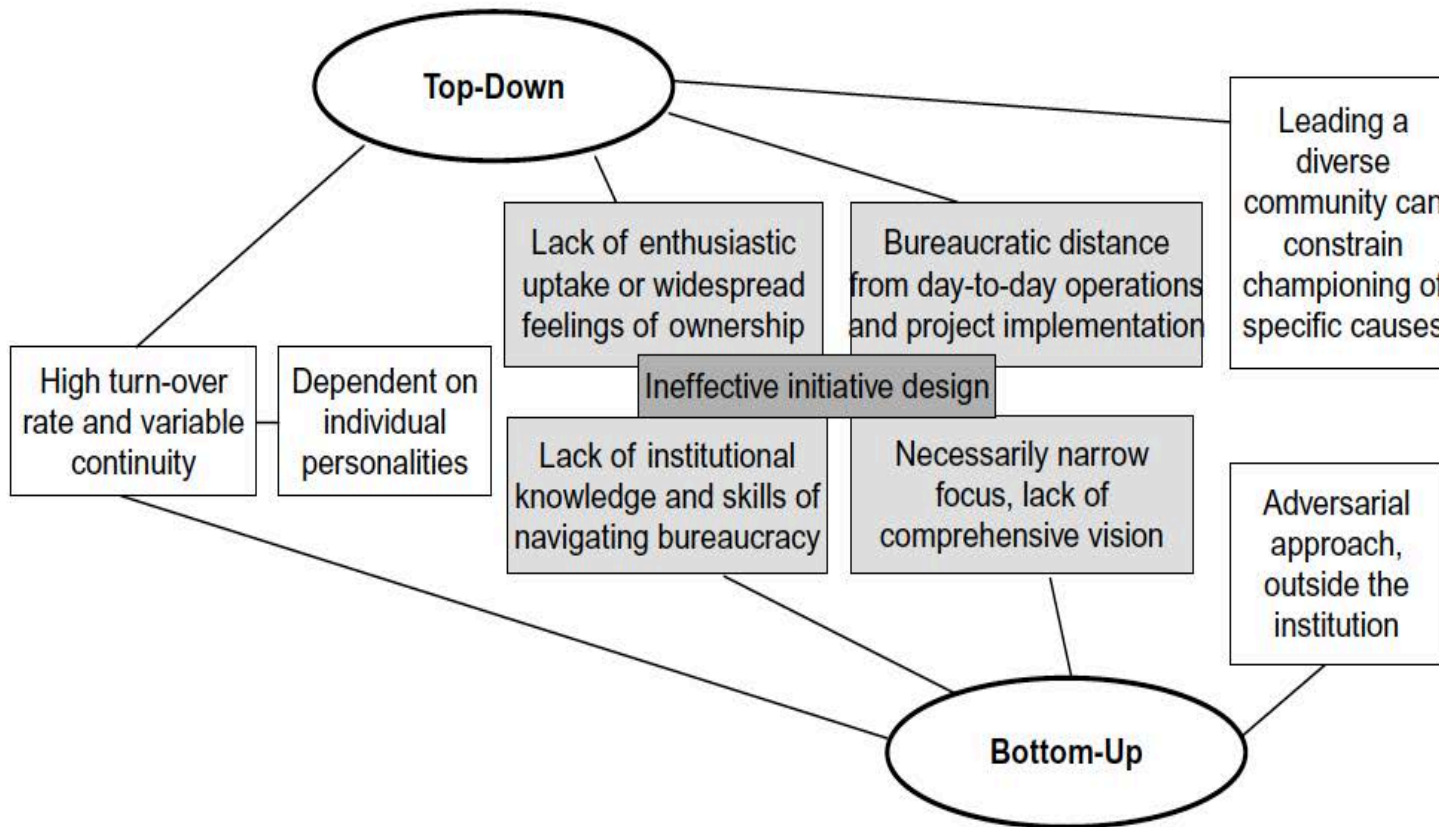


Figure 1.
Challenges facing
top-down and bottom-up
change makers

If either dominantly top-down or bottom up, initiative design tends to suffer.



