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Sustainable Facilities Management at Florida Institute of Technology

The physical plant of the University includes the buildings, the infrastructure, and the grounds. At FIT, it is the job of the facilities managers to plan, design, construct, and maintain this physical plant. Operating at this scale we are able to change and enact policy, and implement new processes quickly in the interest of a more sustainable campus. The organizational structure of centralizing and decentralizing and in-sourcing and out-sourcing the right functions is the key to implementing sustainable strategies, but is also the key to survival in the business of facilities management. In contrast to the governmental top-down approach or the grassroots bottom-up approach, in the realm of facilities management and physical plant operations, we have the people in the middle, the doers, where it is the direct action of the worker that is either good or bad as it pertains to sustainability. The frontline staff members are led by a culture that will be either sustainable or not. Toward the evolution of the campus, not only will we examine the campus-wide effect one single major project can have at this scale, but also, what are smaller simpler projects that every university should do right now? And what role do the “rapidly renewable” students play? Finally, by evaluating needs and projecting growth, it is during the planning process that the most important decisions are made. Planners must often navigate competing visions to generate the most sustainable outcome.