



**GRADUATE
SUSTAINABILITY
GROUP**

FIRST ANNUAL REPORT

JANUARY 2014-MAY 2015

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GSG FLAGSHIP PROGRAMS

Student Sustainability Leaders Summits (SSLs)

Spring 2014: Showcasing Sustainability Initiatives

On April 18, 2014 the GSG ran its first SSLS that focused on showcasing student sustainability initiatives. The 50 attendees listened to 5 minute flash talks from 10 Emory and non-Emory student leaders, including a video presentation from Malika Shettar on working towards sustainability on Emory's [Oxford College](#) campus and a guest presentation on the power of harnessing business and technology towards sustainability from the [Georgia Institute of Technology](#) student Michael Maziar. The session was rounded out with a brief introduction to the [National Wildlife Federation's](#) (NWF) [EcoLeaders](#) program and a closing presentation by Emily Cumbie-Drake from Emory's [Office of Sustainability Initiatives](#) (OSI). See the [Summit Agenda](#) for a full list of presentations.

Fall 2014: Mapping the Graduate Student Sustainability Network

On November 19, 2014, the [Graduate Sustainability Group](#) shared the preliminary results of an ongoing student-led study that is mapping and visualizing the network of graduate students involved in sustainability at Emory. The results allow students and graduate student groups interested in sustainability to understand their position in the network and take steps to strengthen our sustainability community. Emory Village Chipotle graciously provided 50 free burritos for the event. In the spirit of collaboration, leaders from student groups identified by the research spoke about their upcoming events and initiatives during the second half of the Summit. In total, more than 50 student and faculty attendees made the event a great success. The GSG is now profiling most of the 21 graduate student-ran sustainability events and initiatives on the [Graduate Student Groups](#) page of this website.

GSG/LGS Sustainability Ambassadors Program

One of the GSG's earliest partnership projects, the GSG/LGS Sustainability Ambassadors program is continuing to support graduate students in the pursuit of sustainability across Laney the Graduate School (LGS). Modeled off the Anthropology Department's sustainability committee, the program recruits interested students to serve as "ambassadors" to work on sustainability in their doctorate and masters programs. This program aims to give sustainability-minded individual students across the university the tools and support they need to make the daily operations of their departments more sustainable. GSG treasurer Sarah Whitaker leads ambassadors in several meetings throughout the semester to brainstorm changes they can bring to their home departments. Examples of implemented projects include making recycling bins more visible and accessible, signs to raise awareness of turning out lights, and providing simple instructions on how to print double-sided. The program aims to cover all LGS programs in the future.

Sustainability Case Competition (SCC)

Every year, Emory's Goizueta Business School and the Global Health Institute (GHI) run case competitions where teams of students work through a challenging problem, either in business or public health, respectively. The competitions challenge students to engage with important topics in a creative manner, work quickly as part of a team, and network with prominent professionals in the business and global health fields. What is lacking on our campus is a case competition that specifically focuses solving problems that are vital to creating a sustainable future for all.

During the 2014/2015 academic year, the GSG put together a Sustainability Case Competition Planning Committee to organize Emory's inaugural Sustainability Case Competition (SCC). The competition will help move the Emory community a little closer towards a world that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. While most case competitions create imaginary scenarios, to maximize impact, the Emory Sustainability Case Competition will focus on real life sustainability issues that affect the Emory community on campus, in Atlanta and beyond. The Planning Committee is made up of a multidisciplinary undergraduate and graduate student team and the first competition is scheduled to kick off in the fall of 2015.

GSG EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Spring 2014: GSG Hosts Eat.Teach.Talk.Run

On Tuesday, March 18th, 2014 the GSG hosted a special session of **Eat.Teach.Talk.Run (ETTR)**! Started in 2011 by **Brian Croxall** and **Howard Chiou**, ETTR is an event where graduate student speakers share innovative teaching ideas and techniques in a series of 4 minute flash-talks to other graduate students. The event has seen great success, with ETTR chapters appearing at the University of Chicago and at Stanford University. The [Fall 2014 session](#) featured talks by John Trimper, Orion Keifer and Ioulia Fenton.

Fall 2014 Laney Picnic Partnership



Laney Welcome Picnic is one of the best-attended annual student activities. In order to reduce waste, during the Fall 2014 orientation, GSG partnered with Laney to provide students with reusable cups for the event (pictured). GSG officers and volunteers helped manage waste by directing attendees to recycling stations.