Components of a vibrant academic sustainability community

- Infrastructure facilities & operations
 - showcase facilities and operations
 - walking the talk: pervasive institutional practices
 - Energy generation and use, residence life, dining, buildings and grounds, purchasing etc
- institutional leadership
- academics
 - curriculum, research/scholarly activities and co-curricular activities



Administrative support from the top

Vision

- Sustainability in university strategic plan
 - “Exemplify a sustainable, innovative, and effective university community”
 - “Model environmentally responsible and sustainable operations and education”
- ACUP campus climate commitment
- Feasible climate action plan and campus sustainability plan



Administrative support from the top

Vision

- Sustainability in university strategic plan
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Resources

- prioritize sustainability in budget process
- support resource and energy efficiency initiatives
- establish committees with direct reports
 - Council on Campus Sustainability (CoCoSus)
 - Sustainability Academic Programs Steering Committee
- create staff positions: *sustainability champions*
 - sustainability manager
 - coordinator of academic sustainability
- encourage creation of new academic programs and research institutes



Administrative support from the top

Vision

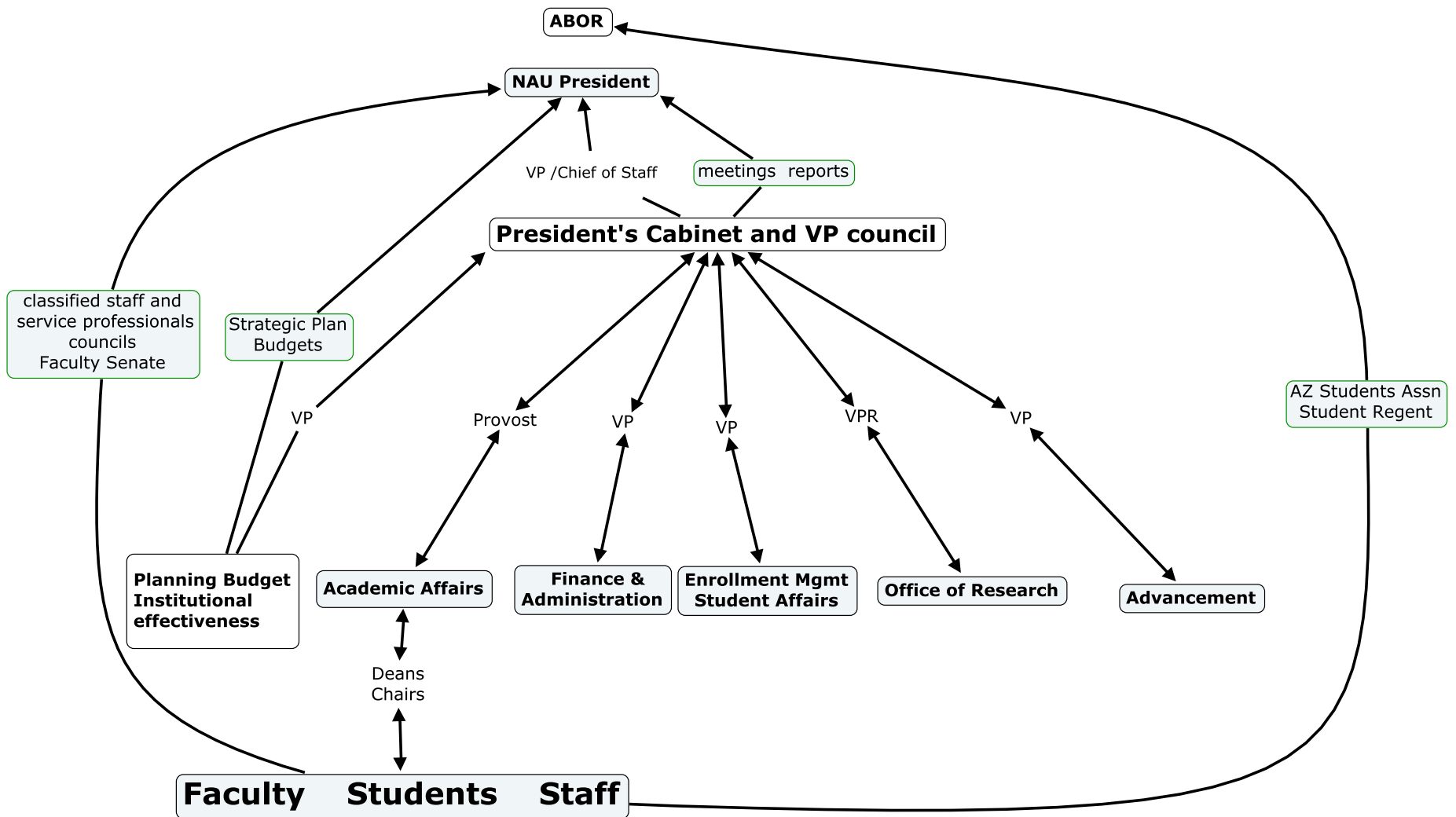
Resources

Recognition of others' activities

encourage creation of new academic programs, research institutes

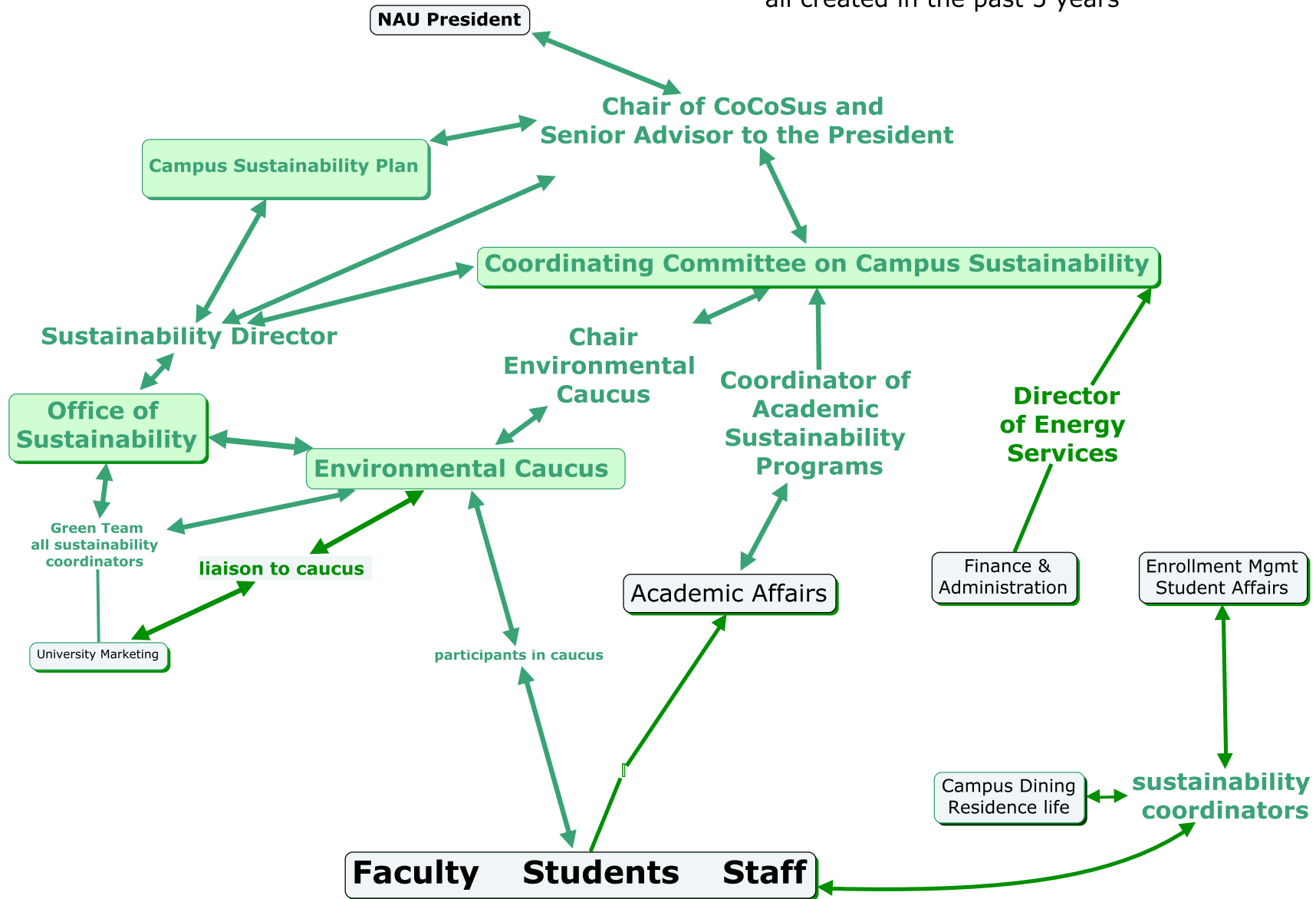
support grassroots sustainability efforts like Green Fund, Environmental Caucus, Earth Week

