

Sustainability at Rhodes College

“Our goal is a delightfully diverse, safe, healthy and just world, with clean air, water, soil and power – economically, equitably, ecologically and elegantly enjoyed.”

– William McDonough, architect and recipient of Presidential Award for Sustainable Development

Executive Summary

The report *Sustainability at Rhodes College* provides an overview of sustainability efforts at Rhodes College, followed by recommendations for immediate actions that could be taken to improve sustainability efforts and their visibility at Rhodes. The suggestions align with the Strategic Plan, the curriculum, and already established campus groups and programs. Furthermore, these suggestions align with sustainability initiatives underway in the City of Memphis and Shelby County. Although Rhodes College has ongoing programs and initiatives that focus on sustainability, much more can be done to highlight these priorities.

We provide six recommendations that could be immediately addressed at Rhodes:

1. Maintain the Presidential Climate Commitment, and Further Reduce Our Carbon Footprint.
2. Join the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).
3. Establish a Sustainability Working Group that Has Support from the Administration.
4. Highlight the Positive Work through a Sustainability Webpage.
5. Create Sustainability Fellowships for Admitted Students.
6. Reduce Waste Associated with Campus Dining and Athletic Events.

We also provide two recommendations for longer-term, future action:

1. Make Sustainability a Key Focus in Campus Planning (e.g., New Building Design, Integration of West Campus).
2. Create a Sustainability Coordinator Position.

Why should Rhodes College pay more attention to sustainability? According to the *2019 Hopes & Worries Survey* by the Princeton Review, 66% of students and 58% of parents indicated that a school’s “greenness” would contribute to their decisions to apply or enroll in an institution.¹ Moreover, in the Spring of 2020, students in the Rhodes First Year Seminar listed “sustainability” as one of their top choices for areas they would like to pursue via community partners. Even the parents of current and prospective students increasingly care more about the environment than preceding generations, with greater proportions of Generation X and Millennials believing that humans play a role in climate change and in a need to move away from fossil fuels to protect the environment; that relationship holds for both Republicans and Democrats². Many of the world’s most urgent and pressing problems are associated with [sustainability](#) and [climate change](#), but these global issues are also present in [Memphis](#).³ Furthermore, tomorrow’s economy is more focused on [sustainable business practices](#) than ever before. As Rhodes College thinks about the educational and professional experiences our students obtain, we must acknowledge that sustainability is increasingly important to our current and future students, as well as their families.

¹ Princeton Review (2019) [2019 Hopes & Worries Survey](#)

² Gary Funk & Meg Hefferon, Pew Research Center (2019) [Millennial and Gen Z Republicans Stand Out from their Elders on Climate and Energy Issues](#)

³ Alex Greene, Memphis Flyer (2018) [Toxic Battles: the Fight for Environmental Justice in Memphis](#)

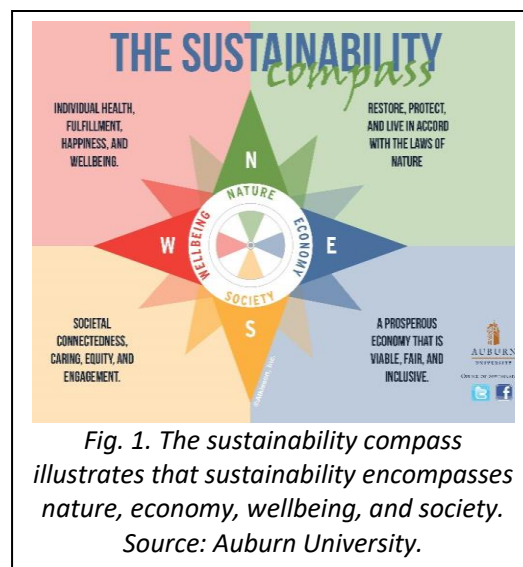
1. Overview

Sustainability has four facets: nature, economy, society, and wellbeing (Figure 1). These facets highlight that **sustainability impacts all people; sustainability is not solely an “environmental” topic**. As outlined by the sustainability compass (Fig. 1), sustainability restores, protects, and is in line according with the laws of nature; it creates a prosperous economy that is viable, fair, and inclusive; it creates societal connectedness, caring, equity, and engagement; and it values health, fulfillment, happiness, and wellbeing.

