



# SUSTAINABILITY HANDBOOK

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CENTER FOR SUSTAINABILITY

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AGNES SCOTT COLLEGE



WELCOME TO THE

# SUSTAINABILITY HANDBOOK

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## CONTACT US

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We'd like to welcome you to the Agnes Scott College Sustainability Handbook, an introduction to the array of sustainability initiatives at Agnes Scott and across our campus.

The Handbook provides an overview of our programs in energy, water, transportation, our arboretum and garden, food, green purchasing, and our Environmental Studies Minor. Use it as a stepping stone to learning about the vast reach of sustainability has across our campus community and learn ways in which you can connect and start your own sustainable practices during your time on campus!

Explore, and learn and please share!

- The Center for Sustainability Team

# WHY DOES SUSTAINABILITY MATTER?

In 2007, Agnes Scott College became a charter signatory of the College and University President's Climate Commitment, pledging the college to become climate neutral by the year 2037. President Elizabeth Kiss believed that in order for Agnes Scott to fulfill its mission to educate its students to both live honorably and to engage the social and intellectual challenges of their time, sustainability and climate action had to become campus-wide priorities. To date, we have made major strides to our sustainability goals, including:

- Reducing our emissions by 20 percent to date;
- Installing a quarter megawatt of solar power and two geothermal HVAC systems;
- Reaching our goal of \$1 million in the Green Revolving Fund to pay for energy and water efficiency projects on campus;
- Reaching a waste diversion rate of 70%;
- Creating partnerships with Emory University, Georgia Tech Research Institute, City of Decatur, Oak Ridge National Labs, Southface Energy Institute, and the Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta Grants to Green Initiative.

Agnes Scott has been able to complete these initiatives because of the support and action of our entire community. Every sustainable action on our campus helps the college reach its goal of climate neutrality by 2037. The Center for Sustainability has created this guidebook so that you can increase your sustainable choices and habits, in order to become a change agent in the fight against climate change.

# ENERGY



*The energy used to operate our buildings is currently Agnes Scott's greatest source of on-campus carbon emissions. We have taken huge strides to make our buildings more energy efficient and have started installing renewable energy sources.*

## RENEWABLE ENERGY

Agnes Scott's five solar arrays generate enough electricity to power 31 U.S. homes. The panels located at the soccer fields, parking deck, Bullock Science Center, and the Facilities building send carbon-free electricity to the Georgia Power grid. The power generated from the Observatory's solar array goes directly into the building! LEED-Gold Certified Campbell Hall has an innovative HVAC system that is operated on geothermal power. The only conventional electricity needed for the building is for lights and plugs, making it one of the lowest energy users on campus.



## LED LIGHTS

During the summer of 2016, Agnes Scott installed 16,000 new LED light bulbs across campus. These new high-efficiency bulbs will save 1 million kilowatt-hours of electricity annually. Don't forget to bring your old bulbs to the Center to be recycled!

## UNPLUG

Even if an electronic is not in use, it uses electricity while it is plugged in. Always be sure to unplug cords when not in use. For larger electronics, use a surge protector and turn it off whenever you are not using it.

## WASH ON COLD

Your clothes will get just as clean when washed with cold water, and the colors will stay vibrant for longer. If you are washing on campus, select the bright setting for cold water. Also be sure to only wash when you have a full load to cut down on electricity and water use.



# WATER



## Campus Water:

### **Low-Flow Fixtures**

Every building on campus features low-flow toilets, showerheads, and faucet aerators. These fixtures save the college a huge amount of water every year. Our low-flow toilets use 60 percent less water per flush and the showerheads use 40 percent less water per shower.

### **Hydration Stations**

The installation of 14 "hydration stations" allows you to fill your reusable water bottle with chilled, filtered water, drastically reducing the use of disposable plastic bottles on campus.

### **Retention Pond**

All of Agnes Scott's irrigation is fed by our on-campus retention pond, eliminating the use of potable water in irrigating our gorgeous grass.

## Quick Tips:

### **Shower Time**

Keep your showers short! Start timing your showers and slowly work to reduce the amount of time you are in the shower. This cuts down the amount of energy needed to heat the water. Switching to 5-minute showers can reduce your carbon footprint by roughly 300 pounds each year.

### **Turn Off the Faucet**

Always keep the sink off when you are washing your face and brushing your teeth. By leaving the water on while you brush, you are wasting 6 gallons of water a day, or 2,190 gallons of a year.