incubate innovative curriculum: Global Learning Initiative



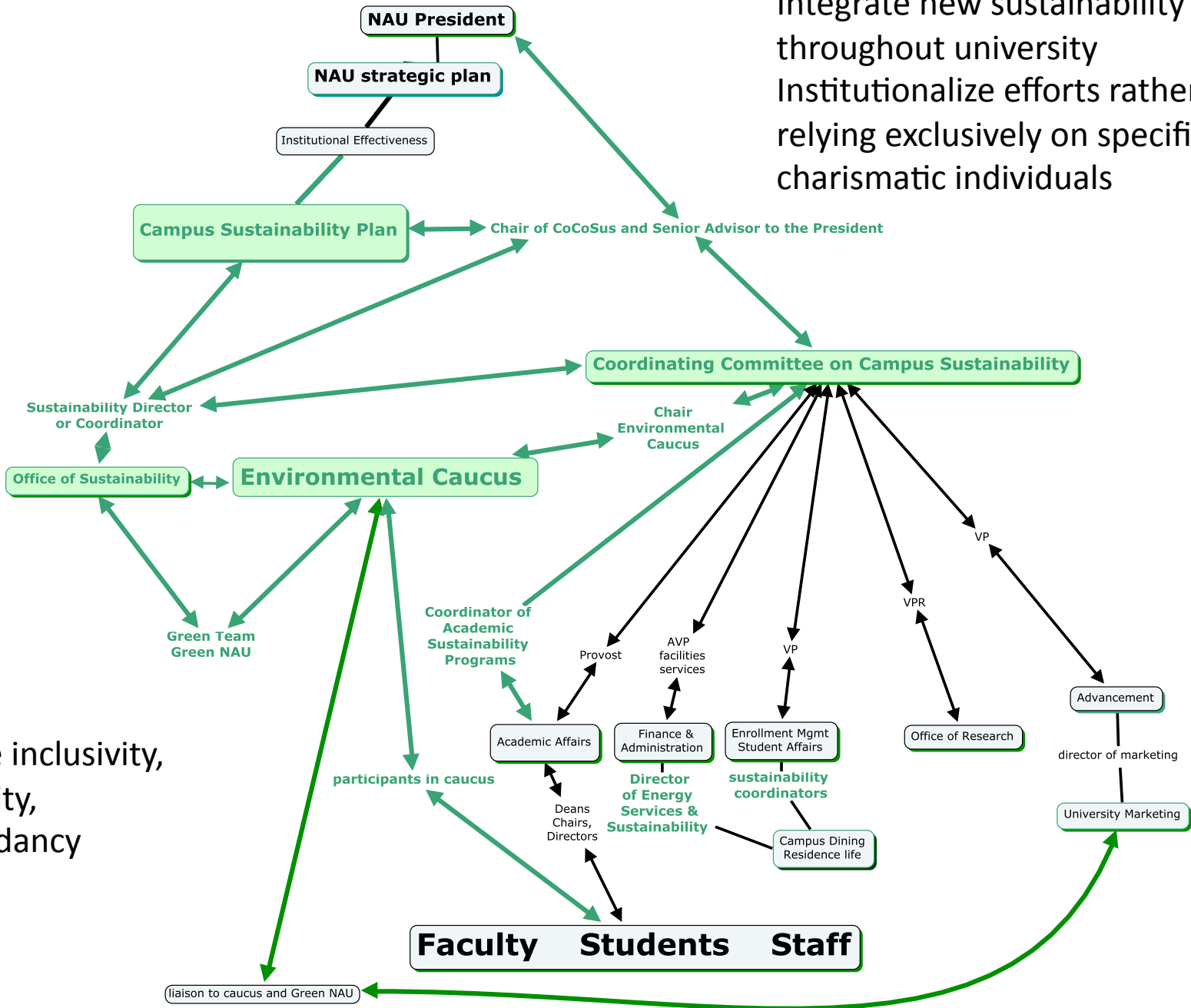
How do we infuse sustainability planning, operations, and values into the organization: distributed or centralized ?

green boxes represent sustainability organizations
 green text indicates sustainability positions
 all created in the past 5 years