The four facets of sustainability are already embedded in the Rhodes Vision and Rhodes Strategic Plan, specifically the commitment to ensure that our students graduate “intellectually ready to tackle the world’s most pressing problems,” have “leadership ready to create equitable and prosperous communities,” and are prepared “to succeed in tomorrow’s economy” (see [Rhodes Edge](#)). With greater visible focus on sustainability, with a focus on natural resource conservation, inclusivity, racial justice, and economic justice, Rhodes can and should be in alignment with the work that other peer institutions have underway. By highlighting our commitment to sustainable practices, Rhodes can recruit students from diverse cultural and geographic backgrounds; demonstrate to perspective students and their families that Rhodes is committed to pursuing a sustainable path; provide educational and professional opportunities for students within the many ongoing efforts at Rhodes (e.g., Internationalization Plan; work related to diversity, equity, access, and inclusion; Turley Memphis Center; Kinney & Programs; Fellowships; Internships; Athletics), and save natural and financial resources. With the recent Strategic Plan in place, Rhodes has a unique opportunity to implement these steps in planning for the future trajectory of Rhodes College.

Furthermore, all four facets of sustainability resonate at Rhodes College through many of its academic departments and programs, student internship opportunities and community partnerships, and campus groups (Table 1) and are visible within the Strategic Plan and objectives of the First Year Seminar. The [First Year Seminar](#) is built on the foundation that students will “Develop skills to become informed, active and engaged student-citizens.” Within these exposures, students can and should learn about the importance of improving natural resource conservation, inclusivity, racial justice, and economic justice.

Rhodes College is engaged in sustainability efforts (Box 1) but we can do more to highlight and expand these efforts, especially when compared to those efforts of our peer institutions (Table 1; [Sustainable Campus Index](#)). These peers have formalized sustainability programs (e.g., sustainability centers; sustainability directors/coordinators; green fees; campus-wide sustainability curriculum)—unfortunately Rhodes has not yet created and implemented any of the above. Gains in sustainability can further connect with and expand upon current Rhodes efforts to enhance internationalization efforts and engagement with the Memphis community. Given the strong interest in sustainability on campus and at the national level by prospective students and their families, we recommend that now is the time to pursue some of the suggestions provided in this document. We realize that resources are limited, so we propose initial first steps that can help highlight what is already being done, but also increase sustainability efforts at Rhodes so that sustainability is an aspect of the Rhodes Strategic Plan, and plays a role in new building construction (e.g., dorms) and the linking of West Campus.



The following sections outline recent campus discussions, and concludes with six recommendations that can be immediately addressed with relatively little financial cost, and two longer-term goals.

2. Campus Visit by Auburn University Sustainability Director

On October 3-4, 2019, the Environmental Studies and Sciences (ENVS) Program hosted Mike Kensler, Director of Sustainability at Auburn University. This visit was initiated because of the strong interest among a group of Rhodes faculty, staff, and students to learn how Rhodes could pursue opportunities to improve campus sustainability efforts. ENVS invited Mike Kensler as part of Bard College's [Climate 2030 Program](#), which focuses on sustainability on college and university campuses.

Mike Kensler gave an informative and passionate lecture on climate change and sustainability (*Sustainability and Climate Change: Values, Aspirations, and Actions*), with a focus on how individuals, governments, and businesses can improve sustainability locally and globally. The lecture hall in Frazier Jelke B was filled almost to capacity, and ENVS received very positive feedback on Kensler's talk. After the campus lecture, Mike Kensler joined five Rhodes student leaders and three ENVS faculty members for dinner. The conversation focused on discussing ways in which Rhodes could address sustainability, through the student perspective.

The next day, Rhodes Student Associate for Recycling, Meredith Davies, gave Mike Kensler a tour of campus and brought him along for some of her recycling pick-ups in buildings. This tour was followed by a coffee hour with President Marjorie Hass, Provost Milton Moreland, Associate Provost Tim Huebner, Vice President of Enrollment and Communications and Dean of Admission Carey Thompson, Associate Director of Physical Plant (Tim Lucas), and nine ENVS faculty members: Sarah Boyle, Michael Collins, Will Eckenhoff, Elaine Frawley, Kimberly Kasper, Tait Keller, Patrick Kelly, Rob Laport, and Shaolu Yu. Mike Kensler provided an overview of his experiences, and those experiences of others at liberal arts colleges. Members of the Rhodes community discussed past and current efforts at Rhodes, the President's Climate Commitment, the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), a campus-wide sustainability working group, student fellowships, community partnerships, and curriculum. Additional information on these topics are provided below.

3. Sustainability Discussions at Rhodes

Below is a summary of topics addressed during recent discussions focused on sustainability during the 2019-2020 academic year. These discussions include the visit by Mike Kensler, follow-up conversations with students, faculty members, and representatives from Physical Plant and Athletics, and conversations with current and past sustainability directors/coordinators at Agnes Scott College and Davidson College. These topics provide the background for our recommendations.

