

COMMITTED TO A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Sustainability Guide

“The time is always right
to do what is right.”

– MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.



GRAND VALLEY
STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF
SUSTAINABILITY PRACTICES

From President Thomas J. Haas

There may never be a better time to make a commitment to sustainability than right now. With incredible challenges presented by recent events, such as the financial and energy crises, also come incredible opportunities. As a rapidly growing university whose size, impact, and community engagement are continuing to build momentum, Grand Valley is poised to play a powerful role in building a more sustainable community and world.

In addition to the university's dedication to being environmentally friendly, fiscally responsible, and involved in the community, its mission of educating students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies fuels the core of sustainability. Through education, our university aims to make students more mindful, responsible, and passionate individuals who will be mobilized to create a world and society that can be enjoyed by both the people of today and those of tomorrow.

But the most well-intended and robust programs mean nothing unless individuals, like you and me, decide to make a difference. To create a more sustainable community, each one of us must realize how important our every action is and must be inspired to change our thoughts and behaviors in a way that benefits the greater good.

In this guide, you will find examples of changes the university and other individuals have made that might inspire you, along with some of the many opportunities you have to become a part of this exciting and important journey.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Haas', with a stylized, flowing script.

Thomas J. Haas
President

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What is Sustainability?

“No matter how complex global problems may seem, it is we ourselves who have given use to them. They cannot be beyond our power to resolve.”

– DAISAKU IKEDA

Sustainability is about meeting the needs of today without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

To make sure that the environmental, social, and economic impact of our activities will create a high quality of life for our current generation and those of the future, we can look at them through a framework of sustainability factors.

These are the major factors of sustainable development:

- Increasing **environmental** stewardship, restoration, and renewal.
- Improving overall **social** well-being and quality of life.
- Achieving **economic** vitality and overall fiscal sustainability.
- Building upon the **cultural capacity** and our collective diversity, heritage, and intrinsic values.

By considering these factors when making decisions, we can become better global citizens. Sustainability is integral to Grand Valley State University’s strategic mission, vision, and values. It is everyone’s responsibility to work toward a sustainable future.

GRAND VALLEY'S MISSION

Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies. The university contributes to the enrichment of society through excellent teaching, active scholarship, and public service.

VISION

Grand Valley State University will become one of the nation's premier Carnegie classification "Master's Large" institutions of higher education grounded in the tradition of liberal education. It will be recognized and acknowledged as a community of diverse, committed scholars engaged in collaborative, lifelong learning to achieve acknowledged academic excellence and positive community impacts. By focusing on the promotion of high-quality undergraduate and graduate degree programs, the institution will be the university of choice for students and faculty alike and it will enjoy broad support for its innovative partnerships and initiatives that promote the physical health and the intellectual, social, environmental, economic, and cultural advancement of West Michigan, and ultimately, the advancement of the state, nation, and world.

VALUE

Grand Valley values the guiding principles of sustainability in helping to meet the current needs of our faculty members, staff members, and students without compromising the needs and resources of future generations. We are committed to working with our community partners to create a sustainable future for our university, our community, our region, our state, our nation, and the world. We model applied sustainability best practices in our campus operations and administration, education for sustainable development, student involvement, and community engagement by promoting social responsibility, practicing fiscal responsibility, and encouraging environmental stewardship. We provide our students with excellence in education for sustainable development by imbedding theory, systems-oriented thinking, and service learning into our curricular and extracurricular programs.

Office of Sustainability Practices

The Office of Sustainability Practices was established at Grand Valley in 2006 and is part of the Brooks College of Interdisciplinary Studies.

Our mission is to provide Grand Valley administration, faculty and staff members, students, and community stakeholders with the required skills and capabilities to become better stewards and responsible global citizens in the workforce, communities, and family life. We accomplish this through the following areas.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Grand Valley offers education for sustainable development through curriculum, certificates, emphases, internships, and study abroad programs.

FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

We seek to make Grand Valley a desirable and affordable destination for those looking to further their education by being responsible stewards of resources and creating an inclusive and welcoming atmosphere.

FACILITIES OPERATIONS

We strive to make all systems operate as efficiently as possible and provide various services including recycling, composting, and free public transportation.

BUILDING DESIGN AND CONSTRUCTION

Our campuses feature sustainable design and all new building projects are constructed to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED®) Silver certification or better. Grand Valley currently has 20 completed or under construction LEED-certified building projects.



Student workers help clean the ravine.

STUDENT INVOLVEMENT

We engage students on campus through internships, clubs, activities, and events to increase awareness and understanding of sustainability and provide students the skillsets they need.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

We partner with the local, regional, and global community through service-learning opportunities, professional networking, and by sharing sustainable best practices.

gvsu.edu/sustainability

Sustainability Issues

Education

“Information is useful only if citizens can put it into a framework of knowledge and use it to solve problems, form values, and make choices.”

– EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABILITY: AN AGENDA FOR ACTION

Education provides us with the knowledge and critical thinking we need to be better global citizens. Some of the common themes in a sustainable education include partnerships and collaboration, multicultural perspectives, lifelong learning, and empowerment.

Education plays an integral role in building a more sustainable community on two levels. First, a liberal education provides the broad perspective that helps people understand the world and its needs, along with the interconnectedness of the various aspects of sustainability. Second, education provides practical skills, knowledge, and opportunities to apply that know-how for the betterment of society.



