

# EVPP 490-002/505-003: Reducing Our Carbon Footprints

Room **TBD**, GMU Fairfax Campus Fall 2020

4:30-7:10pm Mondays

***This course will create a draft of George Mason University's second Climate Action Plan (CAP) for approval by GMU President Gregory Washington (with implementation launched within 1 semester thereafter) and to provide participants with skills, knowledge and experience to become champions for greenhouse gas (GHG) accounting and reductions on campus and beyond.***

Through the course, students will:

1. **CREATE THE TEAM:** Forge a climate action community of practice at Mason, including key decision-makers, implementers, "GHG sources," and other interested stakeholders to realize this CAP and lead in refining future iterations of the CAP. Students will identify stakeholders within Mason who can affect those components; and identify and use 'best practices' in communications.
2. **HELP CHAMPIONS:** Instill in fellow participants the wisdom, skills and commitment to be "climate action champions" in our professional careers and personal lives. Students will identify, develop and implement leadership practices for peer-to-peer and institutional leadership.
3. **ACTIVATE COMMUNITY:** Inform and involve larger communities in generating, demonstrating and testing potential solutions for reducing Mason's GHG emissions towards "net zero." Students will identify and develop techniques for building consensus and community action.
4. **MAKE THE PLAN:** Read and evaluate Mason's initial (2010) Climate Action Plan; formulate a new, updated CAP to reduce and eliminate net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2030 (or earlier) from all activities over which GMU has responsibility, authority or influence. Students will learn the components of a carbon footprint; research CAPs at other institutions; identify and prioritize carbon-mitigation and carbon-minimization actions at Mason; and design actions that drive Mason to carbon neutrality.
5. **PLANT THE SEEDS:** Prepare recommendations to lay the institutional groundwork for perpetual iterations of the CAP refinement process, and implementation of those renewed CAPs, hereafter. Students will study university policies and procedures, develop policy proposals, and work with community members to generate support for future carbon reductions.

Yes, C.H.A.M.P.! More than a tactical approach of tinkering with a set of technological fixes, a Climate Action Plan must account for vital behavioral and social changes. Thus the CAP should be consciously aligned and integrated with organizational strategies, operations and culture. To do so, we propose a CHAMP approach .... where YOU are the CHAMPS – **C**limate **H**elping **A**ctions by **M**ason **P**atriots!

Course website: [TBA but likely Google Drive]

Most up-to-date syllabus, background documents, all assignments (including deadlines), submissions and professors' presentations and notes will be posted to this site.

<b>Instructors</b>	Dr. Dann Sklarew	Greg Farley, Director of University Sustainability
<b>Office hours</b>	Tu/Th 10:30-12:30 in David King Hall 3018, via WebEx, or by appointment	M/W, 3:00 – 5:00 in Northeast Module II room ???, via teleconference, or by appointment.
<b>Phone number</b>	(703) 993-2012	703-993-5315
<b>Email</b>	dsklarew@gmu.edu	gfarley@gmu.edu

Class #	Date	Task(s)	Inputs/Readings (in advance)	ASSIGNMENTS
1	Aug. 24	Introduce Course; History of CAP at Mason; Overview Mason GHG Inventory & CAP Process; overview Mason Sustainability Council	<b>Methods docs; Presidents' Commitments: Merten, ACUPCC/Second Nature; A. Cabrera; G. Washington</b> (bold = req'd.)	Personal carbon footprint: coolclimate.org <a href="https://coolclimate.org/calculator">https://coolclimate.org/calculator</a> Read (exec summary?) of Mason Sustainability Co its Carbon Neutrality Task Force. <a href="#">Student requests of Mason (PDF)</a>
2	Sep. 14	Determine Mason CAP Structure; Identify Likely Root Causes for GHGs; Form seed Working Groups (Task Forces?)	<b>Peer-institution CAPs; Mason GHGI (ugrads – exec sum only)</b>	Look at original CAP Look at history of Mason carbon reporting: <a href="http://reporting.secondnature.org/institution/detail!40">http://reporting.secondnature.org/institution/detail!40</a>
	TBD	<i>President Washington Kicks-off Climate Action Plan Working Groups</i>		
3	Sep. 28	Identify and focus on mitigation options not already underway, and research needs for solution profiles addressing root causes.		
	Oct. 12	Present and prioritize mitigation		