3.1. President's Climate Commitment

Rhodes was one of the original signatories of the President's Climate Commitment in 2007. There are currently **436** institutions that have signed the Climate, Carbon, or Resilience Commitment. Rhodes College is currently [listed](#) under the Carbon Commitment. Although this commitment was signed in 2007, Physical Plant has been working on sustainability issues for decades: they created a set of Sustainability Goals during the construction of the Barret Library, and these goals are still in place today.

Tim Lucas, Associate Director of Physical Plant, submits the annual reports for Rhodes through [Second Nature](#). According to the reporting at Second Nature, Rhodes has reduced its emissions by 49% since 2007 (Figure 2). When examining our emissions per 1,000 square feet, and per fulltime enrollment, Rhodes has decreased its emissions since 2007 by 58% in both categories. The targets for Rhodes were 15% by 2014, 25% by 2020, and 100% by 2029. We have already met and exceeded our 2020 target goal, but there's work to do to achieve 100%. Our [Climate Action Plan](#) is available on the Second Nature website.

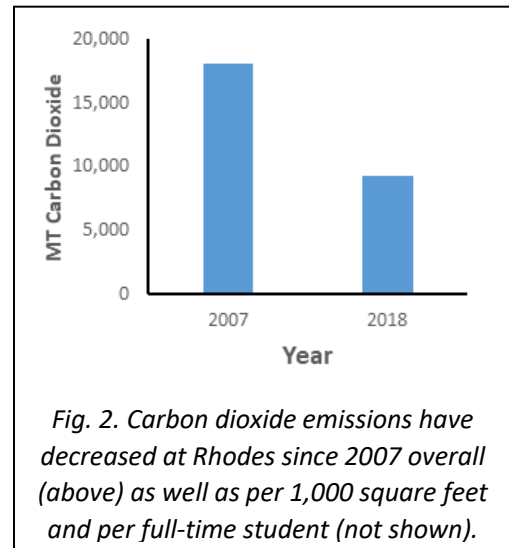


Fig. 2. Carbon dioxide emissions have decreased at Rhodes since 2007 overall (above) as well as per 1,000 square feet and per full-time student (not shown).

The ENVS Program would like to highlight the great work that Physical Plant is doing to address sustainability. Rhodes has decreased its carbon emissions (Figure 2), even with a larger student population. The data (e.g. natural gas, electric, food services, water and wastewater, building space) are important for understanding how Rhodes can work to reduce its carbon footprint and save financial resources. Compared to peers such as Middlebury College

and Colby College, our carbon footprint is high. However, in 2018 Rhodes had similar total emissions to Austin College, Dickinson College, and Agnes Scott College, and did substantially better in total emissions than Guilford College, Bowdoin College, and Sewanee (data available via [Second Nature](#)).

Since 2007, Rhodes has made great improvements in carbon emissions, and we are fully capable of making additional improvements that align us with our peers, particularly those who have intentionally reduced their emissions. Our peers are working towards carbon neutrality by using renewable energy, installing solar panels, changing purchasing behavior, adopting LEED standards for campus buildings, working on energy-efficiency projects related to electricity and water use, improving efficiency with groundskeeping, reducing waste in offices, dorms, and dining halls, and purchasing carbon offsets.

3.2. Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

There are 716 North American educational institutions that are members of the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ([AASHE](#)) including many of our peer institutions (Table 1). Rhodes is not currently a member. Membership is \$1160/year and the membership benefits and resources are available to every person on campus (no limit). Associated with AASHE is the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System ([STARS](#)), which focuses on tracking sustainability items on campus. The STARS program involves a lot of data reporting in order for a campus to be ranked, but the tool is available for free for schools that want to use the reporting process (without receiving a ranking) for educational purposes.

The resources available through membership to AASHE would help faculty, staff, and students. For example, there are resources on ways to reduce [paper waste](#) on campus (which ultimately saves money as well), numerous [webinars](#) on topics that address sustainability (past webinar topics: managing behavior changes; celebrating diversity is not enough: teaching social justice; engaging activities; carbon pricing; zero waste; planning & administration; reducing paper; take the climate back; engaging with alumni), [guides](#) for sustainability learning projects, and electronic [resources](#) related to air & climate, buildings, campus engagement, curriculum, diversity & affordability, food & dining, grounds, purchasing,

waste, and water. These resources would directly benefit faculty through providing ideas on how to address sustainability in the classroom and engage students in meaningful projects on- and off-campus. The AASHE resources could help guide student sustainability efforts (e.g., Rhodes Sustainability Club, Kinney Environment, Roots, Food Recovery Network), as well as staff by providing information about best practices related to purchasing, investing, grounds, building construction and maintenance, engaging with alumni, and recruiting prospective families.