Researchers Developing Affordable Flow Battery Technology

The wind and sun can produce great amounts of power, but usually can only be harnessed when it's windy and the sun is shining. Researchers at Grand Valley and Ann Arbor-based Vinazene are working to change that by creating a new type of flow battery technology that will allow the capture, collection, and storage of energy through organic compounds.

The project, funded by a Phase II Small Business Innovation Research grant through the U.S. Department of Energy to Vinazene, includes researchers from Grand Valley's Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center (MAREC) and Chemistry Department.

Andrew Lantz, associate professor of chemistry at Grand Valley, Bill Schroeder and John Schroeder, research consultants for Grand Valley, and a group of students are developing and testing a prototype device to showcase the redox flow battery technology concept.

"The main roadblock with many renewable energy sources is their lack of consistent power output over time," said Lantz. "Flow battery technology can help deal with this issue by storing energy reserves during times of peak collection and discharging energy when needed."

While other companies and universities are conducting similar research, Vinazene founder Paul Rasmussen, professor emeritus of chemistry and macromolecular science and engineering at the University of Michigan, said many of them rely on expensive, scarce elements to supply the batteries; his team uses less expensive, more accessible organic compounds.

Lantz said as the country shifts to renewable energy, this concept will be especially well suited for solar and wind energy sources. For more information, contact Andrew Lantz at lantz@gvsu.edu or (616) 331-8753 or Paul Rasmussen at pgrasmsn@gmail.com.

GVSU INITIATIVES

Educational programs

Grand Valley has created educational programs related to sustainability, including natural resources management, liberal studies with an emphasis in sustainability, and geography and planning. There are also sustainability-related minors in environmental studies, natural resources management, and adventure travel.



Issues courses are an upper-division general education requirement in which students choose classes from different disciplines that relate to a common theme. Disciplines include globalization; health; human rights; identity; information, innovation and technology; and sustainability. Study Abroad experiences may be supplemented.

Academics GVSU offers more than 200 sustainability-related courses. You can earn a degree in natural resources management, environmental studies, liberal studies with an emphasis in sustainability, or an MBA with a sustainable enterprise emphasis.

For example, you can earn a **certificate** in green chemistry, sustainable food systems, intercultural training, sustainable urban and regional planning, sustainability in public and nonprofit organizations, and more.



TAKE ACTION

Integrate sustainability into your coursework or lesson plans Students might consider the sustainability issue, pursuing a sustainability-related certificate, or majoring or minoring in a sustainability-related field, while faculty members could create a class project that gets students involved with sustainability and promote sustainability events to their students.

Attend a community workshop or class Local nonprofit organizations, such as the West Michigan Environmental Action Council, offer courses in everything from rain barrel making to the importance of supporting local businesses. Visit wmeac.org for more information.

Join a campus club or attend an event GVSU has more than a dozen sustainability-related groups on campus, including the Student Environmental Coalition and the Farm Club. Student groups host many educational events on campus that are open to everyone. Visit the Office of Student Life at gvsu.edu/studentlife for more information.



“It is estimated that the average American meal travels about 1,500 miles to get from farm to plate.”

– WWW.CUESA.ORG

Food

Sustainable agriculture is a way of producing food that’s healthy to eat, doesn’t harm the environment, is humane for workers, respects animals, provides a fair wage to the farmer, and supports and enhances local communities. Since there is no “sustainable” label, eating sustainably means understanding the issues, getting involved with your food, and knowing the people who grow and sell it. Learn more about how to do this at sustainabletable.org/.

“‘Eating is an agricultural act,’ as Wendell Berry famously said. It is an ecological act, and a political act, too. Though much has been done to obscure this simple fact, how and what we eat determines to a great extent the use we make of the world and what is to become of it. To eat with a fuller consciousness of all that is at stake might sound like a burden, but in practice few things in life can afford quite as much satisfaction.”

– AN EXCERPT FROM THE BOOK BY MICHAEL POLLAN,
THE OMNIVORE’S DILEMMA: A NATURAL HISTORY OF FOUR MEALS

Farm to Table: Produce Grown at GVSU Now Served on Campus

Students and faculty and staff members at Grand Valley are adding a Laker flavor to the farm-to-table concept. In a partnership between the Office of Sustainability Practices and Campus Dining, produce grown on campus is being incorporated into meals served on campus.

Herbs, vegetables, and fruit are grown, harvested, and packaged at Grand Valley's Sustainable Agriculture Project (SAP), a hands-on farming space that allows students and faculty and staff members to learn about sustainable agriculture. Then, the produce is purchased, prepared, and served by Engrained, located in The Connection on the Allendale Campus.

"The produce is grown less than a few miles from the restaurant where it's being prepared and served," said Dave Feenstra of the Sustainable Agriculture Project. "It's a beneficial collaboration that exposes students to where food comes from."

Before the produce could be sold and served, a food risk safety assessment through the Michigan Department of Agriculture and Rural Development had to be completed, which included inspections of equipment and procedures at SAP. Feenstra said students and staff members who harvest the produce completed an extensive training program to learn about food safety.

SAP is a collaborative, hands-on space that was established in 2008 and includes two hoophouses used for fall and winter vegetable production and a community-supported agriculture program (CSA). Support is provided by Farm Club members, faculty and staff members, and a team of student interns.

