



**President's Council on Sustainability Annual Report
Academic Year 2014-2015**

Background on the President’s Council on Sustainability (PCS)

The University of Mary Washington’s Strategic Plan committed the University to sustainability, through management of its resources to meet the social, economic, and environmental needs of the present without compromising the ability to meet the needs of future generations. The plan states that sustainability will be a strong component of future endeavors to ensure that UMW takes responsibility for all actions. Sustainability will also be an essential part of our “scholarship in action,” fostering interdisciplinary studies, experiential and service learning, opportunities for research, professional development, and support of our region and its environment. The PCS was formed in the fall of 2009, consisting of faculty, staff, and students, and reports to both the Executive Vice President for Administration and Finance and the Provost. The PCS plays a critical role in shaping administrative goals and objectives relating to campus sustainability.

Mission of the PCS

The council will advise and assist in the development of goals in these four action areas: Administration and Finance, Education and Research, Operation, and Innovation and Awareness. The PCS meets monthly throughout the academic year, and each member also participates in additional action groups that undertake Action Goals in the designated areas:

- **Administration and Finance**
 - The PCS will assess the places in which sustainability efforts can be enhanced within our campus by suggesting modifications to current spending. Additionally, the PCS will look for ways in which the administration can support current and proposed efforts towards creating a more sustainable campus.
- **Education and Research**
 - The PCS will work on developing educational programs and activities for both the community and the Mary Washington campuses. These programs will support, facilitate, and educate the community members on sustainability issues.
- **Operations**
 - The PCS will assess where sustainable actions can be included into the university’s daily functions and what can be done to facilitate these changes. Furthermore, the PCS will examine what infrastructure could feasibly be added to continue our development toward a more sustainable campus.

- **Innovation and Awareness**
 - The PCS will work to further educate Mary Washington students, faculty, and staff on how to live a more sustainable life style and work in a more sustainable environment. Additionally, the PCS will strive to incorporate the community, region, and state into our efforts.

PCS Members (2014-2015)

Below is the list of members, along with their affiliation, who served during the 2014-2015 academic year. The co-chairs of the PCS are indicated with a *.

Faculty

Eric Bonds, Assistant Professor, Sociology

Antonio Causarano, Assistant Professor, College of Education

Dan Hubbard, Associate Professor, College of Business

Jeremy Larochelle, Associate Professor, Modern Foreign Languages

Laura Mentore, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

Andrea Smith, Associate Professor, Historic Preservation

Melanie Szulczewski*, Associate Professor, Earth and Environmental Sciences

Staff

Erma Baker, Assistant Vice-President, Business Services

Kevin Caffrey*, Senior Associate Registrar, Stafford Campus

Bianca Faison, Student Success Coordinator, Academic and Career Services

Bethany Friesner, Associate Director, Residence Life

Amme Mahler, Service Delivery Manager, Copy and Mail Services (Spring semester)

Darryl “Jay” Sullivan, Director of Utilities Management, Facilities Services

Joni Wilson, Director, Landscaping and Grounds, Facilities Services

Students

Kathryn Erwin, Class of 2016, Green House

Ria Firth, Class of 2015, Ecology Club

Sam Fortier, Class of 2016 (Spring semester)

Jennifer Grove, Class of 2017 (Spring semester)

Margaret Magliato, Class of 2017, Ecology Club

Sean Morris, Class of 2018, Student athlete

Megan O’Connell*, Class of 2017, Sustainability Coordinator (Spring semester)

Beatrice Ohene-Okae, Class of 2017, Student government

Taryn Payne, Class of 2016, Dean's nomination

Jessica Reingold, Class of 2015, Faculty nomination

Maura Slocum, Class of 2016, RA and Outdoors Club

Megan Traylor*, Class of 2015, Sustainability Coordinator (Fall semester only)