3.3. Campus-wide Sustainability Working Group

The group discussed the intermittent work of the Environmental Planning Committee, which formed in the 1990s and participants included faculty, staff, and students, but whose strength has waxed and waned. Often the committee was organized by a faculty member, and participation was voluntary. Participation was not officially recognized as service to the Rhodes community for purposes of tenure and promotion review, and when people became busy, participation decreased. Mike Kensler stated that based on his experiences, such working groups or committees are most successful when there is participation by the administration. Many of the topics related to campus sustainability have to do with purchasing, contracts, building and grounds maintenance; these are not areas in which faculty members are involved. There is currently strong support for a Sustainability Working Group on campus; more than 20 faculty, staff, and students have indicated an interest in participating immediately.

The group thought that at this point since Rhodes does not yet have a sustainability coordinator, fully participating in the STARS program (as mentioned in Section 3.2) would be unrealistic at this point, but that it could be feasible for Rhodes to sign up for the free version of the STARS program for use by faculty and students in course projects, fellowships, etc. The discussion highlighted that Physical Plant has been working on areas related to sustainability, but there needs to be a holistic approach to sustainability on campus: facilities, grounds, food services, dormitories and Residence Life, athletics (travel to events and hosting of events), Greek Life, office purchases (e.g. paper, furniture), and travel (e.g. conferences, daily commutes) all are involved. We would like to highlight that the Rhodes Track and Field team does not allow for single-use plastics at its events, and athletes travel with reusable water bottles. If other sports teams, campus groups, and other events on campus adopted similar policies, Rhodes could substantially decrease the amount of waste that it generates.

Collaboration among staff, faculty, and students through the Sustainability Working Group could result in positive changes on campus. In addition to the various campus activities and initiatives mentioned earlier (Section 3.2. Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education), a formal working group could streamline actions, focus on specific campus messaging, and relate activities to other ongoing efforts at Rhodes. For example, collaboration between faculty and Physical Plant could result in the collection, management, and visualization of data that could be used in the classroom, in reporting, and in highlighting Rhodes to past, current, and future students.

3.4. Potential Sustainability Fellowships for Admitted Students

Carey Thompson, Dean of Admission, mentioned the possibility of awarding sustainability fellowships to incoming first-year students. These students could work under the supervision of a faculty or staff member on a campus sustainability initiative. In doing so, Rhodes may attract students with interests in sustainability. People cautioned that such an initiative would need strong mentorship so that such projects do not generate “ecowaste.” There is great potential here to engage students in sustainability projects with a focus on natural resource conservation, inclusivity, racial justice, and economic justice. Such projects could focus on the campus itself, as well as the Memphis community.

3.5. Sustainability in the Curriculum

Participants in the discussions have brainstormed ways to improve sustainability education throughout the curriculum, both formally (in classes, such as first-year seminar) and informally (e.g., training in dorms). Students have expressed a disconnect between what they learn in their classes that address sustainability and what they see on campus (e.g., waste of resources in the dorms; use of disposable plastics during campus events; few areas that are considered semi-natural). Already, sustainability is addressed in courses that span 15 departments and programs. We have also spoken with Dr. Elizabeth Thomas about ways to weave sustainability into the First Year Seminar.

3.6. Advice from Sustainability Directors/Coordinators at Other Colleges

Mike Kensler introduced Sarah Boyle to Susan Kidd (Executive Director, Center for Sustainability, Office of the President, Agnes Scott) and Jeff Mittelstadt (past Director of Sustainability, Davidson College). Sarah spoke with each person individually to learn more about that person's experiences in developing a sustainability center at a liberal arts college. The feedback from both people was similar. Their suggestions are summarized below.

1. Both enthusiastically agreed that campuses benefit from membership in Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The resources can be used by all faculty, staff, and students.
2. Rhodes needs a dedicated staff member to supervise sustainability. This person should have knowledge and experience related to campus facilities, groundskeeping, purchasing, utilities and water, food services, building renovations, and investments.
 - The most economic staffing solution is to hire a recent graduate in the position of sustainability coordinator. Alternatively, Rhodes could hire someone part-time or begin with a student position. The latter choices have obvious limitations.
 - Rhodes can work through the Office of Development to fund a full-time position and resources for that office.
 - Tracking the amount of money saved through sustainability projects could help sustain a staff position.
3. Success requires full support of the Administration.

4. Recommendations

We (Table 2) have compiled the following recommendations from faculty, staff, and students. We realize that not all recommendations can be addressed immediately, and some recommendations may not be the most suitable for Rhodes, but we have identified six items that could be addressed immediately.