For more information, contact Yumiko Jakobcic, sustainability coordinator, at jakobciy@gvsu.edu.

GVSU INITIATIVES

Farmers' market Running June through October of each year, the farmers' market offers a way for the GVSU community to shop directly from local farmers and food producers.

Visit gvsu.edu/farmersmarket/.

Local produce Campus Dining purchases more than 30 percent of its produce locally. They purchase Michigan-grown foods when possible, including produce grown right on Grand Valley's campus.

Fair trade products Campus Dining offers fair trade coffee, tea, chocolate, and sugar in most dining locations. Fair trade certification ensures that the workers and producers of the product are treated fairly and receive a living wage.

Cage-free eggs Grand Valley is the first university in Michigan to commit to using cage-free eggs exclusively, which began in the fall of 2010.





TAKE ACTION

Buy locally Purchase foods from local farmers through farmers' markets and food cooperatives. Buy food when it's in season and freeze or can foods at their peak freshness to preserve and enjoy later in the year. Consider purchasing a community-supported agriculture (CSA) share from Grand Valley to get fresh produce grown right on campus by our students.

Reduce your meat consumption Going meatless once a week may reduce your risk of chronic preventable conditions like cancer, cardiovascular disease, diabetes, and obesity. It can also help reduce your carbon footprint and save natural resources. Campus Dining offers vegetarian and vegan options at every restaurant location on a daily basis.

Grow your own Nothing is more local than your own backyard. If you have limited space, try growing a tomato plant in a container on your porch, or a pot of herbs on your windowsill. You can also join others in this effort by joining a community garden. Along with providing food, gardening can be part of a meditative practice and a fun social activity.

Waste Minimization

The problem with throwing things away is that there is no “away.”

– UNKNOWN

Waste is a distinctly human problem. In nature, there is no waste, as all is recycled back into the earth, while humans use landfills that have significant negative impacts on our society. Landfills are a big ticket expense for municipalities and local governments to maintain. Landfills also can leach toxic chemicals into the environment, and they tend to be disproportionately located near marginalized communities. Therefore, working to minimize waste has social, economic, and environmental benefits.



A compost system, like the one shown here at Grand Valley's Sustainable Agriculture Project on Luce Street, is easy and inexpensive to set up.

Laker Football Games Go Zero-waste

GVSU has strived to make our athletic events more sustainable, mainly by minimizing how much waste gets sent to the landfill. Recycling and composting stations were introduced in Lubbers Stadium for all home football games in 2013 with the help of the Office of Sustainability Practices, Facilities Services, Athletics, and various student groups.

As a result, more than 4,000 lbs. of waste were saved from the landfill in 2013 and recycled or composted instead. That number only grew during the 2014 season, bringing the average waste diversion rate to 69 percent. Campus Dining is also a critical partner in this effort, by choosing to sell more compostable and recyclable food items in the concession stands.

Zero-waste events have spread since then with sorting stations now available for indoor athletic events as well. News of Grand Valley's successful initiative spread throughout the community. Resources, including students' project skills, have gone toward making events like ArtPrize® and Gazelle Sports' Gazelle Girl race more sustainable.



GVSU INITIATIVES

Composting Campus Dining composts food waste, pizza boxes, and compostable food and beverage containers in all of its locations. Grand Valley is the first university in the state to feature an entirely compostable soda cup from Pepsi Co. In an average year, more than 400 tons of compostable waste are diverted from the landfill.



Project Donation When students move out at the end of each year, they often discover several unwanted items. The Facilities Services Department coordinates with local nonprofit organizations to set up donation boxes on campus for students to donate items like furniture, clothing, and food. Even electronics, which are reused or recycled by Comprenew (a local e-waste recycler), can be donated.

Recycling Grand Valley recycles paper, cardboard, plastics, glass, metal, batteries, and more. Recycling bins are located throughout the housing units, student centers, and academic buildings. Each winter, Grand Valley competes against other universities nationally in the RecycleMania competition to see who can divert the most waste from the landfill. Visit recyclemaniacs.org for more information.

Paper reduction efforts Duplex printing is the default option in most computer labs on campus. The transition to duplex printing saved more than nine million sheets of paper in its first year. Paper usage has also been reduced in the classroom as a result of the Blackboard website, where students can obtain class readings or submit assignments electronically.

TAKE ACTION

Buy less stuff The more stuff we buy, the more stuff that will eventually end up in a landfill. Before buying something new, ask yourself if you really need it, you could do without, you could reuse something you already have, you could purchase it second-hand, or you could borrow it. For more information on responsible consumption, visit newdream.org/.

Reduce, reuse, and recycle — in that order Try to reduce the waste you generate by buying less and choosing products with little or no packaging. After reducing, think of ways to reuse things that might otherwise be thrown away, like using food tubs to store leftovers. Finally, if it absolutely cannot be reduced or reused, recycle it.

Start a compost pile Much of the waste that ends up in our landfills could be composted. Composting at home is simple, and many containers for doing so are available for purchase or you can build your own.



This piece of art was created from reclaimed material by Jamie Kalinowski.

Energy

“We simply must balance our demand for energy with our rapidly shrinking resources. By acting now we can control our future instead of letting the future control us.”

