

## CLIMATE ACTION PLAN PROPOSAL FOR EMORY LAW SCHOOL

**To:** Robert Schapiro, Dean of Emory Law School

**From:** Emory Law School Climate Action Plan Committee (Eli Burton, Mark Engsborg, Mindy Goldstein, and Sue McAvoy)

**Cc:** Brooks Seay

**Re:** Climate Action Plan for Emory Law School

**Date:** Originally dated April 22, 2013 and updated September 13, 2013

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### Background

In December 2011, Emory University adopted a Climate Action Plan to reduce greenhouse gas emissions across campus.<sup>1</sup> The Plan set forth comprehensive recommendations and offered “emission reduction strategies in the categories of sustainable building and construction, energy, transportation, waste management, food, procurement, academic programs, and individual action.” Each academic and several operational units of the university were asked to adopt specific strategies to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions in furtherance of the University Climate Action Plan. These strategies will be recorded in individual climate action plans, and they will be submitted to the Provost through the deans’ annual reports on October 1, 2013.

### Our Task

Dean Robert Schapiro of Emory Law School convened a Climate Action Plan Committee (comprised of students, faculty, and staff) to develop a Climate Action Plan for the law school and law library, setting forth specific steps to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions and enhance curricular and co-curricular education around issues related to climate change and environmental protection.

### Our Proposal

The law school and law library have recently made important and substantial efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. We propose a continuation of these efforts (which are depicted in *italics* in the proposal), together with investigating new efforts to meaningfully and measurably reduce our greenhouse gas emissions.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [http://sustainability.emory.edu/uploads/articles/2012/06/2012060716021390/Emory\\_University\\_Final\\_Climate\\_Action\\_Plan.pdf](http://sustainability.emory.edu/uploads/articles/2012/06/2012060716021390/Emory_University_Final_Climate_Action_Plan.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> The law school will be tasked with annually revising and updating its Climate Action Plan. In light of this, we have chosen to use this first year for exploration, and we aim to establish a firm baseline from which to measure our success going forward.

In our proposal, we have placed an emphasis on creating a culture of sustainability at the law school. We believe that the goals we set forth cannot be accomplished unless students, faculty, and staff are familiar with this Climate Action Plan and aware of the many opportunities each member of the law school community has to assist the university in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. To this end, the cornerstone of our Climate Action Plan is utilization of the law school intranet (the “Emory Law Intranet”) to centralize information about our sustainability initiatives.<sup>3</sup>

## **EMORY UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF LAW – CLIMATE ACTION PLAN PROPOSAL**

### **Energy Use Reduction**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Conducted a URECA (Utility Reduction and Energy Conservation Actions) Phase II Project with the university to improve energy efficiency in the law school building. This project yielded a 33% energy reduction by October 2012.*
- *Installed energy efficient light bulbs throughout the law school.*
- *Installed motion sensors on lights in certain bathrooms, classrooms, and offices in the law school and law library.*
- *Purchased energy efficient equipment and appliances, including refrigerators and microwaves.*
- *Instituted computing and data management approaches (including virtualized servers and energy saving software) and networked most printers to reduce equipment use and energy consumption.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Install energy efficient light bulbs throughout the law library.
- With the help of Southface ([www.southface.org](http://www.southface.org)), investigate whether we should install (or reinstall) additional motion sensors on lights in the law school and law library.
- Continue our commitment to purchase energy efficient equipment and appliances. We will also investigate preparing a case study with best practices for the purchasing of energy efficient equipment and appliances. This may serve as an important tool for other academic and operational units of the university.
- Continue our commitment to institute computing and data management approaches to reduce equipment use and energy consumption. We will also investigate preparing a case study with best practices for instituting computing and data management approaches and networking printers. This may serve as an important tool for other academic and operational units of the university.
- Increase participation in the Office of Sustainability Initiatives Energy Competition.
- Include commitment to sustainability in job description for law school Director of Operations.

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<sup>3</sup> When properly established, an intranet can become the central source of an institution’s knowledge and practices. Having a single source of knowledge in turn produces a more collaborative environment, ultimately creating a sense of community – all involved constituents utilize the same knowledge, experience the same practices, and “speak the same language.” The Emory Law Intranet can be accessed at: <https://my.law.emory.edu>.