Immediate Actions

- **Maintain the Presidential Climate Commitment and Further Reduce Our Carbon Footprint.** Maintaining the Presidential Climate Commitment is important for Rhodes College (both internal and external perceptions of the college). The data collected and analyzed by Physical Plant's Tim Lucas are valuable data, and we would like to highlight the work that has been done already to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, financial costs, and campus waste.
- **Join Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).** The \$1160/year membership would allow all students, staff, and faculty on campus to participate, thereby providing an incredible [resource](#) for the entire Rhodes community. Participating in

STARS at the free level (no rank) would allow use of the tool in the curriculum at Rhodes, as well as by campus groups.

- **Sustainability Working Group**. We suggest Rhodes forms a sustainability working group whose membership includes faculty, staff, and students. We suggest that participation in this group is considered as faculty service for the purposes of evaluations, and that staff are recognized for their participation in this group. Although there has been an Environmental Planning Cooperative on-and-off-again for the past 20 years, the group has struggled to maintain participation due to other job commitments. At least 20 people on campus have expressed interest in joining such a group. In conversations with current and former Sustainability Directors at other institutions, such groups are typically more successful if at least one member of the Administration is involved. This umbrella group could facilitate communication across the multiple groups engaged in sustainability issues (Box 1), as well as work directly on projects that relate to the four compass points of sustainability: nature, economy, society, and wellbeing. By communicating with other colleges and universities, we can learn what could work best here at Rhodes.
- **Improving Communications: Sustainability Webpage**. We suggest the creation of a Sustainability Webpage on the Rhodes website to highlight the work that is already being done by faculty, staff, and students, and to encourage people to enjoy the Rhodes Arboretum. Such information could also draw prospective students to the work that is being done, and highlight that Rhodes supports sustainability efforts. There could also be an article/video on these efforts. Such resources could help educate people on campus about sustainability efforts, and could be used as a teaching resource for the First Year Seminar, thereby connecting students with life on campus with the Memphis and global community.
- **Sustainability Fellowships for Admitted Students**. Carey Thompson mentioned the possibility of awarding up to five sustainability fellowships to incoming first-year students. We strongly support this idea, and suggest that faculty and staff discuss this possibility in more detail to see if there would be adequate mentorship available for fellows.
- **Campus Dining and Athletics**. Bon Appétit can provide more sustainable dining practices, based on its locations at other colleges, but Rhodes currently does not demand that the company follow the practices that are often highlighted on the [Bon Appétit website](#). For example, we would like to see Bon Appétit start engaging in composting activities of all food waste, and use reusable and compostable materials at the Refectory, Lair, and Middle Ground, and with catered events. The company worked with ENVIS to provide reusable items for a coffee event, but most catered events on campus use a great deal of disposable plastics, and for almost two months the dining services in the Refectory has primarily used disposable plastic cups during mealtime. We acknowledge that the single-use plastics used in the Refectory may be due to people taking (and not returning) the permanent plastic cups, as well as utensils and plates; however, this issue could be addressed immediately to change behavior. These practices (in the dining hall and during catered events) are not in line with actions by Bon Appétit at other college campuses. Furthermore, we think it sends a negative image to our campus, our campus visitors, and prospective students about Rhodes College's commitment to conserve resources.

We also recommend that Rhodes highlights the work that is being done by members of the Track and Field team to not use single-use plastics, and we encourage other teams to adopt similar measures.

Future Actions

In addition, there are some areas that could be addressed in the long-term. We think that, depending on how the short-term suggestions play out, it would be helpful for Rhodes to discuss:

- **Make Sustainability a Key Focus in Campus Planning.** As Rhodes moves forward with building repairs and renovations, new building construction, and potential changes to campus, including the integration of West Campus, it is important to consider sustainability. Specifically, we hope that major plans will be discussed with the Rhodes community prior to implementation, so that the Rhodes community may provide feedback. We suggest highlighting one highly visible sign of Rhodes' commitment to sustainability (e.g., [solar array over a parking lot](#) that could be included as part of campus tours and be used in academic activities).
- **Create a Sustainability Coordinator Position.** Members of Physical Plant and the faculty engaged in sustainability issues are already working full-time jobs. In order to fully compile and track the data at Rhodes, use the data to make recommendations about purchasing, contracts, etc., and plan for the future, it would be helpful to have a position dedicated to sustainability. In a review of our peer institutions (Table 1), many of our peers across the country have a sustainability coordinator or sustainability director on campus; in almost all cases, this person is a member of the staff (not a faculty member), and supported by additional staff and/or student interns. For example, at other schools, sometimes a person is hired to perform the job half-time, and as the financial benefits of addressing sustainability on campus are realized, funding becomes available for a full-time position. Other schools have established a position out of grant monies (e.g. Ripon College and the Margaret Cargill Philanthropies).