– JIMMY CARTER

Reliance on fossil fuels has numerous negative environmental consequences, including climate change and pollution of the air and water, along with social effects like higher asthma rates for inner-city children and political instability in oil-producing nations. Reducing reliance on fossil fuels through energy conservation and development of renewable energy sources is a way to lessen these impacts.

The Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center (MAREC) opened in 2003.



Grand Valley Joins Chevrolet to go Green, Combat Carbon Emissions

Grand Valley became a partner with Chevrolet's Campus Clean Energy Efficiency Campaign — a voluntary program to reduce carbon emissions. The program enables the university to receive funding from Chevrolet through energy efficiency improvements.



To qualify, Grand Valley had to demonstrate that its energy-based greenhouse gas reductions on a campus-wide scale surpassed the performance of the top 15 percent of campuses in the nation.

“Grand Valley is the only university in Michigan that has qualified for Chevrolet's program,” said Terry Pahl, facilities engineer at GVSU who applied for the program. “The millions of dollars we save from energy efficiency improvements and the additional funds we'll receive from Chevrolet allow us to reinvest in the university and our students.”

During the last 15 years, Grand Valley has implemented more than 250 energy-savings projects, which total more than \$2 million annually in cost avoidances from long-term, energy-efficient projects and \$1.5 million in cost avoidances from energy conservation programs and initiatives, which change each year, such as the Energy Competition.

GVSU INITIATIVES

Climate Action Plan Grand Valley's Climate Action Plan outlines steps to achieve carbon neutrality by 2043. Go to gvsu.edu/sustainabilityreports/.

LEED facilities Grand Valley has committed to designing and building to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver certification levels. LEED buildings use 30 percent less energy, 40 percent less water, and 75 percent less material than regular buildings.

Energy-saving projects Grand Valley saves more than \$2 million annually by monitoring and documenting energy consumption and implementing energy-efficient practices, procedures, and technology. Examples include installing more efficient lighting and controls, integrating occupancy sensors with HVAC controls, applying Demand Control Ventilation methods, improving building system infrastructure, adjusting temperature settings, promoting energy education, and purchasing Energy Star® products.

Student conserve-energy challenge Each year student housing units compete to see who can reduce energy consumption the most. This competition is part of a broader campaign to encourage behavior change in students.

Michigan Alternative and Renewable Energy Center (MAREC)

MAREC is a leader in education and the advancement of emerging technology with emphasis on alternative and renewable energy. Visit gvsu.edu/marec/.

Renewable energy Both the Kelly Family Sports Center and MAREC use photovoltaics in an exploratory manner as a partial energy source, and the sports center has geothermal wells that help maintain temperature levels.



TAKE ACTION

Turn electronics off when not in use This includes lights, TVs, stereos, and kitchen appliances. Unplugging electronic devices that continue to draw power when not in use, like phone chargers, also helps conserve energy.

Turn the thermostat down By adjusting the thermostat just a few degrees, you can substantially reduce your energy use. You may find it helpful to program your thermostat to a different setting when you are not home or while you are sleeping. Lowering the setting on your hot water heater or line drying your clothes may create additional savings.

Report energy waste Contact the Facilities Services department at (616) 331-3000 if you see energy that's being wasted on campus.

Water

“Water use has been growing at more than twice the rate of population increase in the last century.”

– FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION
OF THE UNITED NATIONS (FAO) AND UN-WATER

Water is an essential building block of life, so the growing demand and pollution of it is gaining increasing attention. Along with thinking about how to reduce the amount of water we consume, we also need to be conscious of what we put down the drain and how pollutants are ending up in our water systems through runoff.

Water that originates from rain, snowmelt, or too much irrigation and that does not soak into the ground becomes surface runoff, carrying with it pollutants from impermeable surfaces. Government studies have shown that up to 70 percent of the pollution in our streams, rivers, and lakes is carried there by storm water.

The rain garden near the Kelly Family Sports Center collects and filters storm water.



Researchers Tackle Water Plant Problems With DNA

In a state with more than 11,000 inland lakes, managing aquatic plants in Michigan is both big business and a sensitive environmental matter. Researchers at Grand Valley's Robert B. Annis Water Resources Institute in



Muskegon are working on a cutting-edge process to help save lakes from environmental damage, save native plants from unnecessary removal, and save money for people who have economic interests in lakes.

The process is based on DNA testing of a particular aquatic plant called a watermilfoil that comes in dozens of varieties. Some are native to Michigan waters, while others are invasive.

“Aquatic plants are the basis of the food chain and create a lot of the structure in a lake as they grow from the bottom to the surface,” said Ryan Thum, a former Grand Valley researcher who led the project. Thum and a group of students, including graduate student Syndell Parks, have been working to determine specific herbicide treatment plans.

GVSU INITIATIVES

Annis Water Resources

Institute (AWRI)

Located in Muskegon, AWRI is committed to enhancing and preserving water quality in the Great Lakes region. It is a leading research center for the region on issues that affect environmental legislation and regulation, and it has an education

and outreach program that has served more than 100,000 passengers aboard its biodiesel-fueled research vessels.



AWRI's research and education vessels offer students hands-on science.

Reducing impermeable surfaces Impermeable surfaces increase water runoff. Grand Valley has made efforts to decrease impermeable surfaces on its campuses with green roofs; permeable pavement, sidewalks, and courtyards; and a 9,000 square-foot rain garden near the Kelly Family Sports Center.

