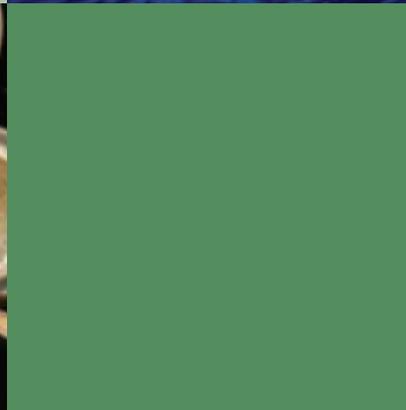




GW Presidential Task Force on Sustainability

Final Report and Recommendations

June 1, 2008



THE GEORGE
WASHINGTON
UNIVERSITY
WASHINGTON DC



GW Presidential Task Force on Sustainability

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Final Report and Recommendations

June 1, 2008

A collage of images featuring cherry blossoms, a brick building, and a statue of George Washington. The top section shows cherry blossoms in front of a brick building with a flag. The middle section is a green banner with the word 'Introduction'. The bottom section shows a bronze statue of George Washington on a stone pedestal, with cherry blossoms and a building in the background. A sign for 'FAYETTE HALL' is visible on the right.

Introduction

THE
GEORGE

FAYETTE
HALL

20 Eye Street, NW



In fall 2007, President Knapp assembled our Task Force on Sustainability and requested that we consider how GW, as an institutional leader, should respond to the challenge of environmental sustainability. The task force started as a disparate group of faculty, students, and staff with little common knowledge of each other and holding various opinions on the topic. After several months of weekly meetings plus considerable sub-committee and individual effort, the task force members have coalesced around the following themes which we believe are essential to GW's future as a leading educational institution.



Consensus Themes

The Challenge:

Sustainability offers one of the central opportunities and challenges of the 21st century. The world is facing a suite of environmental, social, and development issues of unprecedented scale and complexity. The best organizations in the private sector, government, and education are tackling these problems as a market necessity as well as a moral obligation. In the process, they are finding opportunities to do more with less, attract better people, solve important problems, and discover new possibilities.

In the simplest terms, no institution of GW's size and standing can avoid recognizing the environmental implications of its actions, nor can one avoid the obligation to contribute to solving the problems of sustainability.

Potential:

The George Washington University is well situated to make meaningful contributions in this area. Its location offers a unique laboratory for exploring the potential of more sustainable urban practices, and its proximity to the federal government offers enormous potential to engage in research and policy formation at a high level. GW's existing work on environmental issues in law, business, public health, international affairs, science, and other areas provides an important base upon which to build a stronger sustainability culture and program.

GW has made some important progress in operating more sustainably in the past few years, but a great deal more must be done in areas such as energy efficiency, procurement, building design and operation, food service, transportation, and other areas. The good news here is that there is a great deal of enthusiasm among staff, students, faculty, and alumni for finding new ways of doing business more sustainably.

To be a leader in this field, GW must attack the problem from all sides with commitment by every academic and administrative department. Eventual leadership successes will be a result of our collective institutional intent and follow-through. The potential opportunity for GW is huge.

Culture Shift:

Any realistic assessment of GW indicates that environmental sustainability has not played a significant or consistent role in previous institutional decisions. Some may view this as regrettable, but GW's future is not limited by its past practice. Instead, especially in the near term, it means there is ample opportunity for GW to make dramatic progress.

To achieve its potential, however, GW needs to think in terms of a culture shift that allows everyone to understand the sustainability opportunities and to contribute to collective success. Much of the opportunity lies in building awareness to affect the cumulative impact of many smaller choices. Everyone has a role to play, and it will be the cumulative impact that counts. Similarly, the commitment to sustainability needs to be embedded in the cultural values and practices of the institution so that GW's legitimacy and reputation are not threatened by inconsistencies.

Opportunity:

For members of the task force, the most intriguing aspect of environmental sustainability at GW has been the realization that this topic touches every part of the university. In fact, the biggest benefit to these efforts may prove to be that this issue promotes finding new solutions across traditional institutional boundaries.

Because it will require a collective effort to succeed, addressing environmental sustainability has the potential to unite and catalyze the disparate parts of the university in exciting new ways. One can anticipate new opportunities for cross-fertilization among academic departments, among faculty and administrators, and among staff and students.

This initiative will invite involvement by everyone from top to bottom and from edge to edge. It is hard to contemplate a more unifying and uplifting opportunity for the entire GW community.

Scarce Resources:

Although some may be legitimately concerned that a new sustainability initiative will compete for scarce resources, this is not a zero sum situation. If structured well, a sustainability initiative can generate new resources in a variety of areas including research funding, alumni and philanthropic support, and internal cost-savings. In addition, a sustainability initiative can build the reputation of the university, making it more attractive to top students, faculty, and staff.

As for research, there is no other pre-eminent educational leader better poised in Washington, D.C. Once GW has demonstrated its commitment to environmental sustainability, funding for active research should follow. Similarly, by allowing our alumni donors to see the potential for seeding this initiative, it seems very likely that new sources will develop. Already, sustainability has proven to be an attractive idea among younger GW graduates.

With rising energy and other costs, conservation efforts have shorter pay back periods. Further, new financing tools are available that can overcome the historic difficulty in moving efficiency projects to the top of a capital budget priority list. Our needs are not unique, and the marketplace now offers prudent financing vehicles, building products, and technical choices that make energy-saving enhancements accessible and affordable.

Still, it is critical that GW's substantive commitment to environmental sustainability become evident in the annual university budget and in its allocation of resources. One way to start this effort is to devote an amount equal to 10 percent of GW's annual energy budget for five years to fuel GW's initial operational sustainability efforts. This is an investment that would likely pay for itself and far more. The proportionate expense seems suitable as a minimum starting point.





