

# Yale Divinity School Sustainability Action Plan

In 2016 Yale University announced the launch of the *Yale Sustainability Plan 2025* (Plan), which charts a nine-year course toward Yale's sustainability vision of "a Yale where sustainability is seamlessly integrated into the scholarship and operations of the university, contributing to its social, environmental, and financial excellence and positioning Yale as a local and global leader." While the institutional-scale *Yale Sustainability Plan 2025* provides a robust platform for a coordinated and unified approach to enhancing Yale's sustainability leadership, our campus is a diverse set of communities and disciplines. This Sustainability Action Plan is one of a larger set of similar Action Plans that create tailored language for Yale's professional schools. Each professional school sustainability action plan incorporates Yale's Sustainability Vision and Ambitions, but these Action Plans allow for creativity, innovation, and exploration.

Commitment to social justice, community, engagement with music and the arts, and an emphasis on ecumenical and international programming are characteristics that demonstrate the unique sustainability leadership role the Yale Divinity School can play –on the Yale Campus, in New Haven, and among the School's peers. The Yale Divinity School Goals included here reflect these qualities and while supporting the University's sustainability priorities.

The Yale Sustainability Plan is organized into nine ambitions, which are undergirded by 20 Objectives and 38 Goals. A list of the University's ambitions and objectives are included as an Appendix to this Action Plan. The Goals listed here are organized by the University's ambitions, and are a combination of scholarly and administrative commitments.

*Leadership: Demonstrate local and global leadership in sustainability teaching, research, service, and operations.*

- By 2017 make available the religion and ecology Master of Arts in Religion concentration.
- By 2018-2019, offer a sustainability-focused transformational leadership course.
- By September 2019 create a university-wide discourse on water and by January 2020 offer a course on water to be co-led by faculty from across the University.
- By September 2020 expand the joint degree program with the School of Forestry & Environmental Studies (target TBD).
- By September 2020 make environmental concerns a component in at least 50% of Divinity classes.

*Empowerment: Foster a diverse and inclusive sustainability movement.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- Include sustainability in Before the Fall Orientation for incoming students.
- By 2025 offer the direct experience of sustainable community to Yale Divinity students through the creation of a Living Village.

- By September 2019 consider highlighting opportunities to enrich the sustainability-diversity dialogue through student work, support community well-being efforts in area churches.

Health and well-being: *Enhance health, well-being, and ecosystem vitality.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- By the end of 2017 remove asbestos from the NE buildings of SDQ.
- By January 2018 commit to healthy and sustainable meetings and events. (See attached)
- By May 2018 establish a well-being program for YDS students, including mental health.
- By September 2019 in collaboration with Yale Hospitality commit to a program to educate community members on the connections between food, faith, and sustainability.

Climate Action: *Take urgent action to mitigate climate change and proactively adapt to its impacts.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- Starting in September 2017, conduct a rigorous set of energy efficiency updates to the SDQ buildings.
- By December 2017 develop a set of tactics to ensure positive performance in the Yale Carbon Charge Program.
- By September 2020 suggest that members of the Yale Divinity community offsets travel and large events through the Yale Community Carbon Fund.
- By 2022, break ground for the regenerative village, which will offer a net positive energy profile.

Stewardship: *Plan and preserve resilient and sustainable infrastructure and landscapes.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- In the spirit of preparing Divinity students to become leaders in their faith communities and neighborhoods, maintain a suite of programs aimed at positive and proactive creation stewardship, including rain gardens and barrels, tree planting and seed planting activities, and demonstrations of biodiversity enhancement through urban meadows.
- As part of the regenerative green village, plant a grove of fruit trees.

Built Environment: *Design, build, and maintain resilient and sustainable buildings.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- Commit to sustainable standards for all building renovations and management.
- By May 2018 explore the possibility of solar panels on roofs with southern exposure and ground units for the larger Quad.
- Using the principles defined by the Living Building Challenge, by 2022 break ground on a sustainable green village to replace the current Divinity apartments. Concepts to be consider include, but are not limited to, net positive energy, net positive water use, well-building standards, enhanced mobility options, and natural environment enrichment. In addition to offering a sense of community living to students, this set of buildings will offer the opportunity to test new standards for Yale and to offer educational programming.

*Mobility: Promote and support human and ecosystem health through sustainable transportation.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- Encourage members of the Divinity community to choose active transportation with tactics such as additional bike racks and supporting a walking path up the hill through Yale property.
- With the creation of the green village, reduce on-site parking by 30% and enhance alternative transportation options such as bike share and car share.

*Materials: Ensure sustainable consumption and disposal patterns.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- By July 2018 set targets to increase composting and reduce waste.
- Annually, collaborate with Goodwill or a faith-based charity to capture unwanted items from the community.
- On an on-going basis, encourage students to contribute to and take from the furniture storage room.
- By July 2020 commit to transitioning away from the use of disposable water bottles for daily use in classrooms and administrative spaces.

*Technology: Explore innovative technological platforms to address sustainability challenges.*

*Yale Divinity School Goals:*

- In support of the vision to be a more global school of theology, by September 2017 adopt technological systems that allow for expanded participation of speakers from around the world

## Implementation of this Plan

### Visibility & Community Engagement

In October 2017 the Divinity School will announce this plan during Celebrate Sustainability. Following this, the Divinity Green Team will develop communications and programming to connect all members of the Divinity School to themes of sustainability. Leadership for this will originate within the school with guidance of the Office of Sustainability. In addition, the School administration will engage and empower FERNS, the student group dedicated Faith and the Environment, on student-focused activities and programming. A targeted list of FERNS commitments is included in Appendix 1.