Green Housekeeping Policy Through the use of nontoxic and biodegradable cleaners, this policy aims to reduce exposure to hazardous chemicals while protecting the environment.

Water conservation Water consumption has been reduced with waterless urinals, reduced-flow showerheads, low-flush toilets, irrigation rain gauge, and going trayless in campus dining.

Storm water retention pond The rain garden next to the Kelly Family Sports Center feeds into a storm water retention pond to reduce runoff and erosion of the ravines. The water is then used to irrigate athletic fields, which reduces Grand Valley's water costs and its load on the municipal sewer system.



Rain barrels are put to use at Grand Valley's Sustainable Agriculture Project on Luce Street.

TAKE ACTION

Take note of what you're putting down the drain The soaps and other products we use in combination with our water ultimately end up in our water supply. Choose all-natural and biodegradable dish soaps, laundry detergents, hand soaps, shampoos, conditioners, body soaps, and household cleaners.

Reduce the amount of water you consume Take shorter showers, never leave the water running when brushing your teeth or doing the dishes, and only run full loads of laundry and dishes. You can also adjust your toilet to be low flow, water plants and your lawn in the early morning or evening, and install low-flow faucet and showerheads.

Reduce your impact on storm water Pick up pet droppings; wash your car on the grass; install a rain barrel; plant a rain garden; do not use toxic chemicals in your home, on your lawn, or in the garden; and check your car for leaks.

Transportation

“The transportation sector is the second largest source of carbon dioxide emissions in the U.S.”

– ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

Reliable transportation is essential in day-to-day life, and the method of transportation we choose has a direct impact on our environment, health, and pocketbook. Reducing the number of vehicles on roads minimizes traffic congestion, accidents, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and air pollution.



SUSTAINABILITY AT GVSU

Grand Valley Challenges Campus to Participate in Active Commute Week

Each spring Grand Valley partners with the Greater Grand Rapids Bicycle Coalition to present Active Commute Week. Employees are asked to log their time spent in carpools, buses, bikes, or alternative modes of transportation to win awards and prizes.

The week, typically in May, is filled with events like bicycle maintenance workshops, group rides, and bike shop discounts. The weeklong challenge aims at raising awareness of alternative transportation options that are more environmentally efficient and benefit employees' health at the same time.



GVSU INITIATIVES

The Rapid partnership All routes on The Rapid are free for GVSU students and faculty and staff members, including routes to and from the Allendale Campus, Robert C. Pew Grand Rapids Campus, and Cook-DeVos Center for Health Sciences. Our partnership has helped the Interurban Transit Partnership (ITP) achieve its national ranking of No. 1 for its size among other urban transit systems with more than two million bus rides per year. Visit gvsu.edu/bus/.

GreenRide GreenRide is a carpool program available to everyone in the greater Grand Rapids area and surrounding counties, including Allegan, Kent, and Ottawa. It pairs drivers with riders from similar locales with similar commute schedules. Sharing the ride with just one other person can reduce your commuting costs by 50 percent. To learn more, click on “Share a Ride” at gvsu.edu/bus/.





TAKE ACTION

Bike or walk Stay in shape while reducing the impact on our environment. Through its campus master plan, GVSU maintains the feasibility of walking from one end of campus to the other in less than 10 minutes.

Reduce travel time Save on expenses and greenhouse gas emissions. Combine errands into one trip or skip the trip altogether by using online technology to attend meetings and classes.

Take the bus Riding the bus saves gasoline and minimizes carbon emissions. Look for schedules and hours of operation at gvsu.edu/bus or ridetherapid.com/.

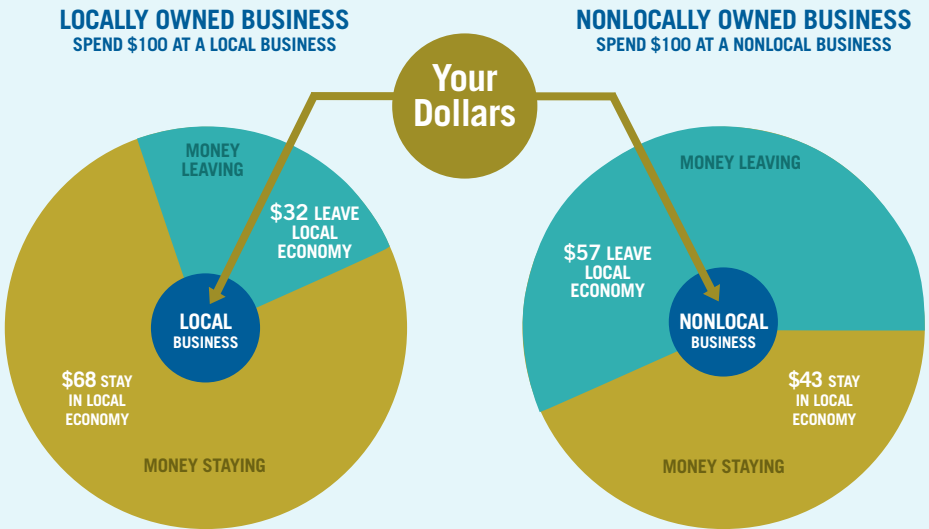
Rideshare and carpooling Sharing a ride, or carpooling, is a great way to save money on your commute and reduce traffic congestion. There are a number of ride-sharing options available to the GVSU community at gvsu.edu/bus/rideshare-carpooling-65.htm/.