Leadership:

From the beginning, President Knapp wisely requested that we consider the components of leadership that should characterize this effort. As we have thought about the question, one of our greatest concerns has been that many would see the goal merely as being a better environmental compliance effort. Our sense is that the appropriate goal for GW is to make progress toward far more ambitious possibilities, and that aspiration will indeed require a shared spirit of leadership.

Of course, leadership is about making bold choices, and it is not enough to merely do what is obvious. If we are to achieve any degree of leadership in this area, we need to make rapid headway. We are well behind many other colleges and universities, and the private sector is moving swiftly too. The good news is that corrective action is easily achievable. In fact, to a degree, we will benefit by our delayed start as vendors and products have developed rapidly and are now more facile in meeting our needs.

A reality is that GW has little yet to brag about, and the world is rightly suspicious of entities and individuals who boast prematurely—especially when it comes to environmental matters.

President Knapp's signing of the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment was a bold step and just what was needed for GW. More of the same will be essential, and every other GW academic and administrative leader will need to do their part. A place of leadership in sustainability will only be attainable if the concept is evident as a core value of the university.

Management:

Much needs to be done, and there is a near term necessity to get started. The Presidents Climate Commitment requires action steps over the next few months, but these will be superseded by GW's own need to demonstrate progress on and benefit from a broader set of sustainability practices.

Other colleges and universities have established Offices of Sustainability to lead these efforts. While there are variations on the theme, the norm exists. In our view, the first opportunity for leadership is to take bolder steps to make environmental sustainability a high level, high visibility, budget sensitive "department."

We encourage GW's leadership to create a position that has sufficient access to resources and has a seat at "the table" when university policy and decisions are in formation. We say more on this in the White Paper reports that are available online (<http://sustainability.gwu.edu>), but it is our strong belief that GW will be best served if the management of sustainability initiatives is elevated to a position for which both influence and accountability are expected. Over time, the sustainability issues will probably become more subtle, complex, and variable. Any management structure must be able to adapt to these changes.

In addition, it is important to continue engaging all key stakeholders at GW in the sustainability dialogue and process. This could be done by naming an implementation committee to carry forward the work of the task force in a way that ensures broad support for the initiative. GW needs to set in motion both a management and a stakeholder approach that will assure that sustainability continues to grow and evolve long after the easy fixes are in place.



Transparency and Accountability:

Other hallmarks of GW's sustainability effort must be transparency and accountability. Communication must be direct, and facts shared if there is to be integrity. This will require, among other things, developing a set of metrics that can track our sustainability performance, accurate benchmarks for our current performance and regular reporting on progress towards clearly articulated sustainability goals. The Presidents Climate Commitment provides an important early opportunity to establish these procedures and pattern.

In sum, good metrics and open communication of those metrics create transparency which enables change, assures accountability, increases the likelihood our efforts will produce real results, and builds credibility for our sustainability program.

Governance:

The task force was not asked to comment on the role of the board of trustees, but their participation will play a vital role in GW's formula for success in environmental sustainability. Trustees have a unique opportunity to encourage and support GW's leadership in developing new metrics by which to measure the progress of our decisions and actions.

One way to demonstrate this leadership would be the establishment of a board committee on environmental sustainability, and we would encourage greater trustee collaboration with students, faculty, and staff on this topic. As the ultimate governing authority, it is essential that the board of trustees also comprehend the challenges and opportunities inherent in this initiative.