## **HYDRATE AWAY!**

*Handy hydration stations can be found in these locations across campus. Fill your reusable bottle or just take a sip on the go!*

- Campbell Ground Floor
- Campbell 1st Floor
- Campbell 2nd Floor
- Bullock Ground Floor
- Bullock 1st Floor
- Bullock 2nd Floor
- Bullock 3rd Floor
- Alston Ground Floor
- Alston 1st Floor
- Alston 2nd Floor
- Walters Basement - ITS
- Winship Basement
- McCain Library Ground Floor
- Buttrick 1st Floor
- Buttrick 2nd Floor
- Presser 1st Floor
- Woodruff 1st Floor
- Bradley Observatory

# Transportation

*Skip the traffic and try one of these sustainable commuting options instead!*

## **MARTA**

Agnes Scott provides discounted MARTA U-PASSES for students, faculty, and staff. With a U-PASS you get unlimited trips on any MARTA bus or train. Passes are sold at the Post Office for \$60/month for students and \$70/month for faculty and staff.

## **PURPLE BIKES**

Need a bike? Check one out at the library! The library currently has six bikes available for checkout. Just head to the circulation desk and they will get you set up with a bike, helmet, and lock.

## **ZIPCAR**

Agnes Scott has four Zip Cars parked on the Front Loop. Community members are able to sign-up for Zip Car and receive a reduced membership rate of \$15. After that, you pay \$7.50/hour or \$69/day.

## **PARKING BENEFITS**

Public Safety offers reduced parking passes for students, faculty, and staff who drive fuel-efficient vehicles (FEVs). FEVs are hybrids and totally electric vehicles. Owners of FEVs are able to park in the two designated spaces at the entrance of the parking deck and utilize charging stations in Campbell Lot. Reduced passes are available for \$80 at Public Safety.



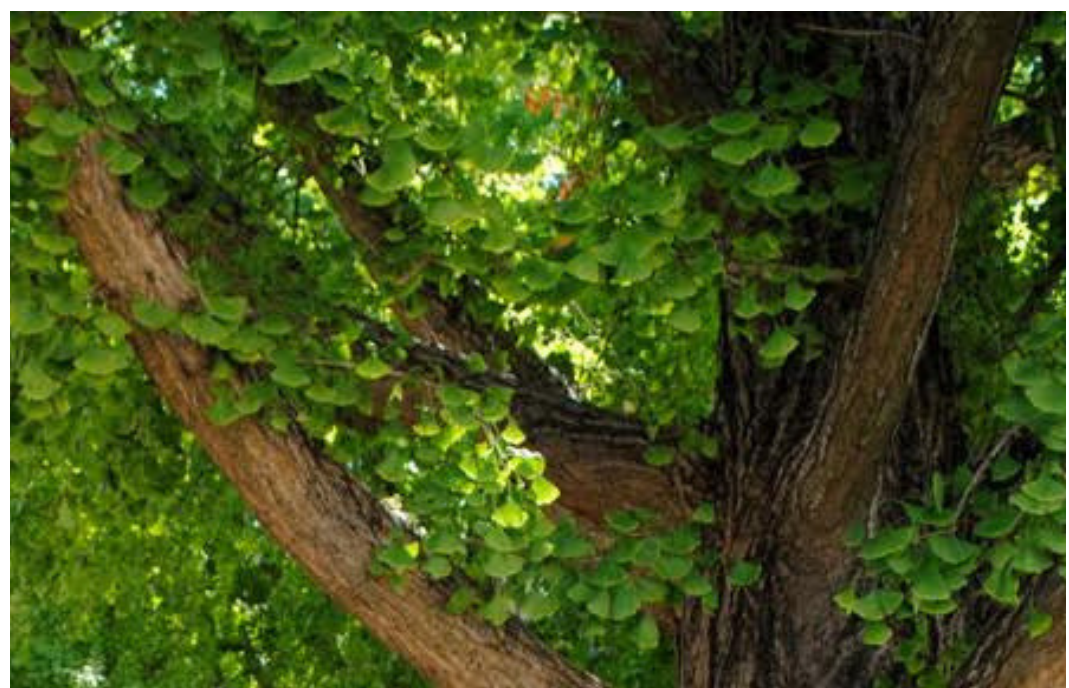
# ARBORETUM

Life at Agnes Scott buzzes and flows under the umbrella of our tree canopy, which covers about 53% of the 100-acre campus. Agnes Scott's award-winning, nationally certified arboretum is estimated to include approximately 2,000 trees. The college's arboretum advisory committee, alongside a consulting arborist, is currently updating a detailed inventory documenting the number of species on campus, as well as the health and condition of the canopy.

