SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

REPORT SUSTAINABILITY
This is a report that contains and describes all facts, wishes, ambitions, opportunities and challenges with regards to sustainability for every faculty of the University of Groningen.

FACULTIES
FEB, GMW, GGW, Letteren, Medische Wetenschappen, Rechtsgeleerdheid, Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen, Science and Engineering, Wijsbegeerte, University College Groningen, Campus Fryslân.
Dear reader,

What sustainable developments are there in the faculties of the UG? The Green Office attempts to answer this question with the following document. This document is meant as a guideline for people working with sustainability, people who are curious about the goings-on in their faculty, and people who want to be inspired.

For every faculty, we give some best practices, desires and opportunities. We hope to increase knowledge and the exchange of information between faculties, and to become more sustainable together.

At each faculty, we spoke with a coordinator of education, a facility manager, and a student assessor. The interviews were done by different members of the Green Office. We tried to note down everything as completely as we heard it. However, it is possible that some information is outdated upon publication. This document will therefore remain subject to change: we will make yearly updates, by holding interviews and through tips we receive.

If you find something that needs updating, don’t hesitate to contact us. We will apply your update in a following version.

We hope you’ll enjoy our report!

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SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

FEB / Faculty of Economics and Business

BSS / Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences

TRS / Facult of Theology and Religious Studies

Arts / Faculty of Arts

UMCG / Facult of Medical Sciences

Law / Faculteit of Law

FSS / Faculty of Spatial Sciences

FSE / Faculty of Science and Engineering

Philosophy / Faculty of Philosophy

UCG / Faculty University College Groningen

CF / University of Groningen Campus Fryslân
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Economics and Business
6300 students
713 staff members
2 buildings

FACTS

• Sustainability has not explicitly been incorporated in the policy goals of the FEB. The demand for this from corporations and sustainable researchers is growing.

• There are a number of courses on sustainability, mostly elective courses. It depends on the study program whether you have access to these or not.

• Sustainability is a focus area in the masters. These are part of the master programs (so not an elective course). Once they’re finished, students can show that they have acquired certain competences. These courses are only open to students from the faculty.

• Next year, new courses on sustainable energy will be given.

• The FEB is -in a collaboration project with other faculties- working on a sustainable minor on energy.

• There are learning communities, of which one is about sustainability.

• Sustainability is a signature research theme for a number of researchers in FEB.

• Sustainability as a theme is used a lot by study associations. They organise -among other things- conferences about this theme (EBF).

• Building: good isolation, windows, energy-efficient lighting, light sensors in every room. Ergonomic working environment and central bins instead of private bins.

• The facility managers at the faculty are given a lot of goals from the UG, resulting in little difference between the management of buildings at Zernike-West.

• FEB collaborates a lot with AMD and the energy team. Once every two weeks, there’s a meeting with the central facility services and the purchase services to exchange ideas.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

DESIRES & AMBITIONS

- Study associations can aim more for sustainable companies, for example for career events.
- There’s a need to increase the visibility of sustainability at the FEB.
- There’s demand for more sustainable courses and more room in the programs for students, so that they can follow those courses, especially regarding circular economy.
- There’s a need for smarter systems, for example in pcs that stay on all night, sensors for ventilation and heating systems, etc. There are often possibilities, but those require experimentation first and the FEB doesn’t always want to be the frontrunner in that.
- Will be working on water- and energy-efficient toilets. There was a pilot with waterless urinoirs, but that wasn’t a big success.
- There will be more small pilots, such as sustainable floor maintenance and electric management of the car park.
- There are goals for achieving a certain percentage of energy-efficient cars at Zernike-West.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Much of what the FEB does in terms of sustainability is invisible for students. Take for example the sustainability of the building. Things that are visible are often less sustainable, such as the food in canteens.
- Students can show more clearly that there is a demand for sustainable courses.
- The study associations produce a lot of waste (for example in goodiebags).
- Smoking students are (/remain) a challenge.
- Would love to place more office plants.
• Students ask for longer opening hours. This creates a dilemma: by giving in to these demands, the faculty uses more energy (but also: a student who does not study at the Zernike, but at home, still uses energy. This doesn’t show on the energy bill of the UG, but it matters for the grand picture and should be kept in mind).
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Behavioural and Social Sciences
4366 students
658 staff members
2 buildings

FACTS

- Sustainability is gradually prioritised and incorporated in the business model of the faculty.