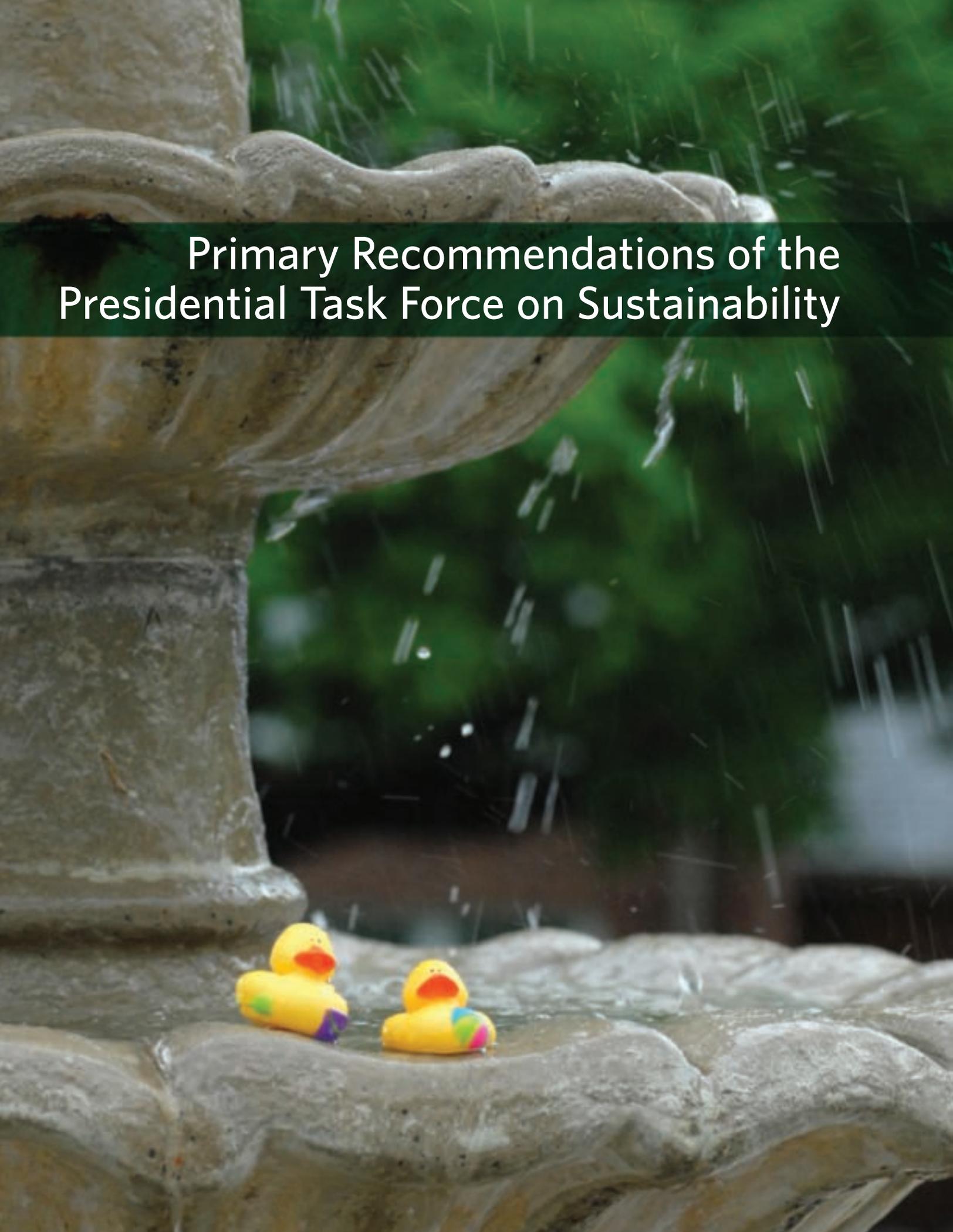


Broader Goals:

One other concept has been present in all our Task Force on Sustainability discussions. While we each may differ on specific issues and solutions, we see environmental sustainability as an entry point for wider considerations on GW's purpose of advancing awareness, learning, and discourse about matters of social and global importance.

We are struck by the abundance in our lives and the opportunities we share collectively and individually as part of the GW community. Environmental sustainability is now front page news as rising energy and food costs drive home the call for action. Thus, GW can act in a manner that serves its needs while also serving the needs of the wider community.

There are, of course, other social, cultural, and economic sustainability issues that deserve study, reflection, and discussion. While less sharply defined, we see those as opportunities for GW as well, and hope the effort to address environmental sustainability offers a starting point for far more ferment and action within our university community.

A photograph of a stone fountain with water spraying upwards. Two yellow rubber ducks are on the stone ledge. The background is a blurred green lawn.

Primary Recommendations of the Presidential Task Force on Sustainability

1. Institutional Commitment:

To be a leader, GW needs to embrace environmental sustainability at all levels and in all departments. There is enormous institutional opportunity to unlock, and it will be incumbent on everyone to contribute. Bold leadership will be required at many levels, but equally important will be a willingness to fund sustainability-related initiatives, and encourage participation and ideas from every corner of the university.

2. Office of Sustainability:

Establish a new office with the leadership, funding, and clout to influence university decisions and coordinate with both the faculty and administrative staff tasked to implement sustainability initiatives. This office will provide a central and visible focal point to ensure the university delivers on its potential to be a sustainability leader. Properly funded, this office should serve as a clearing house for best practices, new programs, and competing budgetary priorities.

3. Curriculum:

GW's greatest opportunity for impact lies in the classroom. GW should expand the variety and quality of sustainability-related courses, programs, and degrees offered and create new opportunities for interdisciplinary study.

4. Research:

Leverage GW's location and other strengths to create a preeminent, interdisciplinary Sustainability Research Institute that is anchored by endowed faculty, that engages students in sustainability-focused research, and that contributes to local, national, and international sustainability policy development.



5. Energy and Resources:

Conserve natural resources we use including energy, water, and materials to help achieve the university's goal of climate neutrality. Energy conservation opportunities are plentiful, but GW must invest in or finance energy-saving infrastructure for cost-effective savings and to accomplish GW's goal of sustainability leadership.

6. Recycling:

Dramatically enhance awareness about GW's recycling system to encourage broad participation and the reuse of a wide variety of materials.

7. Buildings:

Create a process that assures all new buildings and major remodeling projects will meet advanced LEED standards. At a minimum, all new developments should strive for LEED Silver status and all GW campuses should be exemplary in the use of trees, landscaping, and other natural elements.

8. Purchasing:

Establish an environmentally preferred purchasing system to assure GW's acquisition of recycled content materials and energy efficient equipment and items produced locally.

9. Community:

Partner with local and regional governments, businesses, and institutions to raise awareness, host sustainability-related events, and promote community sustainability projects. Engage alumni, neighbors, local businesses, and community organizations to encourage their participation in environmentally healthy practices and to exchange ideas for mutual benefit.

10. Transparency and Accountability:

Make information accessible, so that the challenges, goals, and progress can be observed, understood, challenged, and celebrated by everyone. There may be disagreement on goals and methods, and not every attempt will succeed. GW must be a place where the free exchange of information and ideas on sustainability is supported and where debate and inquiry are the norm. Where there is transparency, there will be accountability, and that integrity is essential.

11. Presidents Climate Commitment:

Ensure that the university meets its responsibilities as agreed to in this national pledge and achieves its commitment to be a climate-neutral campus in a timely manner.

12. Funding:

Becoming a leader in sustainability will require significant investment by the university. The success of the Sustainability Research Institute and other initiatives will depend in part on the university's ability to seek corporate, government, and foundation funding as well as individual gifts. For administration and operations, our vision is that the effort be supported at a minimum by a self-imposed tax on energy use equal to 10 percent of this year's energy budget, and that the commitment extend for at least five years. Regardless of the funding approaches adopted, this effort will require budget choices and must be viewed as a priority.



Summary Task Force Findings and Recommendations



Each of the following short summaries provides a glimpse of the recommendations contained within the White Papers available online (<http://sustainability.gwu.edu>) as described at the end of this section.