Summary of 2014-2015 Accomplishments

- **Princeton Review of Green Colleges**
 - UMW was listed in the Princeton Review of 353 Green Colleges for the first time in 2015.
- **First Campus-Wide Earth Day Celebration**
 - Several local organizations, including Downtown Greens and the Fredericksburg Farmers Market participated with tables and demos, as did the UMW Bookstore and Facilities Department. Some student clubs, including the Outdoors Club and Ecology Club also hosted tables and activities for the event,
- **UMW Divestment Resolution**
 - The PCS unanimously passed a resolution urging the University to divest its investments from the world's largest publically-traded fossil fuel companies in order to both transition our campus towards greater sustainability in the face of climate change and demonstrate UMW's commitment to a more sustainable future.
 - Led by Dr. Eric Bonds, this initiative was inspired by the student group Divest UMW, but did not endorse that group's actions.
- **UMW Hosted the Annual Virginia Power Shift Conference in February 2015**
 - PCS Student Member Beatrice Ohene-Okae led the organization of the annual Virginia Power Shift Conference (VAPS) held on our campus this year.
 - Many members of the PCS and their host departments contributed to the development and organization of the event.
 - Approximately 350 students from across Virginia spent the weekend of February 13-15 at UMW for workshops and talks on becoming environmental activists and leaders.

- **Initiation of Large-Scale Action Goals**
 - PCS Staff Member Bethany Friesner led the efforts to earn Tree Campus status for UMW by achieving the five goals listed below before the application is due in December 2015.
 - Having an active Tree Advisory Committee
 - Creating a Campus Tree Care Plan
 - Creating a Campus Tree Program with Dedicated Expenditures Each Year
 - Holding an Arbor Day Observance
 - Incorporating a Tree-based Service Learning Project
 - PCS Faculty Member Dr. Jeremy Larochelle became the leader of the formally established Green House Living Learning Community for first year students tied to his FSEM Writing for a Wounded Planet: Literature and Environment in the US and Latin America. In addition to class and advising duties, he led students on hiking trip and in volunteer events with Tree Fredericksburg and Friends of the Rappahannock.
 - PCS Student Member Sean Morris, working with PCS Staff Member Jay Sullivan, began efforts to complete an energy envelope of each building on campus with the ultimate goals to lower energy use and the UMW carbon footprint.
- **Continuation of an Environmental Studies Research Colloquium**
 - Dr. Jeremy Larochelle coordinated the now annual speaker series on faculty work connected to sustainability issues as brown bag lunch talks.
 - This year there were four fascinating presentations to showcase research from faculty members across campus:
 - "The World is Our Oyster: A turbulent history for *Crassostrea virginica* in the tidal reaches of the Potomac River," Dr. Neil Tibert (Earth and Environmental Science)
 - "Sustainability in the Galapagos Islands: faculty-student experiential learning in an ecologically vulnerable World Heritage Natural Site," Dr. Melanie Szulczewski (Environmental Science) and Dr. Andrew Dolby (Biology)

- "Synthetic chemistry solving environmental problems: Superabsorbent polymers for oil remediation," Dr. Janet Asper (Chemistry)
- "The Psychology of Environmental Degradation," Dr. Parrish Waters (Biology)
- **Ongoing PCS Action Goals**
 - PCS Staff Member Jay Sullivan continued to evaluate the practicability of developing renewable energy on campus, specifically looking into the feasibility of installing solar panels on the roof of the Indoor Tennis Center.
 - PCS Staff Members Erma Baker and Amme Mahler along with a subcommittee continued to educate students and faculty on cloud printing and departmental MDF printing to increase the sustainability of printing on campus.
 - Work continued on the development of a bike share or similar program on campus. PCS Members Joni Wilson, Andi Smith, and Eric Bonds have completed initial steps, such as finding storage space and a repair site.
 - A new annual tradition, the PCS Holiday Coffee Break for faculty and students, was started in December 2014. The first study break was held in the new ITCC.
 - UMW continued to be a strong participant in the national RecycleMania competition, placing first in amount recycled per capita for Virginia for 2015.
 - Faculty Co-Chair Melanie Szulczewski and Staff Co-Chair Kevin Caffrey promoted the inclusion of sustainability into the new strategic plan.

Conclusion

Despite having many new members and some turnover during the academic year, the PCS accomplished many important tasks during this past year while laying the foundation for significant progress in the upcoming years.

For more information on sustainability initiatives, programs, and ways to get involved, please visit the UMW PCS website: <http://sustainability.umw.edu>.



UMW Celebration of Earth Day 2015



UMW Celebration of Arbor Day 2015