- Cleaning projects are being done by people who are in integration programs.

- Ergonomic working desks and performance (O&O) are important pillars. There’s a strong collaboration with AMD and there are so-called ‘fit’ meeting rooms and bicycle chairs.

- The main building (Heymans building) is being renovated, in which sustainability plays an important role. For example by arranging for cradle-to-cradle furniture, carpet that improves the air quality and led lights.

- Solar panels on the roof will be installed soon.

- Old furniture and pcs are given to second hand shops and not disposed of.

- There’s an active energy team who come together regularly. This consists of technical staff, building and facility managers. They’ve helped the faculty with technical details for a concrete project on the solar panels, but can also offer support at a strategic level.

- Lamps and heating are turned off automatically at night.

- There are charging docks for electric cars.

- All windows are double-glazed.

- There are light sensors in every room.

- Heating is managed centrally, and only adjusted during holidays.

- The faculty is secretary of the research group Sustainable Society.
FACTS

- Project: fairtrade coffee and sustainable products in the cantines.
- A water tap from the Green Office.
- Charging docks for electric bikes in a bike shed with a green roof.
- There are no concrete targets concerning sustainability.

DESIRES & AMBITIONS

- Idea for others: set up an energy team at every faculty.
- In need of new ideas for sustainable buildings; most of the easier steps have been taken by now.
- Desire: the sharing of knowledge on innovations between faculties is currently missing.
- Desire: an expert on sustainability is currently missing in the renovations.
- Solar panels will be installed on the roof

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Improvements concerning the temperature in buildings.
- There as a project called Sustainable Building, in which the building was monitored. This showed that there is room for more improvements.
- Water saving is still a challenge.
- The program manager should inspire and talk about new techniques and materials, also at a faculty level.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Money is missing for improving the sustainability during the renovations. The UG indicates that they find sustainability important, but barely offer financial support to do so.

- The study associations can still make some steps: students there are using a lot of throw-away cups and print a lot.

- Transparency of the faculty concerning their sustainability can also improve, so that building managers can better work on this.

- The purchase contracts of the UG limit the faculty in what they can arrange locally. A lot of sustainable improvements are therefore out of reach for the faculty.
Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies
200 students
X staff members
1 building, old / monumental

FACTS

- Green week: annually organised week, this year set up by the student assessor. It’s a week filled with sustainable activities. In 2017, for example, they organised a movie night, a yoga class, a dinner at the Free Cafe, the handing out of mugs to students, etc.

- There is a fountain where students can wash their own mug, so it’s easier for them to use their own mug.

- There is a pear tree in the garden, from which the faculty picks the fruits.

- It’s unknown if there are active ambassadors at this faculty.

- Willeke van der Pol is a very active and sustainable employee who coordinates a lot of activities such as the purchase of fair trade tea, sustainable information on the info screens, etc.

- The bathrooms work on automatic light switches.

- There is a gender-neutral toilet.

- The TRS Faculty distinguishes sustainability and CSR (Corporate Social Responsibility).

- Education is not specifically focused on sustainability, but focuses on societal topics such as religion and conflict. Sustainability is an underlying factor in these subjects.

- Students have made and shared a list with sustainable desires, which resulted in -among other things- sensors in the bathrooms and sustainable cups.

- Sustainability is a given in the business model of the faculty, although it could be incorporated more explicitly in the strategic agenda of the board.
The faculty has its own vegetable garden and a desire for a compost heap. However, it’s hard to find someone who wants to be responsible for these on a long-term basis. Students sometimes forget to maintain the garden and other times there’s no volunteer. A solution would be to appoint a coordinator or a vegetable garden network. There is also a demand for someone to ask for (technical) advice on the garden.

There is a lot demand for more sustainable events (e.g. nature walks), but there isn’t always someone who can organise these.

The support by the Green Office is appreciated.

They would like a standard script or tips and tricks to organise a green week, on topics such as: how to search for a location, how to set up the promotion, what’s supposed to be on a poster, the amount of time it takes to do all this, etc.