Academics

The task force concluded that GW must first approach sustainability as a central part of its academic mission. To do otherwise would be to miss the biggest opportunity to use the strength of the university in addressing the pressing questions that surround the topic.

Frequently, discussions about sustainability start with an examination of the need for more enlightened operating practices, because that is where savings may be found and other waste avoided. Clearly, there are very important opportunities to enhance operating performance, but GW is first and foremost an academic institution.

While GW's facilities must support its academic purpose, it is incumbent on GW's faculty and schools to examine their responsibility to find new purpose and opportunity in leading GW's effort to become a place where environmental sustainability learning and research flourish.

Our report has many more pages devoted to university operations, but we feel strongly that the challenge must be met most aggressively by GW's deans and professors with each contributing, both within their departments and without, to a new sense of cross-disciplinary engagement.

Those of us who have served on this task force have been impressed and encouraged by the students who have helped us. Their commitment and integrity has demonstrated again why GW exists and the potential for the future which GW must nourish.

Curriculum

We believe that an interdisciplinary approach must be embraced. Environmental sustainability touches all disciplines. To relegate it to only one curricular category misses the opportunity. We envision an invigorated approach to an Institute for Sustainability Education and Research that can serve as a clearinghouse and coordinator among departments, thereby enabling students and faculty to collaborate in new and responsive ways. The hope is that every student will be exposed in some manner and that many will be able to build cross disciplinary majors in this field.

Research

We see abundant opportunities for expanded research, but especially if there is a systematic and coordinated approach to allow faculty and student research to work across traditional departmental lines. We believe, therefore, that there needs to be a new Office of Sustainability Research housed within the aforementioned institute to coordinate this faculty activity.

Facilities

It is not surprising that the facilities side of GW is full of near-term opportunities to improve operations from a sustainability perspective. We are a large institution and the cumulative impact of our actions is immediately observable in the campus buildings and management strategies employed.

Energy

Unnecessary energy consumption is obviously an enormous sustainability concern. Given recent trends in energy pricing, it should take little prodding to engage GW in a thoughtful exploration of energy saving alternatives. The potential is enormous, but exciting results will not happen unless there is an investment in understanding and infrastructure to support conservation. Most of the hard work can be done mechanically with better controls. This requires funding, but it is hard to imagine an investment area more prone to a rapid return and long-term benefit.

Buildings

The past few years have seen rapid adoption of LEED certification and other sustainability enhancements for buildings of all types. Previous efforts by GW look inadequate by today's standards for "best practice." Future new buildings at GW will be conspicuous examples of GW's commitment to sustainability, and life cycle costing demands far greater attention to building more sustainable facilities.

Our recommendation is that the equivalence to Silver becomes the minimum LEED target for all new buildings, but the primary goal is to introduce a process that assures that all new facilities are designed and built to the highest standards reasonably possible. There is tremendous progress occurring in the marketplace that should facilitate attaining this goal with little or no added cost, so long as the design intent is articulated at the outset.

Older existing buildings receive less public notice, but are more prevalent at GW and therefore require even more attention as targets of opportunity. Remodeling and retrofits deserve the same process for using sustainable best practices if GW is to be successful in meeting the leadership challenge.



Transportation

GW's urban situation, limited parking and access to mass transit all contribute to a favorable position from a sustainability perspective. Nonetheless, there are many opportunities for further improvement in GW's use of vehicles and in ways that GW may encourage less vehicular travel by employees. From a green house gas perspective, options exist for GW to offset its travel-related carbon footprint.

Recycling

In addition to being sound policy, recycling is a proxy for sustainability awareness at GW. Currently, GW has a recycling program that is only minimally effective. Most people do not understand what can and cannot be recycled, and even the recycling bins around campus are confusing to users. Clearly, more awareness and education about recycling is needed. Among GW employees, the same is true. For instance, who knew that it is \$85 per ton less costly for GW to recycle materials than to dispose of trash? We are in fact *paid* \$30 for recyclables and charged \$55 for trash. Why would we not want to take full advantage of the widest array of recyclable items our vendor will accept and educate students, staff, and faculty sufficiently?

Water

There is growing awareness that water is a scarce resource that requires our attention. Washington, D.C and surrounding areas all contribute to the enormous pollution and ecological problems of the Chesapeake Bay region. Within the District, there is growing awareness of the limitations of our combined sanitary/storm water sewage system. And in recent years, summer droughts have caused other disruptions. One result is higher pricing for water-related municipal services, but those charges tend to mirror the



concerns we should have from a sustainability perspective. As a result, water conservation is increasingly important to GW.

Landscape, Streetscape, Plantings

GW benefits from having several different campus settings, each varied in character; but each enriched by the plant life that is cultivated and sustained by the university. Of course, those same decorative additions also support the environment, primarily by enhancing water and air quality. As water becomes a more precious resource, plants afford us opportunities for water retention and re-use. In addition, GW's Foggy Bottom Campus offers the District a unique laboratory for the cultivation of street trees. Thoughtful planting experimentation, in cooperation with the D.C. Urban Forestry Administration and Casey Trees, could eventually transform GW's main campus into a streetscape arboretum. And all of these programs can take advantage of GW's existing and respected Landscape Design Program for direction.



Green Cleaning Supplies and Services

As in other areas, there is growing awareness about the importance of selecting cleaning agents for reasons that go beyond initial cost or efficiency. As part of GW's commitment to sustainability, it must consider the options that are most likely to accomplish the necessary task while also taking into consideration secondary effects on the health of people and the environment. This is an area that is likely to get increasing attention, and GW will need to work with its suppliers and contractors to develop wise practices. All GW vendors contacted expressed a willingness to substitute "green" products because they had already heard these same concerns raised by many other customers.

Outreach

GW's sustainability effort also affects our broader community building efforts on and off-campus.

