

# Education for Sustainability Work Group

## Background, Objectives, and Membership

### University Sustainability Council Work Groups

The University Strategic Plan established the goal for the University of Maryland to “become a national model for a Green University.” UMD is making significant progress toward that goal but much work remains to integrate sustainability into the core of campus operations, teaching, and service.

The University Sustainability Council recently reviewed progress on the University’s Climate Action Plan (CAP), trends in selected campus sustainability metrics, and UMD’s expected performance on the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). This review and assessment revealed the need for leadership and focused work in several priority areas. The Council, chaired by Rob Specter, Vice President for Administration and Finance, approved the creation of the following campus-wide work groups to develop recommended goals, plans and strategies:

- Sustainable Buildings and Energy Sources (launched fall 2012)
- Sustainable Water Use and Watershed Protection (launched fall 2012)
- Education for Sustainability (approved by Provost Rankin in December 2012)
- Sustainable Transportation Systems (launch date TBD)

### Background on Education for Sustainability

As a charter signatory of the American College and University Presidents’ Climate Commitment, the University of Maryland set an ambitious goal to educate all students about sustainability. UMD is progressing toward that goal through its broad array of degree granting programs, living/learning programs, and initiatives such as the Sustainability Advisors and Chesapeake Project; however, the university may have a long way to go before all graduates are prepared to help lead a meaningful transition to sustainability through their personal and professional pursuits.

The objective of Education for Sustainability (Efs) is to make sustainability a learning outcome of the holistic student experience. Principles of sustainability should resonate in lessons students learn in and out of the classroom and in every interaction with the campus environment (i.e. buildings, transportation, food, etc.). Students should gain a deep understanding of sustainability because it permeates every part of their sensory and intellectual experience at the university. Transformation of the physical campus is underway but it should be matched with transformation of the curriculum. Students in every discipline should have an appreciation for the role their discipline can play in the transition to a sustainable society. Once all graduates understand how they can contribute to improving our global condition, then the University of Maryland will truly emerge as a national model for a green university.

## **Education for Sustainability Work Group Objectives**

Objective 1: Establish the Core Competencies for Sustainability, which include the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that enable successful task performance and problem solving with respect to real-world sustainability problems, challenges, and opportunities.

Objective 2: Map-out the programs that currently provide opportunities to learn core competencies. Distinguish between programs that reach all students (broad-impact programs) and those that are simply accessible to students (self-selected programs). Evaluate opportunities to enhance broad-impact programs and encourage greater participation in self-selected programs.

Objective 3: Develop a plan to make sustainability a learning outcome of the holistic student experience so that all UMD students are prepared to help lead a meaningful transition to sustainability through their personal and professional pursuits. The plan should be guided by the core competencies for sustainability.

Objective 4: Consider how the plan relates to the Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) Education and Research credits.

## **Proposed Membership**

David Cronrath, Dean, Architecture, Planning, & Preservation (Chair)

*Council on the Environment Representative (TBD)*

*Office of the Provost Representative (TBD)*

Alba Torrents, Professor, Civil and Environmental Engineering

Bill Dorland, Professor, Physics and Director, Honors College

Bryan Quinn, Director of Technical Operation, Dept. of Electrical and Computer Eng. (Sust. Council)

Carol Rogers, Professor of Practice, Journalism (Sust. Council and Chair of the Senate's Gen. Ed. Comm.)

Donald Milton, Professor and Director, Maryland Institute of Applied Environmental Health

Jen Shaffer, Assistant Professor, Anthropology

Jess Belue Buckley, Graduate Student, Education

Jim Riker, Director, Beyond the Classroom

Kate Richard, Undergraduate Student, English and Environmental Science & Policy

Lisa Kiely, Assistant Dean, Undergraduate Studies

Mark Stewart, Senior Project Manager, Office of Sustainability

Martha Geores, Associate Professor, Geography

Marybeth Shea, Instructor, English

Melissa Carrier, Assistant Dean, Business

Michele Dudash, Associate Professor, Biology

Nina Harris, Assistant Dean, Public Policy

Psyche Williams-Forson, Associate Professor, American Studies

Ray Weil, Professor, Environmental Science & Technology