Fall 2014 – Pilot: Incoming Graduate Student Outreach

In May 2014, Ioulia Fenton participated in Emory's **Piedmont TATTO** project, a “one-day workshop for graduate students that highlights ways in which sustainability can integrate with disciplinary teaching opportunities.” As part of the output for the workshop, she developed an incoming graduate student outreach activity that served as a pilot for the GSG program to integrate sustainability into future student orientation events. The outreach activity centered on reaching incoming graduate students during their department/program level orientation activities in order to a) make up for a reduction in sustainability messaging during the major Laney orientation and b) socialize the students as early as possible into thinking about sustainability in their teaching, research, and daily life as members of the Emory community. A total of four 15 minute talks were delivered to: 6 students in the Anthropology program; 8 students in the School of Nursing; 29 students in the department of Chemistry; 35 1st and 2nd year students in the Psychology program; and 6 sociology students in their Pro Seminar class.

Fall 2014: Composting for Apartment Living Workshop

Part of GSG's mission is to provide graduate students and other Emory community members with practical opportunities to be involved in sustainability and build tangible life skills for a sustainable future. On October 24, 2014 the GSG held the hands-on *Composting for Apartment Living Workshop* by the Cox Hall Educational Garden. Permaculture Designer Sumayya Allen, who runs the [Emory Educational Garden Initiative](#), led the 12 workshop participants through building a compost pile, while teaching them about composting options for their homes.

Fall 2014: GSG Sponsors Vandana Shiva Talk

Vandana Shiva is a world-renowned environmental activist and anti-globalization scholar. Her prolific publishing career includes 20 books, such as the 1992 widely acclaimed *The Violence of the Green Revolution: Ecological degradation and political conflict in Punjab* and the recent 2013 *Making Peace With The Earth* volume. GSG was proud to be one of six Emory organizations and departments to sponsor Dr. Shiva's visit to the University, her first since 2006. The audience over-filled a spacious seminar room 102 in the *Center for Ethics* on November 6, 2014 as the participants heard Dr. Shiva discuss *Seed Freedom and Food Democracy*.

Fall 2014: GSG Pilot: Mapping the Emory Graduate Student Sustainability Social Network.

During Fall 2014, the GSG ran a pilot study to map Emory University's graduate student sustainability social network. The student research team, made up of three Anthropology students and three Masters in Development Practice (MDP) students, used Social Network Analysis to map the network and better understand how graduate students leaders—those who actively further sustainability through projects and initiatives—engage with sustainability and each other. Data analysis is ongoing, but the team shared preliminary results during the November 19, 2014 GSG [Student Sustainability Leaders Summit](#). The analysis has confirmed the team's hypothesis that while there are many sustainability groups and initiatives at the graduate level (21 in total), they tend to be relatively siloed and cluster along department and program lines. In addition, the 120+ students in the network have been actively engaged in 28 University-led sustainability initiatives and 43 sustainability-related organizations off campus. Further analysis will discover the characteristics of the most active and connected individuals and help the GSG and Emory better plan for succession of key leaders.

Spring 2015: Student Involvement in Climate@Emory

[Climate@Emory](#) is an Emory University faculty-led effort to increase scholarship, conversations and action around climate change on Emory's campus. The leaders, Daniel Rochberg and Eri Saikawa, who teach in both the department of Environmental Sciences in Emory College and Environmental Health at Rollins School of Public Health, were honored for the initiative by jointly receiving the Office of Sustainability Initiatives 2014 [Faculty Robert S. Hascall Sustainability Innovator Award](#). In February 2015, the GSG facilitated the next phase of Climate@Emory by organizing a focus group session with undergraduate and graduate student leaders to help shape the program towards student needs, goals and desires.

Spring 2015: Seedlings Giveaway at Earth Day Fair

To encourage more of Emory's community to garden, GSG gave away over 150 seedlings during the April Earth Day Fair on Cox Bridge. The GSG team grew the organic seedlings of cilantro, basil, tomatoes, eggplant, and peppers from seed and additional young lavender, oregano, thyme, and chive plants were donated by Emory Recycles. The GSG further partnered with Emory Recycles on the day to encourage students, faculty and staff to help paint and stencil a large filing cabinet that the Emory Surplus Store repurposed into a raised bed. The bed was filled with

soil and planted with a garden on the day. The raised garden is set to be donated to Toomer Elementary thanks to the help of Emory's student chapter of Roots and Shoots, an organization started by Jane Goodall that enables university students to educate elementary school students on becoming ecological citizens.