5. Summary

In summary, there are people at Rhodes who have been working on sustainability initiatives for decades, but Rhodes as an institution could do far more. By maintaining the Presidential Climate Commitment, joining AASHE, creating a Sustainability Working Group that has the support of the Administration, creating a Sustainability webpage, offering fellowships for admitted students, and working on reducing waste associated with campus dining and athletic events, Rhodes could powerfully demonstrate its commitment to sustainability. Doing so could help reduce Rhodes' impact on the environment, address social inequalities and racial justice, save money, and recruit prospective students. Rhodes could contribute more efforts towards sustainability initiatives, and there are ample opportunities to do so. We encourage the administration to emphasize sustainability as a major focus, and to work toward sustainable practices with the upcoming renovations of dorms and other buildings, and the planning for future buildings on campus.

Box 1. Ways in which Rhodes is currently engaged in sustainability efforts

Departments/Programs offering at least one course focusing on a sustainability topic*

Included in parentheses are examples of courses offered; there are more courses offered than are listed.

- **Anthropology & Sociology** (Gender & the Environment; Ecological Anthropology; Indigenous People of North America)
- **Biology** (Environmental Science; Conservation Biology; Science of Climate Change; Environmental Issues in Southern Africa; Environmental Field Study in Namibia)
- **Chemistry** (Environmental Chemistry)
- **English** (First Year Writing Seminar: Energy & Waste)
- **Environmental Studies and Sciences** (Environment & Society; Geology; Rocky Mountain Ecology Field Research)
- **History** (Global Environmental History; Natural Disasters; Disease & Epidemics; Nature & War)
- **Interdepartmental** (Geographic Information Systems)
- **International Studies** (Global Ecopolitics; Politics of Migration)
- **Latin American and Latinx Studies** (Intro to Latin American and Latinx Studies; Memphis Cartonera Sustainable Publishing House)
- **Philosophy** (Environmental Ethics)
- **Political Science** (Urban Politics & Policy)
- **Physics** (Science of Climate Change)
- **Religious Studies** (The Bible and Environment; The Bible and Food; Socially Engaged Buddhism)
- **Search** (Humanities 201: sections taught by Profs. Bakewell, Jackson, or Loth)
- **Urban Studies** (Intro to Urban Studies; Asian Urbanization Through Cinema)

**There have been discussions in 2019-2020 with Theatre and Art about interests in courses or productions associated with sustainability and/or climate change*

**Faculty and staff supervise sustainability-focused research fellowships, Rhodes Student Associate positions, internships, and independent research (many of which count as academic credit, with the exception of RSA opportunities)*

Internships and community partnerships associated with sustainability

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| - Agricenter | - Memphis Botanical Garden |
| - ARK Farms | - Memphis Farmers Market |
| - Bike Walk Tennessee | - Memphis Light Gas and Water |
| - BLDG Memphis | - Memphis RiverParks |
| - Bridges | - Memphis Tilth |
| - CAESER | - Memphis Zoo |
| - Church Health | - Overton Park Conservancy |
| - Clean Memphis | - Planned Parenthood |
| - Cooper Young Farmers Market | - Project Green Fork |
| - Crop Trust | - Shelby County Office of Sustainability |
| - Ducks Unlimited | - Shelby Farms Park Conservancy |
| - FedEx | - Wolf River Conservancy |
| - Loeb Properties | |

Campus groups associated with sustainability

- | | |
|-------------------------------|--|
| - Rhodes Sustainability Group | - Roots – Botanical Society of America |
| - Kinney Environment | - Food Recovery Network |
| - Kinney Animal Services | - Rhodes Arboretum |
| - Beekeeping Club | |

Table 1. Examples of colleges that are members of AASHE and have a sustainability office and/or director or coordinator on campus. Hyperlinks direct to the college’s sustainability webpage, providing a wealth of positive examples for Rhodes to consider. We propose that membership in AASHE would be a first big step to solidify and expand sustainability efforts on campus.

