

Yale University Library Sustainability Action Plan

March 2016

Sustainability at Yale

Yale University is dedicated to an integrated, comprehensive approach to policy and operations that balances ecosystem health with human health and economic viability in order to demonstrate that sustainability is both feasible and affordable. To accomplish this goal the University integrates sustainable practices into the fabric of institutional decision-making at all levels.

Each unit on campus has a unique cultural context. Successful implementation of sustainability goals will rely on efforts to refine tools and tactics to suit this diversity of disciplines and perspectives.

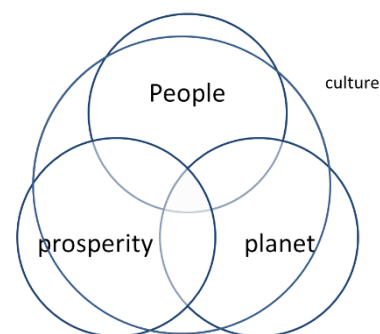


Figure 1: sustainability values

This Document

As a component of leadership and capacity building, the Yale Sustainability Strategic Plan commits to establish and implement a Sustainability Action Plan for the Yale University Library (YUL). The Action Plan is intended to support the Yale-wide sustainability goals while reflecting the operational contexts of the Library.

This document offers overarching language about sustainability at Yale and indicates goals from the *Yale Sustainability Strategy Plan 2013-2016* that are particularly relevant to the Library. It then suggests a brief set of initiatives related to the operations and mission of the Library.

The Office of Sustainability will communicate with the Library Sustainability Advisory Group on a regular basis to follow progress on the Action Items below and update this “living document” accordingly.

Yale 2013-2016 Sustainability Strategic Plan

The *Yale 2013-2016 Sustainability Strategic Plan* contains 25 ambitious yet achievable goals divided into five categories: energy and greenhouse gas emissions, natural and built environment, materials management, food and well-being, and sustainability leadership and capacity building.

The Plan is available in full online at sustainability.yale.edu. Goals that may be of particular interest to YUL include:

ENERGY & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

Yale Goal Reduce energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions 5% below 2013 levels by June

2016. This will result in more than a 20% total reduction in greenhouse gas emissions from 2005 levels.

MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

- Yale Goal Achieve a 10% reduction in paper and office supply purchases from 2013 levels by June 2016.
- Yale Goal Achieve a 50% waste diversion rate by June 2016 via reuse, recycling, and/or composting strategies.
- Yale Goal Implement strategies to reduce municipal solid waste with the intention to commit to an institutional total volume waste reduction target by January 2015.

SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING

- Yale Goal Establish a portfolio of sustainability action plans for schools and departments.

The 2013–2016 Plan will end in June 2016, and a forthcoming Sustainability Strategic Plan will follow. The goals of the YUL Action Plan are relevant to both Strategic Plans.

Yale University Library: Mission Statement

At the heart of the University, the Yale University Library provides outstanding support for teaching, learning, and research at Yale, and for the world-wide scholarly community, through its staff, collections, library spaces, and systems.

Yale University Library: Vision

Library **staff** are committed to the Library mission, and effectively anticipate and respond to the ever-changing teaching, learning, and research landscape.

The Library is a gateway to exceptional **collections** and continuously strives to enhance discovery, access, and use of the collections.

Library **programs** contribute to the vibrant intellectual commons for Yale and the community.

Library **spaces** are inspiring, functional, and adaptable to the changing practices of scholarship, teaching, and research.

Library **services** are intuitive, seamless, and driven by an evidence-based understanding of the disparate needs and research practices of our users.



Successes to Date and Opportunities

At the time of this writing, remarkable and robust efforts are underway to integrate sustainability into the operations of the Yale University Library. In order to recognize and build on these accomplishments, included here are a set of successes-to-date, which are followed by a set of suggested opportunities.