Spring 2015: Food Chains Screening

On Tuesday March 24, 2015 GSG was proud to participate in the tour of Food Chains, produced by Eva Longoria and Eric Schlosser. Released last fall in theaters nationwide, the film explores the human element in our food system and reveals the impact of the US supermarket industry's complicity in perpetuating human rights violations of workers at the base of the agricultural supply chain.

Spring 2015: Preserving Now Apple Butter Canning Workshop

On Wednesday March 25, 2015, GSG held its second hands-on workshop for sustainable living. Lyn Deardorf from Preserving Now taught seven students how to make and preserve apple butter in a glass jar. The workshop cost just \$15 per person (a drastically reduced special price) and was held in the Few Hall Demo Kitchen. GSG is planning a regular canning workshop stream for the fall of 2015, including a "Man Can" series to attract male students, faculty and staff.

Spring 2015: GSG Sponsors Four Students to Attend Georgia Organics Conference

To encourage participation in the Georgia sustainability community, through a competitive process, GSG sponsored four students to attend the 2015 Georgia Organics conference in Athens. The students have all produced materials from the conference that the GSG can spread to the rest of the community, including planning an additional campus talk on making sense of food labels in October 2015.

Summer 2015: Responsible Mover's Guide

To encourage incoming students, faculty and staff to lead a more sustainable lifestyle from the moment they commit to come to Emory, the GSG developed a Responsible Mover's Guide. The Guide has been distributed to all of Emory's School's administrators dealing with incoming graduate students, who have in turn passed the Guide to their incoming cohorts and shared the guide on their respective websites. The Guide can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/MoversGuide>

AWARDS, GRANTS & FUNDING



Fall 2014: GSG President Wins Graduate Sustainability Innovator Award

Since 2007, Emory's [Office of Sustainability Initiatives \(OSI\)](#) has celebrated innovative efforts by students, faculty and staff to further sustainability on campus. The winners are announced during the annual Emory Sustainable Food Fair. In Fall 2014, GSG's President, Ioulia Fenton, received the [Graduate Student Robert S. Hascall Sustainability Innovator Award](#) for her work in helping found and run the GSG, teaching the Spring 2014 *Age of Sustainable Development* course, publishing articles about sustainability in the [Emory Wheel](#), and other initiatives.

Fall 2014: \$1,000 Sodexo Catering Grant for Sustainable Events

On April 18, 2014, Emory University held its first World Cup Soccer Tournament, organized by History PhD student Chris Brown and others. The GSG acted as a partner for the event and helped it secure a \$1,000 catering grant from Emory's catering contractor Sodexo. \$650 was spent on food, \$200 on drinks, and \$150 on compostable plates, cups and cutlery, as well as rental of composting and recycling bins from Campus Services. The event was completely zero landfill waste and volunteers from the GSG and elsewhere helped minimize waste contamination by manning the recycling and composting stations and educating event goers about proper disposal of non-landfill waste.

Fall 2014: OSI Sustainability Incentives Fund Awards \$1,800 to the GSG Sustainability Social Network Analysis Project.

In October 2014, GSG leaders Ioulia Fenton and Andrea Rissing were awarded \$1,800 from the Office of Sustainability Initiatives (OSI) competitive Sustainability Incentive Fund for their research project "Mapping Emory's Sustainability Social Network." OSI subsequently expanded the funding to \$3,800. After piloting the project with Emory graduate students involved in sustainability during Fall 2014, the University-wide project took place during Spring 2015. This project represented a novel application of SNA to issues of community and sustainability in the higher education context. It offered a unique opportunity for the Emory

sustainability community to reflexively map out its own strengths and weaknesses, contributed to the methodological training of several graduate students in Anthropology and Masters of Development Practice, and provided a research precedent for other institutions of higher learning seeking to strengthen their own sustainability work. Data collection was completed in May 2015 and qualitative and quantitative analyses are ongoing; Fenton will present preliminary results at the 2015 AASHE conference.