Development

From a development perspective, GW's desire for leadership standing in environmental sustainability offers enormous opportunity to more fully engage with our alumni and to demonstrate the relevance of GW in their lives. Other colleges and universities have identified sustainability as one of their primary initiatives in fundraising campaigns. Opportunities exist for engaging with alumni who are now working in related fields, matching GW activities with external funding sources, and developing a GW Sustainability Fund. In sum, it appears that a committed sustainability effort at GW is wholly consistent with developing deeper relations and enhanced funding opportunities for the university.



Community Involvement

GW can be well-served by using its sustainability initiative as yet another method to involve its neighbors, local businesses, and government agencies. The university's leadership and engagement should serve as a catalyst for progress in our neighborhood, city, and region. There are various ways to connect GW's sustainability efforts with our neighbors, other local universities, and local governments for the benefit of all concerned. By sharing our experience and learning from others, we open new opportunities for collaboration to enhance our own work, inspire others, build goodwill, and expand our impact as a sustainability leader.

Communication

GW's sustainability effort needs to be supported by a consistent communications strategy. Most important will be a Web site that can serve as a one-stop shop for sustainability-related programs, events, speakers, and activities. The site is critically important as it will establish the university's environmental mission, provide the history of GW's sustainability efforts, and provide easy links to student organizations, faculty projects, and research opportunities about sustainability. Other tactics are outlined in the report, but the essential elements are accessibility, frequency, consistency, and transparency.

Administration

This category refers to those administrative activities not contained within the broad rubrics of Facilities and Outreach. The following categories are otherwise not normally closely associated with one another.

Procurement and Materials Usage

The task force sees procurement (AKA "Supply Chain") practices as a rich target of opportunity. It is one of the top three areas for impact in sustainability, along with energy and buildings. GW's approach to procurement is decentralized, but we believe there is far more that could be done to influence behavior and encourage best practices across the university. Historically, sustainability issues have not been an evident ingredient in

GW procurement decisions, but the marketplace now provides many exemplary practices and products to make GW's task easier. Who knew, for instance, that 30% recycled copier paper is available from approved GW vendors at no cost premium? Our contention is that even a decentralized system can support sustainability if the eventual users are informed about how to make wiser choices, and especially when preferable options are identified. Because of the scale of GW's annual purchases, vendors care what we want to buy and therefore, GW can affect its own behavior as well as the practices of the vendors and suppliers with whom it does business. Many other large entities do this and there are numerous environmentally preferred purchasing approaches that GW can refer to in developing its policies. In sum, environmental considerations should become part of GW's normal purchasing practices, consistent with such traditional factors as product safety, price, performance, and availability.

Auxiliary Services

This GW department manages food service contracts, vending machines, the copy center, the bookstore, etc. Within this portfolio, food service may be the most significant from a sustainability perspective. At the current time Sodexo is the primary provider of services. They, like others in their industry, are becoming more adept at offering more sustainable food alternatives as consumer choices require their adaptation. Thus far, GW is not on the forefront in this category, but there has been modest progress. This is likely to become an increasingly important area. The other contract vendors are also providing more sustainable offerings in cooperation with requests by GW and its students. Of course, there is always room for them to do more.

Investments

If GW is to be a leader in environmental sustainability, GW must prepare for the inevitable inquiry into its investment practices. Investment transparency is a hot topic among those who seek to evaluate others as environmental leaders. This task force did not seek to answer this question for GW, and we are aware that few if any private universities care to add to their investment decision burden by deciphering which investment vehicle

might inadvertently run afoul of someone else's test for what is socially responsible. Nonetheless, we do believe that it is very much in GW's interest to explore how one could be more transparent without inflicting undue harm to the intended investment returns. This is a matter for the trustees and senior GW leadership. We encourage that group to engage in the discussion internally, and to actively seek ways to mitigate the inevitable damage that silence will otherwise do to GW's broader efforts to attain leadership status.

We also encourage GW's leadership to think proactively about how to finance infrastructure improvements that generate energy savings. We believe there are some high yield options which would attract third party investors, so it is curious that GW does not encourage more self-funding of these improvements.

Lastly, and along the same lines, it seems that GW lacks a clear sense of what investment return is required to allocate capital to infrastructure improvements. Anecdotal evidence suggests that capital budgets are established as though all expenditures were expenses without regard for their potential rate of return as investment decisions. If a financial hurdle rate were known and communicated, it would allow more suggestions to be contributed from people within the organization who may see opportunities not visible from higher levels in the organization.

Administration and Governance

The task force sees enormous opportunity to unite and energize the GW community by using sustainability as the fluid connector between disparate parts of the university. The opportunity requires leadership at many levels, but the most important may be the person who initially heads



GW's Office of Sustainability. Further, we believe that this person must operate from an organizational stance closely associated with the president, so that their work has the stature and budgetary authority to influence participation by all parts of the university.

Our vision is that the sustainability effort be supported by a self-imposed tax on energy use equal to 10 percent of whatever we spent this year, and that the commitment extend for at least five years. Then, various GW departments could compete for funding from this pool and the Office of Sustainability would be expected to justify its budget decisions and be accountable for outcomes. The transparency of this effort is critical, and the difference between this approach and others would herald GW's intent to be a leader.

Task Force Lessons Learned

Universities are at their best when the differing opinions of students, faculty, and staff are encouraged to be shared and enriched through discussion and debate. As we explored sustainability questions together, each of us learned from the others, and our commitment to the shared purpose was enhanced.

The task force was much stronger because students were an integral part of the entire process. They brought energy, passion, optimism, and integrity—the very qualities they bring to the rest of GW. It is easy to see

how important student involvement will be to GW's sustainability efforts in the future.

It is also evident that every department has a role to play, and we trust that the future of this initiative will be strengthened by broad participation by staff and faculty from across the university.



