

## Campus Sustainability: Analysis and Action

**Time:** Tu 1.30–2.50pm and F 1.30–4.20pm

**Place:** D42

**Level:** Introductory

**Credits:** 4

**Instructors:** Clare Hipschman and Matt Ollis

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**Website:** <http://cs.marlboro.edu/courses/spring2012/sustainable/home>

**Blurb:** In our Environmental Mission Statement we commit to “using energy efficiently and resources wisely.” Do we? How do we know? In this course we compare different methods of assessing environmental impact and dig into the data to evaluate our performance via an ecological footprint assessment of the undergraduate campus. This will be complemented by hands-on activities ranging across many topics within sustainability at every level of the Marlboro community. These topics include energy, waste, food and our landscape as well as whatever other projects we devise as a class.

As a first approximation, we’ll analyse on Tuesdays and act on Fridays. The action begins tomorrow with worm composting—see below—and will continue with a variety of projects, including energy conservation, sustainable building and lots of other work projects that you’ll be generating. We’ll spend a brief time on the next Tuesday or two considering the “big picture” into which sustainability at Marlboro fits. From there we’ll look in detail at the methodology of creating an ecological footprint analysis and build on earlier student efforts to create an updated one for Marlboro. Beyond this, in keeping with the action side, there will be plenty of space for you to drive the conversations and the choices of topics.

The text for the course—*Sharing Nature’s Interest* by Chambers, Simmons and Wackernagel—is available in the bookstore and on the reserve shelves in the library.

**Grading:** There are four major components to your grade, each carries equal weight:

- Five Page Paper. There will be two or three topics that we suggest and we are open to you suggesting your own. This will be due before midterm.

- Analysis Project(s). The ecological footprint analysis will form the heart of this, but depending on the number of people in the class and your interests, it may well reach further. Most, possibly all, of this work will be a whole-class collaboration; everyone will earn the same grade for such work.
- Action. Each student will keep a journal of the “action” portion of their work. This work is expected to take, on average, 4–6 hours per week, including time in class on these projects (the precise number will depend on what projects we pursue and the exact balance of the class).
- Final Poster. Each student will produce a poster with the goal of informing the campus community about some aspect of environmental issues on campus and/or making a case for change in some policy or behaviour.

Your grade may be adjusted up or down based on attendance, participation, engagement and sundry smaller homework tasks. Unless your case is exceptional (you single-handedly halt climate change, say, or never show up for class) this adjustment will be by at most one letter grade.

**What now:** Show up tomorrow, 1.30pm in D42, and we’ll begin by orienting ourselves for the semester. Be ready to talk about your first ideas for topics and projects on which you’d like to see us work. After that we’ll head down to the farm cottage to build a worm composting system. Dress appropriately.

**Academic Integrity:** You are expected to be aware of the college’s policy on academic integrity and to abide by it. It can be found on the college website, and is linked from the course website. Please come and talk to us if anything is unclear.