Name	Sustainability Office or Director/Coordinator
Agnes Scott College	Center for Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Allegheny College	Sustainability Coordinator, Physical Plant
Amherst College	Office of Environmental Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Aquinas College	Center for Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Austin College	Campus Sustainability Plan; Center for Environmental Studies
Bard College	Office of Sustainability; Chief Sustainability Officer
Bates College	Facilities Services
Berea College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Berry College	Office of Environmental Compliance and Sustainability; Director of Environmental Compliance and Sustainability
Boston College	Sustainability and Energy Management Specialist
Bowdoin College	Sustainability Office; Associate Director of Sustainability
Carleton College	Manager of Campus Energy and Sustainability; Sustainability Program Coordinator
Cascadia College	Assistant Director of Sustainability Services
Colby College	Office of Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
College of Charleston	Center for Sustainable Development; Director
College of William and Mary	Office of Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Colorado College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Director
Dartmouth College	Sustainability Office: Director of Sustainability
Davidson College	Sustainability Office; Director of Sustainability
Dickinson College	Center for Sustainability Education; Director
Earlham College	Center for Environmental Leadership; Director
Emerson College	Office of Sustainability; Campus Sustainability Manager
Fort Lewis College	Environmental Center; Coordinator
Franklin & Marshall College	Center for the Sustainable Environment; Director
Goucher College	Sustainability Coordinator
Guilford College	Director of Environmental Sustainability
Gustavus Adolphus College	Johnson Center for Environmental Sustainability; Director
Harvey Mudd College	Hixon Center for Sustainable Environmental Design; Director
Haverford College	Chief Sustainability Officer
Hobart and William Smith Colleges	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Manager
Ithaca College	Office of Energy Management & Sustainability; Director of Energy Management & Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Keene State College	Sustainability Office; Director of Sustainability
Kenyon College	Office of Green Initiatives; Director of Green Initiatives
Knox College	Office of Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Lafayette College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Director
Lewis & Clark College	Sustainability Office; Sustainability Director
Luther College	Center for Sustainable Communities; Director

Middlebury College	Franklin Environmental Center; Director
Mount Holyoke College	Miller Worley Center for the Environment; Director
Muhlenberg College	Office of Campus Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Oberlin College	Office of Environmental Sustainability; Chief Facilities Officer; Sustainability Manager
Prescott College	Green Mountain Center for Sustainability; Director
Ripon College	Director of Sustainability
Sewanee	Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability; Director of Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Skidmore College	Sustainability Office; Director; Coordinator
Smith College	Center for Environment, Ecological Design, and Sustainability; Director
Swarthmore College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Director
Ursinus College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Director
Vassar College	Office of Sustainability
Wellesley College	Office of Sustainability; Director; Sustainability Coordinator
Wells College	Center for Sustainability and the Environment; Director
Whitman College	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Williams College	Zilkha Center for Environmental Initiatives; Director
Colleges and Universities in Tennessee	
Austin Peay State University	Office of Campus Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Christian Brothers University	President's Sustainability Group
East Tennessee State University	Department of Sustainability; Director of Sustainability
Lipscomb University	Institute of Sustainable Practice; Director of Sustainable Practice
Sewanee	Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability; Director of Office of Environmental Stewardship and Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
UT Chattanooga	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
UT Knoxville	Office of Sustainability; Sustainability Manager
UT Martin	Center for Sustainability; Sustainability Coordinator
Vanderbilt University	Sustainability and Environmental Management Office; Director

Table 2. List of Rhodes faculty, staff, and students who provided input for the information in this document

Name	Role	Department/Program
Geoff Bakewell	Faculty	Greek & Roman Studies/Meeman Center
Raina Belleau	Faculty	Art
Erin Bodine	Faculty	Mathematics/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Sarah Boyle	Faculty	Biology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Stephanie Cage	Staff	Turley Memphis Center
Amanda Cheang	Student	Kinney Environment
Brian Christman	Student	Roots
Michael Collins	Faculty	Biology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Meredith Davies	Student	Recycling RSA

Will Eckenhoff	Faculty	Chemistry/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Joy Brooke Fairfield	Faculty	Theatre
Shirley Fontanié	Student	Kinney Environment
Brian Foshee	Staff	Physical Plant
Elaine Frawley	Faculty	Biology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Judith Haas	Faculty	English/Search/Gender & Sexuality Studies
Davi Hertz	Student	Rhodes Sustainability Club
Charles Hughes	Faculty	History/Turley Memphis Center
Jeff Jackson	Faculty	History/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Kimberly Kasper	Faculty	Anthropology & Sociology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Tait Keller	Faculty	History/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Patrick Kelly	Faculty	Biology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Rob Laport	Faculty	Biology/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Laura Loth	Faculty	Modern Languages/French
Iris Mercado	Staff	Turley Memphis Center
Maggie Palopoli	Student	Food Recovery Network
Elizabeth Pettinaroli	Faculty	Modern Languages/Latin American and Latinx Studies
Jen Sciubba	Faculty	International Studies/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Brooke Schedneck	Faculty	Religious Studies/Environmental Studies & Sciences
Robert Shankman	Staff	Athletics
Tim Lucas	Staff	Physical Plant
Liz Paul	Student	Kinney Environment
David Rupke	Faculty	Physics
Elizabeth Thomas	Faculty	Urban Studies/First Year Seminar
Natalie Thomas	Student	Rhodes Sustainability Club
Carey Thompson	Staff	Admissions
Rebecca Tuvel	Faculty	Philosophy/Environmental Studies & Sciences; Gender & Sexuality Studies
Shaolu Yu	Faculty	Urban Studies/Environmental Studies & Sciences

Appendix I. Additional suggestions of topics to address at Rhodes College. These suggestions have been provided by faculty, staff, and students, and the suggestions appear in alphabetical order.