White Paper Reports Available Online

There is ample information available elsewhere regarding specific topics and what others are doing. The task force concluded that there was no value in reciting what is now common wisdom or mimicking the various reports already published by many other institutions. Instead, we have focused our Task Force on Sustainability Report on GW's current practices and made recommendations about how to improve them.

Since each topic represents an array of possibilities, we realized early on that we could only provide a quick introduction to each subject. Members of the task force were subdivided into small committees to tackle each topic.

The resulting topical reports are not exhaustive, but are intended to facilitate action and serve as a starting place and road map for whatever GW groups follow us in dealing with these issues. Since they are authored by different individuals, they may each have a differing voice and structure. Nonetheless, they represent a common view.

Our intention has been to introduce the dialogue through this summary, and encourage the reader to explore any topic in greater detail in the White Papers and Appendices that served as the basis for this summary. For a complete picture of the issues presented, please read the associated Task Force White Paper on each topic area.

Although each White Paper is deliberately brief, printing, and distributing these reports along with this summary seemed inconsistent with our desire to conserve resources and minimize waste. Therefore, a compendium of the White Paper reports is available online at <http://sustainability.gwu.edu>.

Appendices



I Task Force Members

II President's Charge to Task Force

III "Current Sustainability Initiatives" Memo (Feb. 14, 2008)

IV "Low-Hanging Fruit" Memo (Feb. 14, 2008)

Please visit <http://sustainability.gwu.edu> for White Papers and other resources.

Presidential Task Force on Sustainability Members

Mark Starik, co-chair	Department Chair and Professor of Strategic Management and Public Policy, GW School of Business
Lew Rumford, co-chair	Senior Advisor For Business Development
Jill Bond	Director of Corporate Relations, Development Division
Jonathan Deason	Lead Professor of the Environmental and Energy Management Program, School of Engineering and Applied Sciences
Maggie Desmond	Senior, Green GW, GW Student Association
Nicole Friedman	Graduate Student
Nancy Giammatteo	Director of Facilities Planning and Environmental Management
Karen Greenwood	Attorney Fellow, General Counsel's Office
Emily Kessler	Assistant Director of Development
Diane Robinson Knapp	
Jane Kolson	Associate Vice President of Development
Josh Lasky	Presidential Administrative Fellow, Office of Government, International and Community Relations
Lee Paddock	Associate Dean for Environmental Law, GW Law School
Casey Pierzchala	Senior, President of Green GW
Tracy Schario	Director of Media Relations
Doug Spengel	Manager, Energy and Environmental Programs
Sarah Tuntland	Graduate Student, Net Impact

Letter Sent to Presidential Task Force on Sustainability Members

The George Washington University is committed to operating, in all its programs and activities, in ways that express its responsibilities as a preeminent institutional citizen of the nation's capital. That commitment entails an effort to achieve sustainability—that is, to use scarce resources in the most efficient, cost-effective, and environmentally sound way possible. As a research university located at the heart of a complex metropolitan area, GW has the opportunity to provide a national and international model of sustainability in its construction of new facilities, its ongoing operations, and its development of learning and research initiatives that will contribute to the advancement of sustainability as a field of intellectual endeavor and public policy.

I am pleased to ask you to serve on a presidential Task Force on Sustainability that will recommend specific ways in which the university will express its commitment to sustainability and realize its opportunities to contribute to the broader field. In particular, the Task Force is charged with developing recommendations that will address the following topics and areas:

- ▶ Current initiatives
- ▶ Sustainability awareness
- ▶ Research initiatives
- ▶ Learning/curricular opportunities
- ▶ Efficient energy use
- ▶ Resource and waste management
- ▶ Procurement policies
- ▶ Metrics for measuring campus-wide success
- ▶ Service initiatives and partnerships

It is my expectation that the Task Force will also provide advice on the appropriate individuals and/or offices who, in its judgment, should be asked to implement its recommendations, and on the resources it deems necessary for their successful implementation.

The Task Force will work for nine months and will deliver its recommendations by June 1, 2008.

Thank you for your participation in this important initiative.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven Knapp". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

President Steven Knapp

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM

to: PRESIDENT KNAPP
from: THE SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE
subject: CURRENT SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES AT GW
DATE: 2/14/08

The GW Presidential Task Force on Sustainability would like to inform you of the many sustainability initiatives occurring on campus. You may already be aware of many of these, but in case you are not, we would like to bring your attention to the following:

Auxiliary Services

- ▶ Follett bookstore now offers compact fluorescent light bulbs and aluminum water bottles for purchase.
- ▶ Sodexo is now using bulk condiments and is recycling cooking oil for use as biofuel.

Buildings

- ▶ Facilities has requested capital project money to re-lamp Academic Center, Marvin Center, Old Main, and Tompkins Hall.
- ▶ Square 80 changed its specifications to have low-flow shower heads and low-flow toilets installed in the new residence hall.
- ▶ Residential Property Management (“RPM”) has also requested a new type of lighting in the parking garage at the Square 80 residence hall (versus the original design) to save energy.

Communications

- ▶ The task force is developing a sustainability Web site, which in the long-term can be the home of GW’s sustainability initiatives, with the goal to launch by the end of February.
- ▶ A press release announcing university’s Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education membership is in the works.
- ▶ Promotion of GW student/faculty participation in Jan. 31 “global warming teach-in” day to local media resulted in a profile of GW’s efforts in InsideHigherEd.com.

Community Involvement

- ▶ The Institute for Corporate Responsibility (“ICR”) and the Department of Strategic Management and Public Policy (“SMPP”) have worked together so that extra food from events organized by these two entities are delivered to Miriam’s Kitchen which serves food to homeless individuals in the Foggy Bottom neighborhood.