		options/solution profiles; Prepare GHG targeting scenarios/recommendations and present to Mason Sustainability Council		
	TBD	Stakeholders vet GHG targets and prioritize climate solutions @ MSC		
4	Oct. 26	Incorporate priorities and feedback from MSC		
5	Nov. 9	Determine Framework for Carbon Neutral Strategy over short-term (1-4 years), mid-term (5-10 years) and long term (11-40 years)		
6	Nov. 23	Develop, Refine and Integrate [Recommendations and] WG Implementation Plans (into 1 narrative CAP)		
7	Dec. 7	Formulate Strategy for Tracking Performance and Impact of Solution/Projects; Financial Strategy Ideas		
8	Dec. 14	~60 pp. Draft CAP Document (w/o final financial ideas) Final Evaluations Due		
9				
10				
11				

Winter 2021	Sustainability Office refines CAP, with finance-related technical assistance from University administration (e.g., comptroller's office)	
Spring 2021	President Washington approves CAP, authorizes prompt implementation	
Summer 2021	CAP implementation launches.	
Academic 2022/23	S.O. begins new iteration of updating GHG Inventory and Revising/Refining CAP.	

**Recommended texts & background resources:**

Living reference list can be found via “references” link on class Web site. All documents are [or will soon be] linked from that page and available for free on-line download through that page.

**Primary texts and references** – see [course Web site](#).

**Materials:** Lecture notes and other materials will be put on class Web site, to which participants can also post their own files as well as collaborate in shared editing of “wiki” pages.

**Performance Assessment:**

- ◆  **Bi-Weekly “Tasks” 50%**
- ◆  **Participation 30%**
- ◆  **Mid-Term Evaluation 10%**
- ◆  **Final Exam Evaluation 10%**

**Participation:** You can only refine the skills and knowledge to apply ecology in your careers and studies if you practice, and that practice requires participation. For this course, participation is both face-to-face and on-line via our course site. Those who actively contribute to course discussion, share their perspectives, insights and inquiries will receive credit which reflects their involvement. By contrast, those who remain unknown and unheard/unread from in either medium will not receive full credit. In the event that your outside career, illness or immovable external obligations prevents you from either attending class or participating in weekly assignments, it is your obligation to make prior arrangements to ensure you stay current and involved in this fast-paced course. Failure to do so will certainly reduce the credit you are eligible to receive for participation, as well as the benefits you derive from this course.

**Honor Code:** Adherence to the [GMU Honor Code](#) is expected of all students, specifically: *Members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.*

In all assignments and communications, plagiarism\* will not be tolerated. This applies equally to oral and written communications in the context of any evaluated (graded) course assignments. In presenting quotes, paraphrasing statements or logical arguments from others in any medium (on-line, oral or written), students should properly cite their sources. Results of team work should only be attributed to those who directly contribute to the final product (even if more than those people were designated as being part of the team). Any or all members of a student team may be held accountable for any Honor Code violations in their shared work. Any public usage of original material from this course (e.g., presentations, images, etc.) without explicit permission of its creator shall be construed as stealing. As stated in the Honor Code, infractions may result in invalidated credit for dishonorable work and lowered grade, including failure from the class, suspension or dismissal.

The professor reserves the right to use plagiarism detection software in to identify and deter acts of academic plagiarism.

**Inquiries for clarification are welcome, as Dr. Sklarew does not look kindly on having to submit another student for Honor Code violations.** Thank you in advance for your conscious attention to these serious issues.