Alumni

Engaging alumni in sustainability efforts at Rhodes could enhance the participation by alumni who may not currently be heavily engaged in the college, increase donations, and provide professional opportunities for our students and recent graduates. Donors to other institutions have provided funding for campus grants to address sustainability projects (e.g. [Union College](#)). Rhodes has a great network of alumni, many of who work in areas related to sustainability. Rhodes could also have a high-profile, annual event (or annual lecture) focused on a sustainability topic, with a donor's name associated with the event.

Athletics

Sporting events at Rhodes, as well as events that involve travel to other locations, are associated with food and drink waste, packaging waste, and waste/emissions associated with travel to off-campus locations. Some schools have worked with Athletics to reduce the amount of waste and emissions associated with athletic events. Some of these practices could potentially decrease costs. At Rhodes, Coach Shankman (Track and Field) has banned single-use plastics from their home events, and the team does not use single-use plastics when they travel. This example of reducing waste is one that could be fully supported by Rhodes.

Dorms

There is a staggering amount of bottled water that is brought into the dorms, especially in the first-year dorms. Due to the large number of students who live on campus, more outreach and education about responsible use of electricity, water, and disposable products could help reduce the waste that occurs in the dorms. Suggestions: Communicate with Residence Life about changing dorm culture. Work with First Year Seminar on ways to communicate to students the impact of their actions, and relate these actions to the greater Memphis community.

Financial Investments

Many peer institutions have changed their investment practices to support financial investments that address both environmental and social justice.

Protect and Create More Semi-Natural Areas on Campus

Areas that are more semi-natural can be places of refuge⁴, as well as serve as educational spaces to the Rhodes community, as well as to the Memphis community. Campus outdoor resources, such as the Arboretum, are important to the aesthetics of campus, and they provide ecological benefits, economic benefits (e.g., shade during the six months of the year with intense heat), and a refuge for people to get outdoors and away from electronics. We encourage Rhodes to think about the sustainability of our campus grounds, so that all may benefit from them. Already, numerous courses use the open, green spaces on campus in class projects and teaching of field methods.

Refectory, Lair, and Middle Ground

The Food Recovery Network is involved in working to reduce food waste, but more attention could be brought to this matter. For example, the Food Recovery Network stated their interest in recovering food from the Lynx Lair, in addition to the work they do at the Refectory. Furthermore, there is currently a lot

⁴ [A Place of Silence](#), Liam Heneghan, Eon (2020)

of plastic waste generated by dining services at the Refectory, the Lynx Lair, the Middle Ground, and via catered events on campus, especially in regards to use the use of plastic cups, plates, and utensils. Suggestions: Work with Bon Appétit to reduce the amount of disposable plastics that are used. Many of our peer institutions have Bon Appétit as their dining company, but appear to have less plastic waste involved, based on their websites. The Bon Appétit company has banned plastic straws, which we applaud; however, the number of plastic cups thrown away daily at the Refectory makes this straw ban appear to be negligible. If disposable plastic is in use because people are taking the permanent glasses, then measures should be put into place to stop such behavior. Additional attention to composting on campus can help reduce waste, and serve as educational models for the curriculum.

Reuse of Products

Increasing the number of refillable-container water fountains on campus has been suggested by multiple groups, as has the idea of providing first-year students with a reusable bottle and clip for the bottle (to attach to their bags) so to reduce the number of plastic cups and bottles thrown out. Students have highlighted the amount of waste generated at campus events, student events, and parties/Bid Week events associated with the Greek organizations.

Student Projects

Many have suggested the interest in getting students more involved in sustainability projects on campus in ways that are educational but also provide benefit to campus. The resources available on AASHE's website can help.

Transportation

Rhodes has a bike co-op, but cars dominate the transportation scene at Rhodes. Many students live on campus or nearby, yet drive from one parking lot to another. A sustainability working group could work with the campus to encourage ride share, bike share, and pedestrian traffic. Doing so would not only reduce carbon dioxide emissions, but also aide in improving physical health, reduce campus congestion, and potentially increase community interactions on- and off-campus.