

Laudato Si' Action Plan

2022-2028

GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY

Office *of* Sustainability



Plan Detail

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Laudato Si' 2015

Our Response to Pope Francis' call to action

In 2015, Pope Francis issued his second encyclical entitled *Laudato Si': Care for Our Common Home*. The encyclical urges us to take action where we can, to reduce our impact on the climate.

“We are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with one complex crisis which is both social and environmental... Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”

—Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, 2015



Laudato Si' Action Platform

The Laudato Si' Action Platform has been working to support churches, universities, organizations, and individuals in the community of faith in the development of a 7-year Laudato Si' Action Plan. The plan will support work to advance climate action according to the seven Pillars of Laudato Si'.

Georgetown's Laudato Si' Action Plan Background

Georgetown University's Laudato Si' Action Plan (LSAP) was developed by the Office of Sustainability in partnership with key campus partners in the GU community. The plan has gone through several iterations and stages of development using valuable input from academics, campus ministry, faculty and staff, student sustainability representatives, auxiliary services, leadership, and Georgetown planning and facilities teams.

Each section of the Laudato Si' Action Plan details the work Georgetown is currently doing to make change toward a better, more sustainable future at the university and in the community, consistent with the values of this encyclical. The future actions outlined in this plan are actions anticipated to be completed during the current cycle of the plan.

While this document captures immediate steps to be taken or actions to be completed by 2028, it also lays the groundwork for long-term sustainability actions that extend beyond this plan cycle, reflecting a sustained commitment to environmental and community stewardship inspired by the principles of Laudato Si'.

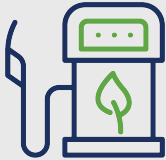


Laudato Si' Pillars

**Respond to
the Cry of
the Earth**



**Foster
Ecological
Economics**



**Adopt a
Sustainable
Lifestyle**



**Offer
Ecological
Education**



**Respond to
the Cry of
the Poor**



**Develop
Ecological
Spirituality**



**Community
Resilience and
Empowerment**



Respond to the Cry of the Earth



The Laudato Si' pillar of Response to the Cry of the Earth urges us to improve the conditions of our common home for the ecological well-being of all living beings.

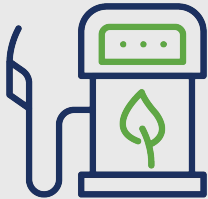
Current Actions

- Reducing the amount of electricity needed to produce chilled water for cooling through an equipment and controls upgrade for the central plant chilled water production system.
- Partnering with ENGIE North America, a global leader in energy services and sustainability.
- Operating 55 H Street NW, Georgetown's first LEED Platinum certified building and highest-rated building from the US Green Building Council.

Future Actions

- Manage campus grounds organically without the use of inorganic fertilizers and chemicals.
- 100% of new or substantially renovated buildings will be designed to achieve LEED silver certification or higher.
- Reduce energy and water used to heat our buildings through the Healy and Copley Lawn Utilities Project.

Foster Ecological Economics



The Laudato Si' pillar of Foster Ecological Economics acknowledges that our common home includes the economy, as it is a component of human society, itself part of the biosphere. As with the behavior of humans themselves, economic activity should sustain, instead of deplete, the Earth and its resources.

Current Actions

- Procure sustainable water cooler options for offices.
- Prioritizing eco-friendly purchasing and sustainable and plant-based foods.
- Spending 20% on diverse suppliers, contributing \$8M to DC-based diverse suppliers, and ensuring 10% of suppliers are diverse by 2025.
- Focusing on socially responsible investing while divesting from coal, tar sands, and fossil fuel companies.
- Investing in renewable energy and energy efficiency to mitigate climate change.

Future Actions

- Encourage partnership in climate mitigation and resilience in our campus product and service providers.
- Procure renewable electricity with Renewable Energy Certificates associated with a project when current procurement contracts expire.
- Encourage divestment from fossil fuels.

Adopt a Sustainable Lifestyle



The Laudato Si' pillar of Adopt a Sustainable Lifestyle celebrates our ability to reduce humanity's impact on the Earth through our individual actions.

Current Actions

- Promoting eco-friendly office practices with our Green Office Network.
- Providing online tips on energy conservation, recycling, and sustainable practices.
- Increase the availability of reusables in Campus Dining.
- Focusing on sustainable and plant-based food and offering low-emission meals.
- Donating tens of thousands of pounds of student items annually to local charities through our Move Out Drive.
- Empowering student Eco-Reps to educate on and encourage campus sustainability.