Library Successes-to-date

In June 2012, a team of representatives from the YUL completed a “Roadmap to Sustainability,” outlining potential opportunities for increased sustainability in the areas of energy, bulky waste, and paper management. All of the proposals contained in this “Roadmap” were successfully undertaken. A few highlights include:

- adjusting the temperature settings all thermostats;
- replacing sources of light with energy-efficient forms of lighting;
- installing light sensors;
- installing smart strips, which shut down power to plugged-in items when possible;
- implementation of Pen Pail recycling program; and
- installing Dyson Air Blades in place of paper towels.

In addition, the following successes have taken place subsequent to the “Roadmap to Sustainability”:

- Staff at the Library Shelving Facility have stopped printing reports that can be archived electronically.
- The Library Project Review Committee is reviewing a proposal for SML and Bass Access Services to use tablets to manage their work instead of working from paper reports.
- Library Collections Services has replaced its paper delivery forms with a web form, reducing paper usage from 7-8 sheets to 1 sheet per delivery.
- An energy audit has been conducted at the Library Shelving Facility, providing retro-commissioning opportunity to save energy in HVAC operations, funded by the state of Connecticut.
- Sterling Memorial Library/Bass Access Services has switched from using non-recyclable bubble mailers to 100% post-consumer padded mailers that are fully recyclable and compostable. In addition, the unit now reuses cardboard boxes, bubble wrap, bubble mailers and packing paper received from incoming shipments.
- The Lewis Walpole Library, which includes 14 acres of land, uses organic products in its grounds-keeping activities and maintains a composting program.
- Eight Library units offer reusable plates, cups, and silverware in kitchens and break rooms.
- The majority of library units use shared printers instead of desk side printers.
- The majority of library units know whom to contact regarding building temperature control issues.
- All Library units participate in a system for sharing and distributing office supplies to maximize reuse and limit unnecessary purchases.

As can be seen by the above list, many projects to date have been operations-focused. While there continue to be opportunities for sustainability improvements in the realm of operations, YUL is also positioned to think through opportunities relating to sustainability education and awareness.

Library Opportunities

All efforts should be tracked, measured, and made transparent to relevant stakeholders in the Library and throughout the University.



SUSTAINABILITY LEADERSHIP & CAPACITY BUILDING

- Form a Library Sustainability Advisory Group to implement Action Plan, in partnership with the Office of Sustainability.
 - Advisory Group will meet quarterly.
- Establish short-term programs to communicate and educate Library staff about sustainable practices relevant to their work environment.

Year One

- Create a Library Sustainability LibGuide that serves as a way to communicate and educate sustainable choices for Library staff.
- Identify standards for sustainable practices in use by caterers.
- In partnership with the Office of Sustainability, educate Library staff about sustainability at the University level.
 - Disseminate information about the forthcoming Sustainability Strategic Plan.
 - Explore incentives to encourage continued participation.
 - Encourage individuals to sign up for the Office of Sustainability's monthly campaigns.
 - Share information about how to start a green team.
 - Provide information about sustainability goals and guidelines for best practices to all new hires and student employees.

Year Two

- Continue to develop the Library Sustainability LibGuide with additional procedures, practices, and successes.
- Create a list of caterers who have sustainable practices for use by Library units in an effort to reduce landfill waste and create greener events.
- Re-administer sustainability survey to measure progress in the Library.

Year Three

- Educate Library staff about strategies about being sustainable in the office environment.



ENERGY & GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS

- Reduce energy consumption in the Library by 5%.

Year One

- Identify opportunities where efficiencies (e.g. energy savings, less waste) can be made with equipment purchases (e.g. printers, reusable containers).
 - Review the Technology Checklist with Library IT to discuss opportunities for energy savings.
 - Review the [Building Occupancy Training for offices](#).

Year Two

- Continue to identify opportunities where energy consumption could be reduced.

Year Three

- Implement strategies to reduce energy consumption.



MATERIALS MANAGEMENT

- Reduce the amount of office and routing slip paper purchased by the Library by 10%.

Year One

- Identify amount of office paper and routing slip paper purchased by the Library during FY16.

Year Two

- Implement strategies to reduce amount of office paper and routing slip paper purchased by the Library.

Year Three

- Continue implementation of strategies to reduce amount of office paper and routing slip paper purchased by the Library.