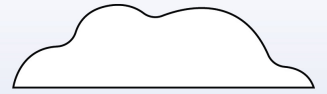
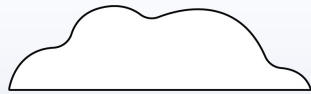


Office of Sustainability

2023 Annual Report



A Letter from the Co-Directors...



With the strategic initiation by President Dennis Assanis, the Office of Sustainability officially opened its doors in January of 2023 to advance sustainable approaches in every aspect of life at UD. Anchoring the work of the new Office, the two of us were brought in to serve as co-directors to assist with operations (Jeffrey Summerhays as Director of Sustainable Operations) and academics (Chris Williams as Associate Provost and Academic Director). We are grateful to celebrate being one year old and it has been a busy year to get the Office up and running.



Like the beautiful state we live in, the Office draws strength from the rich and broad diversity of cultures, histories, perspectives, and opportunities present at the University of Delaware. Our guiding principle is not just numbers (moving up to 33rd in QS World Rankings in Sustainability) but protecting the intrinsic blessings of our environment.

Just like the natural variety across forests to beaches in Delaware, the Office has pursued an array of quantifiable efforts specifically: interdisciplinary education, operations, and holistic wellness. For without knowledge of our impact, how can we light our minds? We can preserve our life sustaining ecosystems (both natural and built) by jointly forging a strategy geared at transformational impact.

In the year(s) to come, the Office will be focusing on collecting internal data, facilitating courses that advance sustainability and student engagement, greening operations, and exploring future environmentally resilient initiatives recommended by the University of Delaware community. Realizing a sustainable world through a sustainable campus is achievable with our partnerships, and shared desire to reimagine the possibilities that lie ahead.

In the following pages, we present numerous updates of our accomplishments in our first year of operation within office organization and reporting, academics, operations, and community engagement. We look forward to more advances in 2024 to make the University of Delaware a national leader in sustainability!



Jeffrey Summerhays and Chris Williams

A SMALL SAMPLING OF UD'S SUSTAINABILITY IMPACT

By the NUMBERS



2 new co-directors leading the new Office of Sustainability

The new ReusePass to-go food containers have removed **27,081** single-use containers being thrown away and saved **17,947** lbs of greenhouse gas emissions and **17,224** gallons of water



>2500
people the office engaged with about sustainability initiatives.



#33

QS World University Rankings ranked UD's success at Sustainability at #33 in the U.S. and #240 globally out of nearly 1,400 institutions (raising us nearly 200 places from the last year)





>450

courses, across **37** Departments and all **8** Colleges, teach aspects of sustainability. This includes **5** new courses added through the Summer Course Development Institute – Sustainability Fellows Program

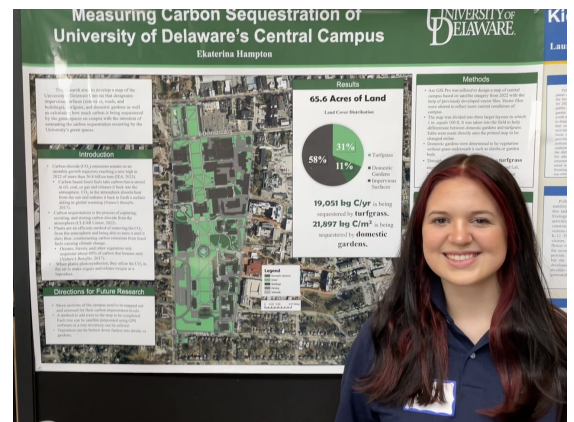


32.6 Million

pounds of waste was recycled including plastics, paper, aluminum, construction, move out furniture, and a new program to compost all food waste

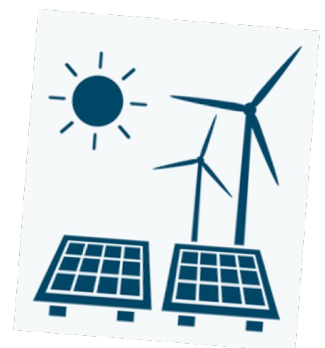
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student interns, researchers, and capstone students have worked with the Office of Sustainability in their Living Labs Program