Curriculum & Research

- ▶ SMPP has proposed a new on-line summer course in Sustainable Organizations.
- ▶ ICR conducted a Global Stakeholder Management research workshop and is planning a second Climate Action Conference focusing on the topic “Small Is Sustainable: Small, Group, & Individual Solutions to Climate Crises” for May 2008 on the GW campus with registration open to all GW stakeholders.
- ▶ GW joined the National Council for Science and the Environment.

Energy

- ▶ Facilities did an e-mail blast for both Thanksgiving and the Winter Holidays to encourage energy savings while students and staff were on break (turn off lights and computers, set back thermostats).
- ▶ Facilities restarted a program called “nighttime, weekend, and holiday setbacks” over winter break, reducing heat and air circulated in certain buildings during periods when buildings should not be occupied.
- ▶ Facilities changed the lighting and added occupancy sensors in its own building (Support) to save energy and asked all occupants to help conserve energy with a top-down approach and a poster campaign. The project is expected to save at least 150,000 kilowatt hours a year (or 100 tons of carbon dioxide), with a payback period of less than two years.
- ▶ RPM changed the parking garage lights in City Hall and Dakota to save energy.
- ▶ Facilities installed occupancy sensors in an area of Fungler Hall to save energy and is working on a proposal to equip the rest of Fungler Hall in the same manner.
- ▶ Facilities is installing a natural gas burner in the Smith Center to replace the need to burn oil which will reduce our carbon footprint and our emissions.
- ▶ An energy-savings contest will be held during spring semester in residence halls.
- ▶ Facilities has asked the Budget Office to establish a revolving fund to continue to pay for energy-efficiency projects.

Events:

- ▶ The Green GW House, an eco-friendly student residence, held an open house Jan. 31 to display the environmental practices of its residents.
- ▶ The Law School’s Environmental Law Association held a “footprint” week.
- ▶ The Communications Division is in the beginning stages of planning a university-wide Earth Day celebration.
- ▶ Colonial Inauguration staff are looking into coordinating a “greener” CI by printing on recycled paper, limiting paper distribution, providing recycling at all CI events, and offering an info session about GW sustainability.
- ▶ Green GW is holding a “Light Bulb Trade-In” next week where students will be able to trade in 60 watt light bulbs for 13 watt bulbs (CFLs) to decrease energy consumption.

Greening of Commencement:

- ▶ GW is requesting that the Park Service install recycling bins on the National Mall for Commencement and will hopefully provide extra recycling bins around campus for “departmental” graduations (e.g., law and medical school).
- ▶ Printing invitations tickets and programs on recycled-content paper.
- ▶ Potentially incorporating a “green theme” (www.graduationpledge.org) into Commencement. The Graduation Pledge of Social and Environmental Responsibility states, “I pledge to explore and take into account the social and environmental consequences of any job I consider and will try to improve these

aspects of any organizations for which I work." Those who sign would wear Green Ribbons to signify their commitment.

Procurement:

- Facilities Department and the Law School changed practices to order minimum of 30% recycled content paper and discovered it was both brighter and cheaper than the paper it had been purchasing.

Recycling:

- More recycling bins have been placed in the Smith Center and select dorms.
- GWSB Duquès Hall recycling cans have been re-labeled to reduce confusion among building users and improve recycling rates throughout the building.

Transportation:

- SMPP has established a voluntary carbon offset/renewable energy credit program so that faculty and doctoral students who use air travel to attend department-related conferences can use this account to offset their related green house gas emissions.

INTEROFFICE MEMORANDUM**to:** PRESIDENT KNAPP**from:** THE SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE**subject:** LOW HANGING FRUIT**DATE:** 2/14/08

The GW Presidential Task Force on Sustainability has determined that there are a number of sustainability initiatives that GW can begin to address before the final report is given in June. As requested, we are providing you with these suggestions, so that implementation can begin on the items that do not require further study.

The task force believes the first five suggestions listed are the most important areas to be addressed in the short term, while the supplementary list offers additional ideas that should be addressed if the time and resources are available in the coming months.

OUR TOP FIVE SUGGESTIONS ARE:**1. Recycling**

- ▶ Change color and signage of both indoor and outdoor GW recycling bins so that they are easily distinguishable from “trash” containers.
- ▶ Put signs at each recycling location that clearly denotes what can be recycled.
- ▶ Have flyers sent or blast e-mailed to all GW offices and students stating how to recycle at GW and how important it is to do so.
- ▶ Ensure that recycling bins are located in every dorm and every office.
 - For example—the Dakota residence hall has one recycling bin for all students. This is due to small hallways and trash rooms where fire codes prohibit placing bins. Working with this restriction, develop a way for this dorm to recycle effectively.
- ▶ Do a publicity campaign because people at GW do not think GW recycles:
 - Publish on sustainability website or Facilities website transparent information/statistics for how much GW recycles.
 - Ensure that housekeeping staff does not mix recyclables with trash and does not perform any actions that might make a passerby *think* they are mixing the bins.
 - Clearly label our ‘recycling truck’ as such so it is clear to staff and students that we are serious about collecting the recycled materials separately.
- ▶ Include education on recycling and energy saving practices as a part of Colonial Inauguration and provide recycling bins at all their events.
- ▶ Include education on recycling and energy saving practices as a part of New Employee Orientation.
- ▶ Provide every dorm room with a recycling bin with a clear label of what can be recycled along with the trash bin already provided.

- ▶ During Commencement on the National Mall and other university events, such as those at the Smith Center, ensure that recycling containers are available.
- ▶ Place recycling containers on sidewalks around the Foggy Bottom Campus.
- ▶ Make announcements encouraging recycling at all GW events such as sports games, lectures, meetings, etc. (e.g., at basketball games recycling could be “talked up” on the electronic news feed as well as by the announcer).