Purchasing

“He who buys what he needs not, sells what he needs.”

– JAPANESE PROVERB

Sustainable purchasing is all about taking environmental and social factors and considerations into account when making purchasing decisions. It is about looking at what your products are made of, where they come from, who has made them, and how they can be disposed. For every dollar you spend at a local business, 68 cents will stay and circulate in the local economy. However, if you spend that same dollar at a nonlocal business, only 43 cents of that dollar will stay in the local economy.



GREEN = MONEY STAYING IN YOUR COMMUNITY

For every \$100 spent locally, \$68 remains in the local economy

TEAL = MONEY LEAVING YOUR COMMUNITY

For every \$100 spent nonlocally, \$43 remains in the local economy

Downtown Surplus Store Offers Gently Used University Inventory

In 2014, Grand Valley opened a surplus store on the Pew Grand Rapids Campus that provides the general public with the chance to purchase university inventory that's no longer in use.

When items have reached the end of their lifecycle or are no longer needed, Procurement Services collects them from the GVSU community and makes them available for sale at the retail store. The goal of the store is to reduce the amount of university materials that goes to a landfill. When items cannot be reused, they are recycled. Some items, such as electronics or hazardous materials, require specialized handling.



GVSU INITIATIVES

Local procurement GVSU strives to raise awareness of Michigan-based companies and support locally produced items through spending on construction, renovation, and campus operations. Part of this is done through group procurement in collaboration with the West Michigan Sustainable Purchasing Consortium. Visit wmspc.org for more information.



Recycled paper As a result of purchasing recycled papers and envelopes, Grand Valley contributes to the conservation of natural resources.

Surplus Store The GVSU Surplus Store was created to reduce environmental impact by engaging in sustainable practices by providing items that have reached the end of their shelf life for sale to the general public, as well as providing an avenue for educating students in the field of business. Its goal is to reduce the amount of university materials that go to a landfill. In its first year, the Surplus Store recycled nearly 120,000 pounds of metal and over 5.5 tons of e-waste.

Diversity Grand Valley consciously partners with a diverse network of qualified vendors. Through our supplier diversity program, GVSU is affiliated with organizations like the Alliance of Women Entrepreneurs (AWE), the Michigan Minority Business Enterprise Center (MMBEC), and the Small Business and Technology Development Center (SBTDC).



TAKE ACTION

Buy fair trade certified products The Fair Trade Certified™ label guarantees consumers that strict economic, social, and environmental criteria were met in the production and trade of an agricultural product. Fair trade certification is currently available in the U.S. for coffee, tea and herbs, cocoa and chocolate, fresh fruit, flowers, sugar, rice, vanilla, and more. For more information, visit fairtradeusa.org/.

Buy sustainable products Look for products with a high postconsumer recycled content that are Green Seal or Forest Stewardship Council certified; that are biodegradable, nonchlorine bleached, and do not use harsh chemicals in their processing; and that can replace disposable goods (such as cloth napkins).

Shop locally Buy from locally owned stores and manufacturers. This helps support a strong local economy because local businesses tend to use other local businesses for their services and supplies, and they give more back to the community through philanthropy. Learn more at localfirst.com/.

Fiscal Sustainability

“Every economic threat also represents an inspiring challenge to those who are bold and creative enough to rise up to it.”

– NANCY SKINNER, DIRECTOR OF THE CLIMATE GROUP

Fiscal sustainability is the ability of an organization or entity to meet its existing spending commitments with its existing resources. These groups may be government departments, businesses, or nonprofit organizations.

Fluctuations in the regional economy and housing market, debt crises, and structural fiscal discrepancies have all raised concerns about fiscal sustainability. Grand Valley is committed to maintaining fiscal sustainability for the institution today and in the future.



Construction began in April 2013 on the 151,000-square-foot, four-story building named the P. Douglas Kindschi Hall of Science.

GVSU has Record Endowment, Regional Impact of \$730 Million

Grand Valley State University has a huge economic impact on the cities and counties where its campuses are located, as well as the broader region surrounding West Michigan. Based on 2012-2013 data, GVSU's annual economic impact on the region was estimated at \$730.1 million. Grand Valley employs more than 3,200 people and enrolls more than 25,000 students who spend money and pay taxes in the region.

The university's endowment surpassed \$100.2 million in 2014. The majority of the fund is dedicated to scholarships and academic programming. Endowment spending in 2014-2015 will be \$4.1 million; 40 percent goes to scholarships helping more than 700 students. The university's 10-year return is in the top 10 percent of the 835 colleges and universities participating in the National Association of Colleges and Universities Business Officers Survey.

Financial stability is a crucial aspect to the overall longevity and sustainability of Grand Valley. For more information about GVSU's fiscal activities, visit gvsu.edu/busfin/.

GVSU INITIATIVES

A+ credit rating Grand Valley has maintained an A+ credit rating from Standard and Poors by exhibiting a strong financial position and maintaining financial health based in assets and liabilities.