180kW

Solar installation will be added to Building X to increase UD's renewable energy generation



2023 ACCOMPLISHMENTS FOR THE OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

INTRODUCTION

The University of Delaware Office of Sustainability provides an annual report of its activities to the Provost's and President's Offices. This report describes our work over the 2023 calendar year and outlines next steps for the coming academic year. The Office of Sustainability was governed by 4 main principles during its first year including: 1) Establish the Office governance, procedures, and report on sustainability initiatives. 2) Enhance sustainability focused education, research, and innovation, 3) Promote sustainable facilities and operations, and 4) Promote sustainability through student, faculty, and staff community engagement. This annual report is designed to be concise. The Office would be pleased to provide additional information about our work in the past academic year.

OBJECTIVE 1: ESTABLISH OFFICE GOVERNANCE, PROCEDURES, AND REPORT

SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVES

The Office of Sustainability officially opened on January 1st, 2023 and the first priority was to work on establishing a guiding governance and procedures. Between December 2022-March 2023 the co-directors were identified and include Dr. Chris Williams as the Associate Provost and Academic Director for Sustainability and Jeffrey Summerhays as the Director of Sustainable Operations to bring an interdisciplinary approach to making UD a sustainable leader across both academics and operations. During 2023, the co-directors worked with UD leadership to 1) Document the roles and responsibilities of the Office and its leadership, 2) Establish operating procedures for main Office functions, 3) Develop a funding strategy in consultation with industry relations and the development office, 4) Discuss Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and metrics by which the Office will demonstrate and benchmark accomplishments, and 5) empanel internal and external advisory councils that can be leveraged to support the Office mission and champion its work on campus and to external communities and stakeholders. During the 2023 calendar year, a strategic planning group was convened to assist with these goals and a draft strategic plan has been created. This will continue into 2024 to formalize the plan and the Office governance and procedures. Additionally, in January 2024, the UD Sustainability Council voted to disband, and the Office is in the process of creating new internal and external advisory committees to the Office.

The Office regularly works with the Office of Development and Alumni Relations, along with internal grant searching and writing, to provide supplemental funding for Office initiatives. Through the kindness of many private donors, the office oversees several small funds to support student sustainability learning experiences and initiatives. The Office is also actively exploring energy efficiency projects to improve operational efficiency and financial saving.

A key component of benchmarking sustainability success is collecting data on initiatives and operations. In 2023, the Office reported on academic and operations successes to QS World Rankings: Sustainability. We rose approximately 200 places earning #33 in the United States and #240 globally out of 1,400 institutions. During 2024, the Office is undergoing the lengthy process to be reranked by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) to show improvement from our expired 2020 bronze ranking.

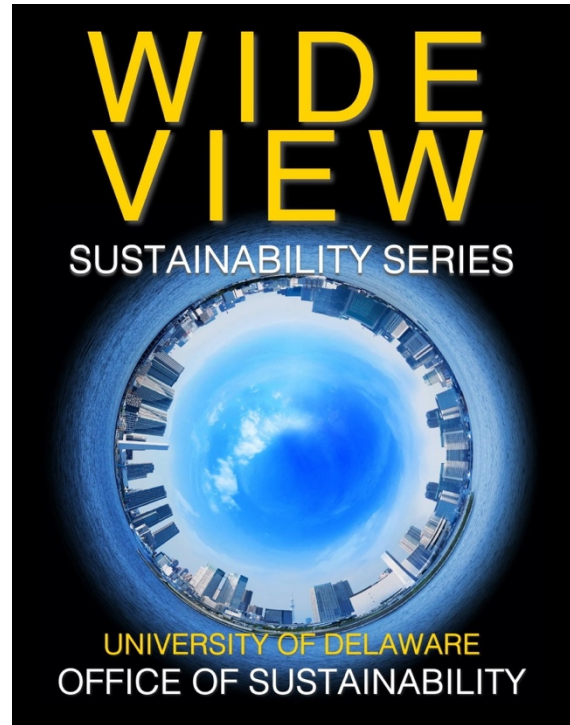
OBJECTIVE 2: ENHANCE SUSTAINABILITY FOCUSED EDUCATION, RESEARCH, AND INNOVATION

The Associate Provost and Academic Director is focused on creating an environment where there will be increased sustainability education and scholarship across the many academic disciplines across UD. In this vein, multiple accomplishments have occurred:

- In 2023, with the help of student interns a preliminary list of over 400 classes across all eight academic colleges were identified that were either lite “Sustainability Connections” or in-depth “Sustainability Investigations” course. This work continues in 2024 with departments to refine this list and support future class engagement.
- In 2023, the Office of Sustainability partnered with the Center for Teaching Assessment and Learning to support 5 Faculty Sustainability Course Development Summer Fellows who designed new courses that engaged sustainability.
- The Office of Sustainability continued to work with the Faculty Senate to designate a formal tracking of courses that meet a Connections and Investigations designation in future years to assist student find sustainability classes across the Colleges.
- The Office now oversees a new Graduate Certificate in Sustainability to offer graduate students the opportunity to add on a sustainability focus to their specific area of study and active recruitment to build this opportunity is underway across the Office of Sustainability and the Graduate College.
- The Office facilitates opportunities for the campus to serve as a testing ground for capstone classes, internships, and living-learning experiences where students

play an active role to research, present, and drive forward solutions to address on-campus sustainability challenges. During 2023, the Office supported 27 undergraduate and graduate students to research sustainability topics that advised UD as well as the students' education and engaged educational experience.

- The Office partnered with the UD Library to start to build an inventory and website of open access sustainability research publications by UD faculty
- The Office is sponsoring and leading research seminars, workshop, and teach-ins to highlight sustainability related scholarship by faculty and students. In Fall 2023, they sponsored the “Wide View” Sustainability Series to discuss sustainability in the fashion industry and in Spring 2024, they will be hosting the 3rd annual Presidential Symposium and Teach-in on Sustainability and Climate Change within both the Built and Natural Environment.



OBJECTIVE 3: PROMOTE SUSTAINABLE FACILITIES AND OPERATIONS

- The Office of Sustainability supports reduction of greenhouse gas and air pollutant emissions. The Office started collecting Scope 1 and Scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions over the last 10 years as well as encourage new purchases that would assist in future reductions. For instance, UD purchased two electric mowers and several other landscaping equipment to reduce gasoline purchase and carbon emissions.
- The Office of Sustainability is dedicated to helping UD reduce energy consumption and building efficiency through conservation and efficiency and switching to cleaner and renewable sources of energy. During 2023, the following activities helped toward that goal:
 - Building X to meet or exceed 180kW solar installation, UD retaining all SRECs
 - Future projects include 1) a Solar Canopy purchase power agreement, and 2) The Fred Rust Ice Arena is qualifying for \$250k in grants and

rebates with state programs aimed at increasing energy efficiency, minimizing greenhouse gas emissions, and saving UD money in operating expenses.

- In conjunction with Energize Delaware and UD students working with the Mid-Atlantic Industrial Assessment Center, an energy audit at the Perkins Student Center was conducted to provide a recommended plan to increase its energy efficiency. If implemented, it is predicted there will be a \$1:3 spend-to-savings ratio.
- The Office of Sustainability is dedicated to support a sustainable food system including collecting data on food system purchasing and provide recommendations to increase sustainable, ethically produced, or plant-based options as well as evaluate the University's current sustainable food systems initiatives and partner with the vendor to enhance opportunities and initiatives. To meet that goal, we have accomplished the following:
 - Aramark is sending regular sustainable dining communications to +6,000 UD campus community members.
 - Dining services provides many sustainable food options including certified "Cool Foods" climate friendly meals, locally sourced foods, sustainable fish Fridays, and hydroponics towers growing produce in the dining halls.
 - ReusePass was implemented in Fall of 2023 to provide reusable to-go containers for student diners. 3,393 UD student users took advantage of the program on average of 2.23 uses per week per user. During the Fall and Winter Sessions, the program has reduced 17,947 lbs CO2 equivalent greenhouse gasses, saved 17,224 gallons of water, and removed 2,477 lbs of waste by avoiding 27,081 Single-Use containers that would have been thrown away.
 - Working with Aramark to sell the unused food digesters in Caesar Rodney Dining Hall (City of Newark forced the stoppage of their use due to waste water concerns). Proceeds will go to FREAS sustainability projects
- The Office is committed to exploring future sustainable transportation systems. In 2023, the Office completed a new Transportation Master Plan started by the Sustainability Council in 2022 that provides recommendations for transitioning the university fleet to be more fuel efficient and/or electric, increasing the number of EV chargers, and increasing cycling and commuting options.
- UD and the Office of Sustainability are committed to reducing as much waste as is possible. During 2023, numerous diversions occurred including:
 - 8 million lbs of recycling was diverted at a rate of 15.2% of the total waste which was up from 11.3% in 2022.
 - 31.6 million lbs of construction waste related to Building X construction was recycled.

