



Sustainability at Salve

approved by President and Cabinet 4.29.2019

University Sustainability Policy to Guide Decision Making

Salve Regina University, as a Mercy, Catholic institution of higher education, is committed to advancing environmental stewardship and sustainability on campus and in the community by integrating the social, economic, and ecological values of sustainable development into institutional policies and practices.¹ Climate change and environmental degradation are pressing moral issues that compromise the future of our common home, threaten human dignity and all life, and compound the hardships of the poorest and most vulnerable members of our community.² Our commitment to sustainability is underwritten by the Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy and Pope Francis' call towards "a new and universal solidarity" in which the climate is understood as "a common good, belonging to all and meant for all" (*Laudato Si'* 14, 23).³ The advancement of an integral ecology at Salve Regina University celebrates our mission to serve as stewards of God's creation, working as transformative agents to bring about a more harmonious, just and merciful world.⁴ Our institutional commitment to sustainability seeks to meet the present needs of our university community without compromising the ability of Salve Regina University and our local and global neighbors to meet future needs.⁵

Sustainable Salve Initiative Vision and Goals

The Salve Regina University community will strive to conduct its activities in a socially just, economically viable, and environmentally sound manner, valuing the interdependence of people, prosperity and the planet, now and into future generations. The campus will serve as a living laboratory for sustainable development by:



- Promoting responsible water consumption, waste reduction, sustainable and socially just food production, material reuse and recycling, renewable energy investments, ecological land use, green building practices, sustainable campus transportation options, and campus conservation efficiencies;
- Advancing interdisciplinary teaching and research to address pressing local and global environmental, economic, and social challenges; and
- Fostering a visible, educated, and active commitment to integral ecology and environmental justice among our students, faculty, staff, and graduates.

¹ In accordance with the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ulsf.org/talloires-declaration), the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (www.aashe.org/sustainability-policy), and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (sustainabledevelopment.un.org).

² As advanced by the U.S. Catholic Climate Declaration, signed in 2018 by Salve Regina University President, Sister Jane Gerety, RSM, see catholicclimatecovenant.org/us-catholic-climate-declaration.

³ The Critical Concerns of the Sisters of Mercy of the Americas are: earth, immigration, women, racism, and non-violence (see <https://www.sistersofmercy.org/>). Pope Francis urges in his encyclical *Laudato Si' On Care for our Common Home* that "a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor" (49).

⁴ Salve Regina University mission statement (salve.edu/about/mission-statement).

⁵ Sustainable development was classically defined in the 1987 Brundtland Report, *Our Common Future*, as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."