Sustainability reinvestment fund Grand Valley manages a Sustainability Reinvestment Fund (SRF) for faculty and staff members and student projects both on- and off-campus. Examples of projects that have been funded through this program include water bottle filling stations around campus, sustainable service ware for the Children's Enrichment Center, and support for a student-led bike shop.

New construction and renovations at GVSU pumped more than \$21.7 million into the local economy in 2013. More than 10,700 permanent off-campus jobs in the region exist because of Grand Valley's campuses in those communities. Grand Valley alumni now number more than 100,000 and nearly half are living or working in West Michigan's tri-county area.

Accountability Grand Valley strives to keep tuition costs reasonable and affordable. In 2014, the university's annual Accountability Report showed that tuition remained in the bottom half of all Michigan public universities, while receiving the lowest state funding per student. The full report can be viewed at gvsu.edu/accountability/.

TAKE ACTION

Purchase only what you need

Take care of your basic needs first and then decide if you should purchase more. Consider alternatives to purchasing some items new and instead buy them used, barter, or make your own for less.

Maintain a balanced budget

Know what your expenses are and live within your means. Search online for budget management tools if you need help getting organized.

Grow your savings Contribute to your savings account on a monthly basis, if possible. For students and young professionals, contributing even a small amount monthly can get you into an early habit of saving. Faculty and staff contributions through a Grand Valley retirement plan can be made on a pretax basis. Learn more at gvsu.edu/healthwellness/.



Water bottle filling stations help keep plastic bottles out of landfills.

Health and Wellness

“Health is a state of complete physical, mental, and social well-being, and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.”

– WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 1948

Health and wellness is an integral part of sustainability. Healthy lifestyles help to create balanced, fit, and vibrant individuals, families, and communities. With rising health care costs, there has been increased focus on health and wellness programs, as it is more cost effective to prevent issues than treat the problem after diagnosis. Feeling connected with our bodies and achieving a healthy state of mind through eating well, enjoying leisure activities, and living an active lifestyle can lead to a higher quality of life.

Grand Valley’s Fieldhouse/Recreation Center has an elevated track among other unique features.



“Stay fit, don’t sit” in Movement Science Class

John Kilbourne, a movement science professor, gives his students the opportunity to stay fit and more alert in his classes by offering alternatives to a traditional desk. His classroom has large exercise balls for students to sit on, and he was able to add 10 stand-up desks after getting a \$2,000 grant from the Robert and Mary Pew Faculty Teaching and Learning Center for the research of the educational and physical benefits of seating alternatives.

Students in Kilbourne’s Movement 101 class select whatever form of seating makes them most comfortable. Research shows that sitting all day increases the risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, and other health issues. Kilbourne says students seem to be more focused, and even though they’re constantly moving — bouncing on the ball or shifting their weight around while standing at their desks — he doesn’t find it distracting.



John Kilbourne’s students chose from a variety of seating options.

GVSU INITIATIVES

Know Your Numbers This free and confidential Clinical Health Risk Assessment (CHRA) for all benefit-eligible faculty and staff members provides a single quantitative measure of overall health.

Exercise release time policy Employees at Grand Valley are permitted an extra half hour for lunch twice per week to participate in a group fitness class over the lunch hour.

Fitness challenges A variety of fitness challenges are offered for faculty and staff throughout the year, such as Summertime Steps and Battle of the Valleys pedometer challenge. Faculty and staff can participate in individual and/or team activities, with great prizes and incentives to motivate them.

Flexible work arrangements Grand Valley recognizes the importance of maintaining a healthy work-life balance, and strives to provide flexible work arrangements that mutually benefit students, the individual, departments, campus, and society.

Fitness and wellness services Campus Recreation offers personal training and exercise programs, fitness consultation and testing, body composition testing, massage, health screenings, wellness coaching, and more.

Intramural sports program More than 20 intramural sport and leisure activities for men's, women's, and co-recreational divisions of play are offered.

For a full list of offerings, visit gvsu.edu/healthwellness and gvsu.edu/rec/.



TAKE ACTION

Be active Building activity into the day is an important way to keep our bodies healthy and active. We can build routine exercise into our schedules or just take small actions each day like getting off the bus a stop or two early to walk further, parking at the far end of the parking lot, taking the stairs instead of the elevator, or standing up to stretch. Hobbies such as gardening, biking, and even household chores like sweeping or mowing the lawn are also ways to stay active.

Eat well Choose local, organic, whole foods rather than foods with processed ingredients. Remember, our bodies are literally made up of the food we eat, so choose wisely what you put in your body.

Manage stress Balancing responsibilities from school, work, and home can often overwhelm us. The resulting stress is taxing on our bodies and can lead to negative health consequences. Remember to take time for yourself, get enough sleep, spend time doing things you enjoy, and focus on the positives to keep the stress from becoming too much to manage.

Visit gvsu.edu/healthwellness for more information.

Community Involvement

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.”

– MARGARET MEAD

In addition to the positive changes that are possible when you become involved with your community, there are numerous personal advantages. Community engagement can enrich your life by helping you connect with others, giving you the opportunity to develop your personal interests, and providing a way to “give back.”



Grand Valley is dedicated to being a good neighbor in the West Michigan community and to engaging with the community in a leadership role. GVSU faculty and staff members and students have developed collaborations, working relationships, and partnerships with numerous businesses and organizations to benefit the community.