- All UD cafeterias are now part of a composting program that diverts food waste. To date, approximately 136,000 lbs have been diverted. These diverted materials are sent to anaerobic digesters operated by Natural Upcycling.
- UD Government Affairs and the Office of Sustainability collaborated on the 2023 UDont Need It program and diverted 55,000 lbs of waste that would have gone to the landfill and resold those items to the community.
- The Office of Sustainability initiated a new Graduation Gown Recycling program collecting 40 gowns that will be donated to students in need in 2024.
- Worked with Lerner Capstone Class to conduct a cost/benefit analysis for a UD e-waste program and improved recycling program.
- The Office initiated use of the Ecosia search engine at UD computing centers which raises money for international tree planting efforts. Thus far UD has recorded >20,000 searches and funded >400 tree plantings.

OBJECTIVE 4: PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY THROUGH STUDENT, FACULTY, AND STAFF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

The Office of Sustainability is dedicated toward outreach and engagement efforts across campus and in our community.

- Within UD, the Office is working with the Office of Undergraduate Education to add a module on sustainability in UNIV101 Freshman seminar assuring all entering freshman learn about sustainability and be engaged sustainable citizens on the UD campus.
- The Office has created a new sustainability literacy assessment that will be given to incoming freshman and outgoing seniors to determine the knowledge gained during their college career.
- The Office hosted the 3rd annual Green Hen Awards to recognize an outstanding student, faculty member, and staff member. This year's winners were Bradie Crandall, Haritha Malladi, and Katie Pollock, respectively.
- The Office began hosting training sessions for new faculty and staff to educate employees about the University's sustainability practices and to develop on-going learning opportunities about sustainable practices.



- The Office funded a \$5000 Green Grant to graduate students at the Lewes Campus to purchase FREAS approved window fritting (circular-shaped decals) to help reduce the reflective properties of the windows and reduce the likelihood of bird collisions.
- The Office co-sponsored the Spring “Presidential Symposium and Teach-in on Sustainability and Climate Change” and the Fall “Wide View Sustainability Series” to educate the UD and external



- community about sustainable research and practices that improve our planet.
- The Office also works to catalyze sustainable communities through public engagement, community partnerships, and service. In 2023, we collaborated with Carnegie Mellon University and Rutgers University to discuss ideas and initiatives to advance all of our colleges. Additionally, the Office participated in many workshops hosted by AASHE to advance knowledge in both academics and in operations.

- The Office is also a board member of RASCL (Resilience and Sustainable Communities League) as well as a contributor to the Youth Environmental Summit (both of which work to discuss and teach about sustainability to Delaware communities and our children.



- The Office sends out monthly communications to inform the UD Community about sustainability research and Office initiatives. Further the Office regularly updates its website with informative and timely information as well as actively work with the Office of Communication and Marketing to write UDaily stories that advance UD’s sustainability messaging.

- The Office partnered with the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources Sustainability Committee to host an educational booth at Ag Day.
- The Office of Sustainability presented at the 2024 Supplier Diversity Conference’s workshop entitled “Are Sustainability and Diversity Goals Compatible? Can Your Organization Meet Both?”
- The Office of Sustainability presented at the 2023 NEAP, District II Mid-Atlantic Fall Conference on supplier sustainability.

