

Ursinus - Green Office Guidelines

This is not meant to be an exhaustive list, but a set of ideas and guidelines. If you have questions or ideas to add to this list, please contact the Office of Sustainability at sustainability@ursinus.edu.

Policy & Planning

- Develop a list of actions that your department is willing to implement toward improving their sustainability, e.g., printing fewer documents, lowering their paper use, adjusting all departmental computer settings to print double sided as the default.
- Participate in the OS's Green Office Certification Program, once it is established.
- Prohibit the use of bottled water for office functions.

Power Usage

- Lighting
 - Turn off all lighting and electronic devices when not in use.
 - Use daylight/natural lighting instead of overhead lights.
 - Use task lighting rather than overhead lights.
 - Turn off all lights when you leave for the day.
 - Use CFL bulbs or LED bulbs instead of incandescents.
- Centralize electronic devices/desk lights by plugging them into a power strip, and then turning them off at the end of the day with the flip on a single switch.
- Unplug devices and appliances that you seldom use.
- Unplug equipment that drains energy when not in use (i.e. cell phone chargers, fans, coffeemakers, desktop printers, radios, etc.).
- Printing:
 - For three copies or less, use the printer; for more, use the copier.
 - Laser printers use 300 watts; inkjets use only 10, for similar quality.
 - Using the "stand-by" button on your copier will lighten your energy load by 70%.
 - Always print double sided.
 - Photocopy only what is really needed.
- Appliances

- If you have appliances in your office, choose Energy Star rated appliances when purchasing.
- Get rid of energy intensive water coolers. Replace with tap water cooled in a refrigerator, water cooler hooked into tap water, or drinking fountains with bottle-filling attachment.
- Computer Power Management
 - Don't use a screen saver
 - A computer monitor uses 60 watts of power; turn it off if you leave for more than 10 minutes.
 - Replace desktop computers with thin clients or notebook computers and docking stations.
- When buying a computer, look for the ENERGY STAR label
 - Set your computer's energy settings to economy
 - Turn down the brightness setting on your monitor
 - Close unused applications and turn off your monitor when you're not using it
 - Turn off peripherals such as printers, scanners, and speakers when not in use

Responsible Consumption

- Use low-waste alternatives for drinks and food (use reusable utensils, napkins, cups and plates).
 - Ban Keurig coffee machines (they create an immense amount of waste and provide a **very** expensive cup of coffee)
 - Avoid plastic "disposable" drink bottles (they contain dangerous chemicals, are less safe than tap water, and produce a lot of waste)
 - Avoid the use of "hard to recycle" materials, such as packaging made from Styrofoam™ (polystyrene), Keurig cups, etc..
 - In the lunch/break room, replace disposables with reusable kitchenware (e.g., mugs, utensils, etc.) and use refillable containers for sugar, salt & pepper, etc. to avoid individual condiment packets.
- For office functions, utilize reusable kitchenware.
- If office has a water cooler with disposable cups, use paper cups that can then be recycled (non-waxed variety).
- If tea and coffee are provided, make sure they are Fair Trade certified and have low environmental impact (e.g., organic, shade grown, etc.)

- Reduce paper use in the bathroom (toilet paper, paper towels) using informational signage, dispensers that regulate sheet length, etc.
- Reduce use of products wherever possible and implement sustainability practices in everyday operations.
- Print promotional materials with low or no-VOC inks.
- Designate a sharing and reuse area for office supplies such as binders, folders and staplers.

Paperless

- Whenever possible, use online filing, resources, communication, storage, document exchange. This will save money on paper, printer ink and energy use (since we're already digitally based anyway) as well as saving physical storage space.
- Distribute documents digitally whenever possible (make use of scan and send options or make PDF documents and email); when printing is required, print official documents double-sided on recycled, recyclable paper.
- Eliminate or redesign print forms to use less paper; or switch forms (such as invoices) to electronic format.
- Design marketing and outreach materials that use less paper – such as e-newsletters.
- Conduct more meetings without paper.
- For drafts and internal documents, print on previously printed paper; designate a draft printer tray; and/or reuse office paper as scratch pads.
- Send all meeting materials, including agendas, to meeting attendees ahead of time. Set the expectation that attendees will bring their computers with them, if possible, to the meeting (or ask them to let you know if they will need paper copies).

Staff Education

- Incorporate sustainability into staff meeting discussions.
- Offer brown bag lunches and workshops with sustainability as a focal topic.
- Elicit staff input into greening the workplace through surveys, suggestion boxes, or other means.
- Hold an annual think tank meetings to strategize about sustainability within the department. Invite students to participate in these discussions.
- Highlight sustainability efforts on your office's website.
- Post educational information in your office space or building about steps you are taking to be a sustainable organization.

- Provide opportunities for employees to learn about greening their personal lives.
- Use signage at light switches reminding staff to turn off lights.
- Put up signs at elevators to encourage the use of stairs.
- Offer in-house training to help staff change old practices so that lights get switched off, waste is recycled/reused, etc.
- Purchase books about sustainability in your particular department. Keep the books somewhere that they can be accessed easily.
- Consider conducting training, in conjunction with Office of Sustainability staff members, around recycling. This should include what can be recycled and what the limitations of the recycling program are (contamination).

Transportation

- Calculate and track travel expenses and the related carbon footprint for each office. Determine if this travel is cost effective for the College (both monetarily and with regard to the related GHG emissions)
- Consider purchasing carbon offsets in the amount of air travel-related emissions related to faculty and staff business travel.

Waste

- If you do not already, consider starting an office composting program. Contact the Office of Sustainability for more information.
- Recycle all paper (including paper towels from the bathrooms), cans, plastic (#1-#7), cardboard in your office blue bin. If you don't have a blue bin in your office, please contact the OS at sustainability@ursinus.edu.

Thank you for your interest in Greening your office!

Office of Sustainability, Ursinus College