### Accountability & Reporting

Every year the Office of Sustainability will solicit updates from the Divinity School and host a series of opportunities for the Divinity School Sustainability team to connect with similar groups in other professional schools. The on-going implementation of this plan should also be considered an opportunity to conceptualize fresh goals and new ideas for academic integration.

## Appendix 1: Commitments of FERNS - Faith & Environment Working Group

### Goals:

- Broad student awareness of sustainability goals
- Consistent school-wide participation in sustainability events and programs
- Faculty and staff buy-in for sustainability goals

### Academic Engagement:

- Graduate Conference in Religion & Ecology:
  - Provide an annual venue for academic engagement with intersection of religion and ecology with support from Forum on Religion & Ecology
- Environmental Humanities Consortium
  - Ensure YDS participation in broader university initiatives through FERNS board, listserv

### YDS Infrastructure

- Green/Regenerative Village
  - Add student voices to steering committees
- Bible Quotes re: sustainability in public areas
  - Bathrooms, Common Areas, next to trash cans (cf. Aldo Leopold Quotes in FES)

### 9 Ambitions

- **Empowerment:** Propose *Ecologies of Grace* (Willis Jenkins), *Food and Faith* (Norman Wirzba) for an all-school read, invite to speak at YDS
- **Health:** Promote Divinity Farm work-days as a part of sustainability goals
- **Food:** Meatless Mondays, Propose blackboard with all of the sourced locations of food for refectory, educate people about modern farming types, and the difference between compost, garbage, and recycling
- **Climate Action:** Energy audit of YDS and advocacy for changes to heating, lighting use
- **Stewardship:** Work-days for care of trees on quad, care of urban meadow and Divinity Farm. Partner with URI to manage trees
- **Built Environment:** Student representation and advocacy around Green/Regenerative village
- **Mobility:** More Bike Racks, Signs to encourage the use of non-carbon emission transportation
- **Materials:** Work with Dean Sterling to find a definitive date by which the Refectory can transition to fully compostable and recyclable materials.
- **Technology:** Use Listservs and Facebook to increase student awareness of FERNS, sustainability goals, online Graduate Journal of Religion and Ecology

## Appendix 2: Ambitions and Objectives of the Yale Sustainability Plan 2025

### 1. *Leadership: Demonstrate local and global leadership in sustainability teaching, research, service, and operations.*

OBJECTIVE 1.1: Enrich and enhance teaching, research, learning, and service that explore and contribute to sustainability solutions.

OBJECTIVE 1.2: Act as a convening voice and leader for dialogues about local, national, and global sustainability challenges.

### 2. *Empowerment: Foster a diverse and inclusive sustainability movement.*

OBJECTIVE 2.1: Engage and empower members of the Yale community around themes of sustainability.

OBJECTIVE 2.2: Support diversity and inclusion in local efforts through education and collaboration.

### 3. *Health and Well-Being: Enhance health, well-being, and ecosystem vitality.*

OBJECTIVE 3.1: Encourage decision-making and behaviors that lead to a healthy, vibrant campus and surrounding community.

OBJECTIVE 3.2: Promote resilient food systems through on-campus food service and community-wide efforts.

### 4. *Climate Action: Take urgent action to mitigate climate change and proactively adapt to its impacts.*

OBJECTIVE 4.1: Achieve carbon neutrality for Yale University by or before 2050.

OBJECTIVE 4.2: Develop, test, and share climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies in support of overall regional resilience.

OBJECTIVE 4.3: Incorporate the risks and opportunities associated with climate change and possible governmental responses to climate change in the evaluation of investment opportunities.

### 5. *Stewardship: Plan and preserve resilient and sustainable infrastructure and landscapes.*

OBJECTIVE 5.1: Develop transformative approaches to urban growth and campus planning that address financial, environmental, and social imperatives.

OBJECTIVE 5.2: Develop innovative approaches to land and water management that enhance human health, biodiversity, and environmental vitality.

### 6. *Built Environment: Design, build, and maintain resilient and sustainable buildings.*

OBJECTIVE 6.1: Develop transformative approaches to project design, construction, and maintenance that address financial, environmental, and social imperatives.

OBJECTIVE 6.2: Develop effective approaches to maintenance, operation, and occupancy of buildings that both ensure optimal performance and are responsive to environmental, social, and financial imperatives.

### 7. *Mobility: Promote and support human and ecosystem health through sustainable transportation.*

OBJECTIVE 7.1: Enhance and support systems for alternative and active transportation.

OBJECTIVE 7.2: Advance transportation choices that improve human health and environmental vitality.

### 8. *Materials: Ensure sustainable consumption and disposal patterns.*

OBJECTIVE 8.1: Advance sustainability purchasing standards that promote sustainability and resilience.

OBJECTIVE 8.2: Promote material flow systems that employ use and disposal patterns to inform purchasing decisions.

OBJECTIVE 8.3: Cultivate sustainable purchasing and disposal decisions.

### 9. *Technology: Explore innovative technological platforms to address sustainability challenges.*

OBJECTIVE 9.1: Develop and implement multidisciplinary technological solutions that foster sustainability and connectivity through local, regional, and global networks.

OBJECTIVE 9.2: Lead the technology industry by creating replicable sustainability standards related to energy, materials, human well-being, and transportation.