Among the many species of trees on campus are our magnificent white oaks, the vibrant yellow-leaved ginkgos, and a few shady magnolias which contribute to Agnes Scott's southern charm. On sunny days, low-hanging branches are sprinkled with Scotties studying napping, or swinging in hammocks between classes.

For every tree we lose, another is planted on campus. Agnes Scott typically plants between five to 20 trees annually even if fewer trees have been removed.

For those who want to get to know the trees a little better, the Agnes Scott Arboretum features an interactive, self-guided tour that explores 18 sites across campus. Visitors to each of the sites are able to Scan the QR codes at each site to access an online map of the arboretum, information on the site, and an audio recording.





# DEMONSTRATION GARDEN

Managed by Agnes Scott alumnae Lois "Farmer Lois" Swords ('77), our organic demonstration garden is a fantastic way to see the true origins of our food. The garden, placed near the entrance to the Woodruff Athletic Complex, offers a glimpse of the process through which food is grown and bringing them closer to the realities of food production.

While the types of crops vary by season, past harvests have included kale, garlic, onions, arugula, beets, and swiss chard.

Though the garden is too small to supply food to Agnes Scott's dining hall, the yield of the harvests often make their way into the kitchens of students, faculty, and staff, making sure that our community benefits from the local, organic produce that the garden produces!





# FOOD

## LOCAL AND ORGANIC FOOD

In partnership with Dining Services, Agnes Scott works to provide our community with a variety of local and organic options in the dining hall. We offer local seasonal vegetables on the salad bar, local bread and milk, and sustainably sourced seafood and pork.

## MEATLESS MONDAYS

One of the largest impacts you can have on your ecological footprint starts with your fork. To raise awareness of this issue, Agnes Scott goes meatless during Monday's dinner! Slowly build up the number of meals you swap meat for veggies to increase your impact on climate change!

## BEEHIVES

On the roof of the Bullock Science Center are two beehives maintained and harvested by Dr. John Pilger and Dr. Doug Fantz. Stop by the demonstration garden and you will see the bees buzzing from flower to flower.

Carbon Reduction Tip:

By eating locally-sourced foods, you reduce the amount of emissions that are required to transport your food to you.



# GREEN PURCHASING

*Some quick tips to make your shopping a little more Earth-friendly.*

## SKIP THE PLASTIC BAG

Be sure to always have a reusable bag with you whenever you go shopping! The average American uses 500 plastic bags a year, most of which end up in landfills and waterways.



## MINIMIZE YOUR PURCHASES

Try and keep what you buy to a minimum. This saves on packaging and materials, and even saves you a bit of money too!

## BUY RECYCLED

Choose products that are made out of recycled materials or that are recyclable themselves

## DITCH THE PLASTIC

Minimize your use of single-use products such as plastic bottles and to-go cups. Bring a bottle or mug with you instead. Most coffee shops in Decatur will fill up your reusable mug and give you a discount for bringing your own.

## GREEN CLEANING SUPPLIES

Agnes Scott's custodial staff uses certified sustainable cleaning products to keep the college clean. You can limit harmful chemical exposure in our buildings and residence halls by using sustainable products, as well.



# ENVIRONMENTAL AND SUSTAINABILITY STUDIES MINOR

Looking for more ways to engage with sustainability? Agnes Scott is proud to offer a minor in Environmental and Sustainability Studies (ESS)! This interdisciplinary program introduces students to key principles of sustainability and environmental science and connects them with biology, chemistry, public health, political science, economics, and sociology and anthropology. For more information on the minor and the course requirements visit the ESS website or contact one of the two program co-chairs:

Dr. John Pilger – [jpilger@agnesscott.edu](mailto:jpilger@agnesscott.edu) - Bullock 202W

Dr. Hal Thorsrud – [hthorsrud@agnesscott.edu](mailto:hthorsrud@agnesscott.edu) - Buttrick 347

VISIT US ON THE WEB:

[WWW.AGNESSCOTT.EDU/ENVIRONMENTAL](http://WWW.AGNESSCOTT.EDU/ENVIRONMENTAL)

## **ESS Internships**

Many of the ESS minors complete for-credit internships either with local sustainability groups or in the Center for Sustainability.

Past internships include Southface Energy Institute, the US Green Building Council, Piedmont Park Conservancy, Global Growers Network, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Federal Reserve Bank of Atlanta and the Environmental Protection Agency.