2. Paper Use

- ▶ Encourage all university marketing materials and communications to be printed on recycled-content paper (including but not limited to admissions brochures, endowment reports, and alumni mailings, etc.).
- ▶ Recommend that all departments, including the computer labs and the libraries, order at least 30% recycled content paper for daily printing and copy use.
- ▶ Recommend that communications to employees, staff and students be sent via e-mail and by verbal announcements where possible (versus sending everyone a flier).

3. Energy Use

- ▶ Install occupancy sensors where possible - ask Facilities to install motion sensors throughout campus in as many classrooms, restrooms, conference rooms, study rooms, etc., as possible to reduce energy consumption when rooms and facilities are not occupied.
- ▶ Replace all incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.
- ▶ Request all employees to turn off their office lights when they leave for the day.

4. Energy Star Appliances

- ▶ Recommend that the Procurement Office, individual departments and schools set an Energy Star minimum for all appliances and copiers purchased by the university.

5. LEED Buildings

- ▶ While the 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan requires a minimum LEED score of 16 points for new developments, ensure that all new construction and building renovations incorporate as many LEED points as possible.

Other Recommendations include:

Development

- ▶ Survey GW alumni regarding their interest in sustainability and their ability to engage in GW sustainability projects.

Auxiliary Services

- ▶ Work with Follett bookstore to carry environmental products and to add signage to make customers aware of eco-friendly offerings.
- ▶ Ask Sodexo to provide environmental friendly containers and utensils, especially during Commencement.

Buildings

- ▶ Establish a Green Roof Demonstration project on an existing Foggy Bottom Campus building to spur future projects and build awareness.

Communications and Participation

- ▶ Develop a university-wide event to recognize Earth Day and the accomplishments of “green” student organizations and university accomplishments.
- ▶ Increase university promotion of the “ecolympics” in residence halls and EPA recycling competitions.
- ▶ Develop regular sustainability messages that can be included in internal and external publications to spread the concept of sustainability.
- ▶ Publicize and record past and ongoing sustainability achievements by GW, such as New Hall as one of the first “green dorms” and the GW staff/faculty Metro pass program.
- ▶ Encourage GW top management (Board, President, & VPs) to visit classes and campus worksites to discuss sustainability topics with students, faculty, and staff.
- ▶ Offer a forum, panel presentation, or exhibit to publicize student sustainability projects culminating at the end of each semester.
- ▶ Put to the students for a vote a “student sustainability fee” to purchase alternative energy. (UMD recently voted to implement such a fee that would begin at \$4 and increase by \$2 a year for a maximum of \$12).

Community Involvement

- ▶ Work with the D.C. city government to co-sponsor a Sustainable D.C. conference in the next 6-12 months.
- ▶ Invite neighbors in Foggy Bottom/West End community to participate in discussions on sustainability and provide feedback on campus improvement, particularly landscaping and streetscape issues. The 2007 Foggy Bottom Campus Plan includes a streetscape plan and provisions for soliciting community feedback.
- ▶ Engage local businesses in Foggy Bottom/West End to begin investigating or investing in renewable energy. Share knowledge and resources on sustainable best practices with small businesses.
- ▶ Connect with leadership of local community organizations, such as FRIENDS, Foggy Bottom Association, West End Citizens Association, Advisory Neighborhood Commission 2A, Foggy Bottom Garden Club, and others to provide information on GW’s plans to implement sustainable ideas.
- ▶ Bring together leaders from GW and the District Department of the Environment for a strategy session on developing a sustainable campus in Foggy Bottom.
- ▶ Provide a report on Sustainability Task Force’s progress to the Consortium of Universities in the Washington Metropolitan Area.

Curriculum & Research

- ▶ Complete brochure or online listing of GW’s sustainability courses and sustainability-related programs and centers. The online listing will be included in the Web site.

- ▶ Complete the development of a new interdisciplinary climate change course at both the undergraduate and graduate level.
- ▶ Create an informal sustainability collaborative that will quickly link existing GW programs that relate to sustainability and will set the stage for developing a GW Sustainability Center.
- ▶ Publicize both the courses in sustainability as well as the distinctive programs at GW (Environmental Policy and Management Program, Environmental Law Program, Environmental and Resource Policy Program, Environmental and Occupational Health Program, Environmental Engineering Program, Environmental and Energy Management Program).
- ▶ Reconstitute faculty energy policy research gatherings (started by the previous GW Chief Research Officer) and initiate other faculty sustainability research interest groups.
- ▶ Gather information from both academic and administrative departments about their current and planned sustainability activities.

Energy

- ▶ Fund an audit of our current energy management systems with the idea of making them more easily monitored and adjusted.
- ▶ Consider closing the campus during the week between Christmas and New Years to reduce energy consumption and save on energy costs (University of Maryland, Catholic University and George Mason are local schools that currently close during this period).

Landscape

- ▶ Upgrade environmental aesthetics, especially on the Foggy Bottom Campus, by inventorying current ecological landscaping practices and potential opportunities for more native plants throughout the campus area.

Procurement

- ▶ Commit to a sustainability review for all capital expenditures over \$25,000.

Transportation

- ▶ Request that all future Zipcars parked on GW's campus be hybrids.
- ▶ Incentives/Rewards:
 - Provide a discounted parking rate for faculty, staff and students who drive gas electric hybrid cars.
 - Provide small gift certificates to faculty and staff who ride a bike to campus, redeemable at a local bike shop.
 - Provide small gift certificates to faculty and staff who walk to campus, redeemable at a local shoe store.
 - Review public transit and alternative commuting incentives to see if the incentives can be enhanced.
- ▶ Install additional bike racks throughout campus.

- Ensure all University-owned and contracted vehicles observe DC law on idling (especially the Mount Vernon Campus shuttle buses).
- Support the Student Association's initiative to secure a reduced metro fare for students during non-peak hours.
- Require carbon offsets for university-sponsored air travel, when available.
- Consider sustainability issues in any upcoming fleet purchases.

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