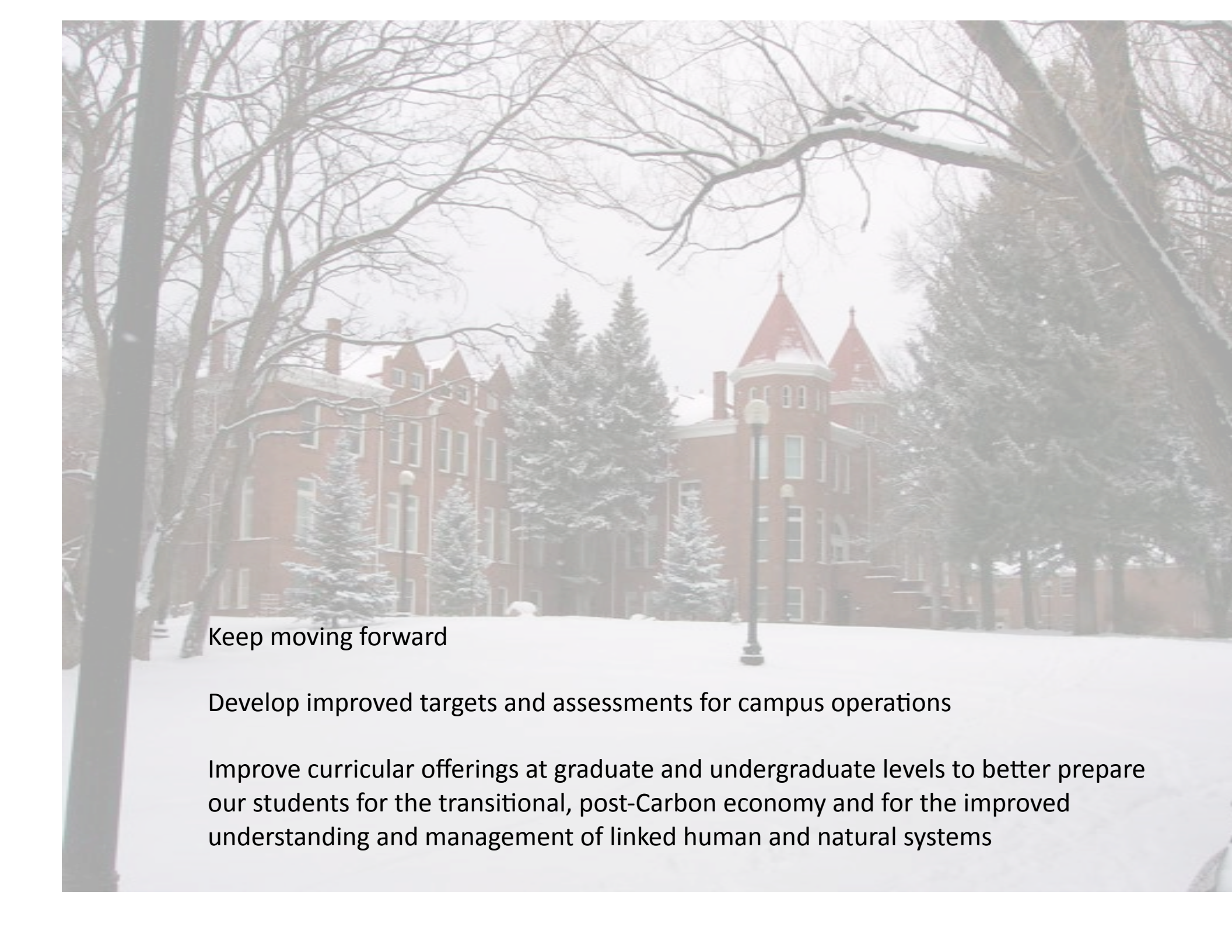


Sustainability organizations and positions established across multiple institutional levels
 Institutionalize sustainability champions at multiple levels, everyone has a stake

Integrate new sustainability units throughout university
Institutionalize efforts rather than relying exclusively on specific charismatic individuals



Create inclusivity, diversity, redundancy



Keep moving forward

Develop improved targets and assessments for campus operations

Improve curricular offerings at graduate and undergraduate levels to better prepare our students for the transitional, post-Carbon economy and for the improved understanding and management of linked human and natural systems

Create a Power Map How does power in your institution influence your actions?

How might power affect sustainability work? **(20 minutes)**

the flow of power / lines of authority

the flow of money and funding opportunities

allies

barriers and blockers / challenges

navigating institutional mission and priorities

Power mapping addresses issues by leveraging relationships and networks.

Step 1: Power location: what parts of our institution do or could affect sustainability decision making?

Step 2: Map major institutions: identify significant decision-making hubs, personnel, and processes.

Step 3: Map individuals associated with sustainability: how do they relate to components in step 2? Put yourself on the map.

Step 4: Map all other associations you have with influential individuals: think about people you know and identify easier ways to access the individuals or institutions that can assist you.

Step 5: Determine relational power lines and priority relationships: Draw lines connecting people and programs that have relations (even unlikely or informal ones) to each other.

Step 6. Are there vacuums ? Are **new** programs, groups, committees, or personnel of value in better developing these relationships ?

Sustainability leadership components

Always
Typical
Nearly unique

