

UVA ECONETWORK

Sustainability Starter Pack

So you're interested in sustainability, huh? Well good news! UVA has an incredible amount of programs related to the topic, and endless ways to get involved. You can make sustainability your career, or just learn about how you can make your everyday actions a bit more eco-friendly. Here is a quick, TLDR version of all that is going on around Grounds. Enjoy!

Who are the main actors in terms of sustainability?

- The Office for Sustainability (OFS)
 - Definitely check out their [incredible website](#) for lots of good information on what UVA is doing as an institution for sustainability.
- [The Committee on Sustainability](#)
- [The Global Sustainability Major \(and Minor\) Program](#)
- [Student Council Sustainability Committee](#)
- Green CIOS (see more on Student Organizations page)

First Year Sustainability

- Try joining the EcoLeaders! This is a program specific to first years that focuses on dorm engagement. Lots of people apply every year, and it is reported to be an engaged group.

- You can join Sustainability Advocates as well! Students working for the Office for Sustainability run this program, and it is a great introduction to sustainability on Grounds. You will likely be in smaller groups working on a particular project related to a main topic for the semester (for example, the Spring 2020 topic was Consumerism)
- You can browse a more in-depth list of green groups on the Student Organizations page

Everyday Actions

- [Graphic](#) from the OFS detailing many different aspects of sustainable living.
- Waste consciousness: UVA has its own way of handling recycling, so unlike the rest of the United States, most of your materials can actually be reprocessed! Aka, recycling “works” here. Here is a [graphic](#) from the OFS that shows exactly where it goes.
- Energy conservation: you can contribute to UVA reducing its emissions by turning off lights in your room, washing only full loads of laundry on cold, and unplugging electronics when not in use.
- Food: eating more plant based helps to reduce GHG production as well as save water. Try choosing these options at dining halls, restaurants around Grounds, or even cooking more plant-based meals yourself.

Food

- UVA dining contracts with [Aramark](#) for its dining halls. Aramark leadership has not been known to necessarily be the largest promoter of more sustainable food (such as increasing the percentage of plant-based options), though the UVA sustainable food coordinator (Brooke Kinsey) is very hard working and involved. UVA does purchase quite a bit of local food, as well as compost any waste that is left.
- View our Sustainable Food for more information!

UVA Energy Portfolio

- UVA’s energy is derived from a mix of coal, oil, gas, and renewable sources. The main sectors of energy use include electricity (50% of the

University's GHG emissions), fuel (31%), transportation (18%), and operations support (1%).

- The University is actively working to improve their energy sustainability through sourcing electricity from off-Grounds utility-scale renewable generators, implementing on-Grounds rooftop solar projects, and increasing the energy efficiency of University buildings.
- For more information on energy at UVA, visit our Energy and Renewables page.
- For more information about UVA's sustainability goals, click [here](#).
- For more information on UVA's greenhouse gas inventory, click [here](#)

Career Involvement

- Global Sustainability Program: if you are curious about incorporating sustainability more strongly into your life, taking a Global Sustainability class is a really good way to see if it is for you. In the past, there have been guest speakers and lots of field trips. The program itself is very interdisciplinary, so you will take a number of classes from different schools at the University, and learn about a wide variety of disciplines. People have reported loving being in the program.
- Working for the OFS: Applications to become a student employee for the OFS come out around March, so keep an eye out for those on Handshake! Otherwise the Sustainanewsletter should alert you to when those have gone live.
- Companies/organizations in Charlottesville: there are many awesome renewable energy companies, climate action groups, etc. within C'ville that you can both volunteer and work at. Check out the Charlottesville Sustainability page for more!

Funding Opportunities

- To discover more about funding opportunities for sustainability-related projects, visit StudCo's page [here](#) or our Funding Resources page.

Earth Week

- The University celebrates Earth Week every year in late April, which is Earth Day on April 22nd. Events are held on-Grounds every day of the week and are hosted by external organizations like National Geographic, the Office for Sustainability, UVA professors, and CIOs.
- Earth Week is a great way for all students to become more aware of sustainability initiatives on-Grounds, as well as for students involved in sustainability to showcase the work they have been doing all year.

Sustainability in Virginia

- Prior to October of 2019, it was generally considered difficult to increase the amount of renewable energy in Virginia due to caps that Dominion Energy held on the connection of new projects. In October of 2019, however, Governor Ralph Northam announced a commitment to sourcing 30% of Virginia's power from renewable sources by 2030, and 100% from carbon-free sources by 2050 (read more about it [here](#)). This announcement included a lifting of the previous caps, and means that a lot of work is going to be focused into developing the clean energy necessary to meet that goal. A few UVA professors are working on figuring out how to accomplish this, including economics professor [Bill Shobe](#).

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