At this time, the law school is undergoing a massive overhaul of its website and intranet. Once complete, this Climate Action Plan will be adjusted to ensure that information about sustainability is made available through the appropriate online forum.

- Highlight our Energy Use Reduction initiatives on the Emory Law Intranet and provide an outlet for students, faculty, and staff to propose new initiatives or suggest ways to improve existing initiatives.

### **Transportation Emissions Reduction**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Permitted alternative and flexible work arrangements (including working from home) to reduce emissions associated with commuting.*
- *Installed additional bike racks on the law school campus.*
- *Provided employees free membership in the zipcar program.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Continue our commitment to permit and promote alternative and flexible work arrangements.
- Promote incentives for reduced air and car travel through teleconferencing, including those incentives provided by the Clean Air Campaign ([www.logyourcommute.org](http://www.logyourcommute.org)), and encourage use of Skype for interviews and conferences.
- Create a webpage on the Emory Law Intranet that allows students, faculty, and staff to coordinate ridesharing, with links to existing ridesharing programs developed by zimride and the Clean Air Campaign.
- Highlight incentives for shared-transit opportunities (including reduced parking fees for carpooling, free zipcar use for employees, free scooter parking, and reduced cost/free MARTA passes) on the Emory Law Intranet.
- Highlight our Transportation Emissions Reduction initiatives on the Emory Law Intranet and provide an outlet for students, faculty, and staff to propose new initiatives or suggest ways to improve existing initiatives.

### **Waste Minimization and Food**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Committed to recycling and composting. Initiatives are in place for placement of more recycling and composting bins throughout the law school and law library.*
- *Encouraged “green events” for all events, including commencement.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Continue our commitment to increase recycling and composting with the ultimate goal of becoming a “zero waste” unit. We will work with Emory Recycles to determine the best locations for recycling and composting bins.
- Investigate food procurement practices and inventory at the snack shops in the law school to ensure they are assisting the university in its commitment to utilize local and sustainably grown foods.
- Continue encouraging “green events.” We will investigate requiring events of a certain size to fill out the Sustainable Events Checklist.
- Investigate installing water bottle filling stations in the law school and law library to reduce plastic water bottle waste, and consider applying for a grant through the Sustainability Initiative Fund to finance implementation.
- Investigate installing hand dryers in the law school and law library bathrooms to reduce paper towel waste, and consider applying for a grant through the Sustainability Initiative Fund to finance implementation.

- Highlight our Waste Minimization initiatives on the Emory Law Intranet and provide an outlet for students, faculty, and staff to propose new initiatives or suggest ways to improve existing initiatives.

### **Sustainable Building and Construction**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Constructed a new concrete roof on the law school, with increased insulation and a reflective white color to reduce energy use.*
- *Encouraged shared work spaces to reduce the need for new built space.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Pursue higher standards for energy efficiency in renovations, including installing an energy efficient roof on the law library (when such a new roof is required).
- Conduct space utilization studies to seek efficiencies within existing space before constructing additional built space.
- Highlight our Sustainable Building and Construction initiatives on the Emory Law Intranet and provide an outlet for students, faculty, and staff to propose new initiatives or suggest ways to improve existing initiatives.

### **Water Conservation**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Installed low-flow faucets and toilets in most of the law school and law library bathrooms.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Continue our commitment to install low-flow fixtures.
- Highlight our Water Conservation initiatives on the Emory Law Intranet and provide an outlet for students, faculty, and staff to propose new initiatives or suggest ways to improve existing initiatives.

### **Curricular and Co-Curricular Education**

In the past few years, we have:

- *Encouraged the use of electronic reserves to reduce the need for printed course materials.*

Going forward, we propose to:

- Continue our commitment to use electronic reserves.
- Design orientation, annual celebrations, student organization events, and commencement activities that support a culture of sustainability.
- Create a centralized webpage on the Emory Law Intranet, highlighting our sustainability initiatives, shared-transit opportunities, and ways to get involved with Office of Sustainability events across campus.
- Seek continuous input from students, faculty, and staff on new sustainability initiatives or ways to improve existing initiatives.