As an institution where “shaping societies” is part of the mission statement, Grand Valley offers students multiple opportunities to make a difference. Sustainability is incorporated into almost every field of study, from the humanities to business to health sciences, so students can learn about the topic and then share their knowledge and service with the community.

Community as Classroom

GVSU coordinates a series of colloquia with faculty and staff members and community partners on community-based teaching, learning, and research-based issues. Topics have included dialogue for reciprocity, justice-oriented education, and wicked problems. Sessions pose questions asking how students can better understand long-term partnerships, while engaging in short-term learning.

The Office of Community Engagement has also created a database of various assessment tools and resources where faculty members can begin to evaluate the impacts of community engagement on students, the institution as a whole, and our communities. For more information, visit gvsu.edu/community/.



GVSU INITIATIVES

Community Sustainability

Partnership

In 2005, Grand Valley became a founding member of the Community Sustainability Partnership, along with the City of Grand Rapids and several other academic institutions, to help build sustainable communities. Visit grpartners.org/.




Schools of Hope Grand Valley employees volunteer time in the community through Schools of Hope, a Heart of West Michigan United Way program. Volunteers are matched with children from 14 participating elementary schools to help increase student literacy rates.

Seeds of Promise Grand Valley helped establish a city initiative, which is modeling sustainable development best practices to transform a marginalized inner city neighborhood, along with more than 60 endorsing partners. Visit seedsofpromise.net/.

Make a Difference Day Grand Valley has participated in this national day of service for more than 15 years. Nearly 400 students come together to serve local nonprofit agencies throughout the greater Grand Rapids and Allendale areas.

Sustainability Careers Grand Valley databases various employment and internship opportunities for students. Sustainability careers are expected to see impressive growth regionally and nationally by 2020. Visit gvsu.edu/lakerjobs for a full list of opportunities.



Faculty and staff members and students tutor public school children as Schools of Hope volunteers.

TAKE ACTION

Volunteer in the community Grand Valley's Community Service Learning Center can connect you with a variety of volunteer opportunities in the community, from one-time to ongoing. For more information, visit gvsu.edu/service/.

Start your own project Is there something you are passionate about? Do you see a way for Grand Valley to be more sustainable? Take action to make it happen. Make it a class project or volunteer your time. Contact sustainability@gvsu.edu for help in getting started.

Join a campus club There are nearly 400 registered student organizations on Grand Valley's campus, and dozens of them are relevant to sustainability. If you can't find what you're looking for, consider starting your own club tailored to your group's unique interests. Visit gvsu.edu/studentlife/.

Grand Valley State University Recent Accomplishments

For the **SIXTH YEAR IN A ROW**, Grand Valley was named one of the country's **MOST ENVIRONMENTALLY RESPONSIBLE** colleges by The Princeton Review in their 2015 "Guide to 353 Green Colleges."

Grand Valley was named **ONE OF THE COUNTRY'S GREENEST UNIVERSITIES** by the Sierra Club for the **THIRD YEAR IN A ROW**. It was the highest ranked Michigan institution on the list.

For the **THIRD YEAR IN A ROW**, Grand Valley received a **GOLD RATING** from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). We're **ONE OF 69 INSTITUTIONS NATIONALLY** to achieve this certification, and the first in the state.

Grand Valley ranked second in the national Game Day Challenge for **DIVERTING NEARLY 80 PERCENT OF WASTE** at a football game.

Grand Valley ranked **24TH NATIONALLY** among all colleges and universities in the recent annual Recyclemania competition.

President Haas established Grand Valley's **DEDICATION TO PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT** by signing The American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment.



The City of Grand Rapids and Community Sustainability Partnership were designated the **FIRST U.S. REGIONAL CENTER OF EXPERTISE IN EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT.**

Grand Valley was featured by **BEST COLLEGE RANKINGS** on a list of colleges that are doing a **GREAT JOB TEACHING SUSTAINABILITY** and promoting it in their communities.

GVSU's Facilities Services was the recipient of the Association of Energy Engineers Region III **CORPORATE ENERGY MANAGEMENT AWARD.**



Grand Valley has received additional sustainability awards and recognitions from **KAPLAN COLLEGE GUIDE, SUSTAINABLE ENDOWMENTS INSTITUTE, AND U.S. GREEN BUILDING COUNCIL.**

During GVSU's re-accreditation by the Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools, officials noted: "The university's **AWARD-WINNING SUSTAINABILITY INITIATIVE** serves the missions of education and outreach and **PROVIDES NATIONAL LEADERSHIP.**"

Peterson's "Green Jobs for a New Economy: The Career Guide to Emerging Opportunities" listed Grand Valley and the University of Michigan as the two Michigan schools among what editors called **"TOP 50 FOUR-YEAR SCHOOLS WITH GREAT GREEN PROGRAMS."**

Mark A. Murray Living Center was given an **ENERGY STAR DESIGNATION** from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency — **THE FIRST UNIVERSITY STUDENT-HOUSING UNIT IN MICHIGAN** to receive such a designation.






Lake Ontario Hall

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Grand Valley State University is an affirmative action, equal opportunity institution. It encourages diversity and provides equal opportunity in education, employment, all of its programs, and the use of its facilities. It is committed to protecting the constitutional and statutory civil rights of persons connected with the university. 06/15