Future Actions

- Build out our composting infrastructure.
- Continue to grow our Green Office and Eco-Reps programs.
- Expand, prioritize, and support individual behavioral sustainability change efforts.
- Ensure that 20% of all food procured by Hoya Hospitality is sustainable by 2027.
- Ensure that 40% of all food procured by Hoya Hospitality is plant-based by 2028.
- Reduce the purchase of single-use plastics campus-wide.

Offer Ecological Education



The Laudato Si' Pillar of Offer Ecological Education asks us to examine our curricular offerings to ensure that they foster “ecological awareness and transformative action”.

Current Actions

- Created an Earth Commons Fellows program.
- Offer applied learning labs to support students' understanding of environmental changemaking.
- Created a Master of Science in Environmental and Sustainability Management degree.
- Created a Master of Science in Environmental and International Affairs degree.
- Offer a Joint Environment and Sustainability Program.

Future Actions

- Foster ecological leadership.
- Develop living learning labs on environmental sustainability.
- Increase outreach to student populations underrepresented in sustainability.
- Publish key sustainability metrics annually.
- Graduate 150 students annually with MS degrees with environmental specialization.
- Graduate 200 students annually with a BS-ES degree.

Respond to the Cry of the Poor



The Laudato Si' Pillar of Respond to the Cry of the Poor requires us to defend all lives on Earth, particularly the most vulnerable among us: indigenous communities, refugees, migrants, and children. Understanding that the impacts of climate change falls most heavily on the most vulnerable, this pillar draws a connection between the fragility of our common home, and the poor who bear the brunt of the impacts of climate change and environmental degradation.

Current Actions

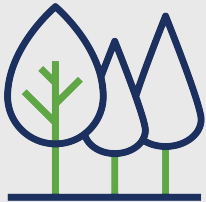
Address the needs of disadvantaged communities through various programs and initiatives spearheaded by the following Georgetown entities:

- Kalmanovitz Initiative for the Working Poor
- Community Scholars Program and Georgetown Scholars Program
- Georgetown Law Center on Poverty and Inequality
- Georgetown Center for Social Justice, Teaching, Research and Service
- Initiative on Catholic Social Thought and Public Life
- Environmental Law and Justice Clinic at Georgetown Law
- Hoya Hub Food Pantry

Future Actions

- Leverage Georgetown's institutional purchasing power to benefit impacted communities from at least three categories of Georgetown University purchasing.
- Connect with the historically under-resourced communities that exist in areas where Georgetown is expanding, and develop ongoing partnerships to foster productive and mutually-supportive relationships with these communities.

Develop Ecological Spirituality



The Laudato Si' pillar of Develop Ecological Spirituality allows us to “discover God in all things”, both in the beauty of creation and in the harsh realities of poverty and suffering.

Current Actions

- The annual Growing Roots retreat creates space for members of Georgetown to reflect on how to building community and culture for a more sustainable future.
- The Center for Social Justice (CSJ) runs an Alternative Breaks Program which offers environmentally-focused trips like the Spring Break in Appalachia trip, where students learned about the US' declining coal industries' effect on Appalachia's economy, and DC Food Justice, which explores socioeconomic barriers to fresh food and the equitability of food distribution practices.

Future Actions

- Identify interfaith engagement opportunities for graduate students.
- Use the Calcagnini Center for non-denominational nature experiences.
- Teach strategies to connect students with urban nature on campus.
- Enhance Jesuit-community engagement on ecological spirituality.
- Increase the awareness and access to nature through Georgetown's NatureRx affiliation.
- Support course development on ecological spirituality.

Community
Resilience and
Empowerment



The Laudato Si' Pillar of Community Resilience and Empowerment calls for community engagement and advocacy, especially engagement and advocacy related to the environment. The University itself faces threats from climate change, and also has a role to play in supporting the local community in Washington, D.C. as it copes with the impacts of climate change.

Current Actions

- Create food for the community while educating students on sustainable food production through the Hoya Harvest Garden.
- Encourage the Georgetown community to pursue nature as medicine on campus through our partnership with the Nature Rx network.
- Collaborate with partners in higher education on sustainability issues through partnerships like the Ivy+ Sustainability Consortium, Second Nature, U7+, the International Sustainable Campus Network, and many more.

Future Actions

- Identify the most urgent university-wide climate threats.
- Increase physical and visual access to nature and green spaces, which are designed to strengthen campus resilience to emerging threats.
- Work with student organizations to implement sustainability efforts.
- Advocate for public transportation options to and from campus.
- Improve the Georgetown community's climate change literacy.