A flyer for students with a top 10 tips or a carousel with sustainable tips

Idea: involve and guide the new student assessor with sustainability at the UG, for example by setting up a meeting in September. Also, introduce them to the ambassadors at their faculty.

Desire: a student who can do research on energy management and smart solutions. Double-glazed windows are difficult, but there is a lot to win in isolation and the settings of the thermostat.

They’re investigating whether the vending machines can provide healthier choices.

Want the UG to become a Fairtrade university.

Want to compensate for airplane trips.

Would like more reimbursements for sustainable transport. For instance, to receive a higher reimbursement if you go to work by bike.

A sustainable internship database

A central hub for the deliveries to the UG, for example at Eelde (is being picked up by -among others- Flora Holland, but the UG should participate).
OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

• The heat and acoustics of an old building

• The faculty is open to changes and wouldn’t mind being an experimental zone for research and innovations.

• The building is often open during the weekends, but not fully occupied. How could you manage that in a smart way? An example is to provide an app so that employees can turn on the heater in their room from home.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Arts
5000 students
700 staff members
7 different buildings, among which the Harmony building and several monumental buildings

FACTS

- Sustainability has been incorporated in the interim reports, which are reported to the department of Health, Safety and Sustainability twice a year. The ‘Arbo’ team is responsible for these reports.

- There’s a food committee, who organizes -among other things- a vegan week.

- A lot of employees use their own coffee mugs.

- Study associations pay a lot of attention to sustainability and are involved in the topic.

- Study programmes do discuss sustainability, especially programs with a societal focus. The degree to which sustainability is discussed differs per study programme. IRIO, for example, puts a lot of focus on sustainability and students are very motivated on the topic. For studies related to languages, sustainability won’t be a main focus.

- Board meetings are mostly about the technical/business side of sustainability, for example the expenditures. The board does not see sustainability as a main priority.

- Arctic studies has a focus on sustainability, causing students to be informed and motivated on the subject.

- Sustainability has been incorporated into study programs such as IRIO, History and Archaeology.

- The Faculty of Arts has three research institutes (CLCG, GIA & ICOG). Sustainability is sometimes part of the focus of the different research groups and teams within these groups of the faculty, especially in the group on Sustainable Societies.
• In the near future, there will (likely) be an experiment with a fast compost machine.

• A request to build 170 solar panels has been approved. It is not certain yet when these will be implemented, with reference to the upcoming renovations of the building(s).

• A stronger policy on information screens, on for example the energy usage of buildings. This has been picked up by Communication.

• A flyer per faculty to hand out to new students in order to inform them about sustainability at their faculty. This has been picked up by Green Office.

• Better communication with the sustainability ambassadors to learn what’s going on there.

• Wanted: a way to turn off all the lights with a single button. Some lamps have to be turned off manually by people, which a lot of people fail to do. Security personnel can check up on this, but that will cost extra money.

• Fun idea: put stickers on stairs so that people become aware of the amount of burned calories.

• The study start week at the start of the year would be a good moment to talk about sustainability.

• Healthier work environments (for example the oxygen levels in certain rooms) - this will be picked up during the renovations of 2020.

• Desire: catering handing out more information about products and sustainability.

• A healthier vending machine like the one at the UCG.

• Suggestion: Green Office should involve the board of assessors more often and help them out in making their faculty more sustainable. Think of briefing them, handing out tips and suggesting contact persons.

• Suggestion: the faculty has a Network of Arts, a network of study associations. This allows them to address other associations about speakers, tips, or similar things.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

• Renovations in 2020 - how to make them as sustainable as possible?

• It’s hard to realize parking spots for electric vehicles, because there is a very limited number of parking spots in general.

• Because of the diversity in nationalities at the faculty, there is a large difference in knowledge on sustainability. Students from Germany, for example, are often up to speed (and sometimes even annoyed that they can’t separate waste here), and other students have never even heard of sustainability. Most students, however, are in between these
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Medical Sciences
X students
X staff members
X building(s)

FACTS

- The Faculty of Medical Sciences is coupled to the UMCG in many ways. This happens a lot in the field of sustainability. The UMCG has its own sustainability coordinator, a program about accessibility, and there is an environmental coordinator. The CO2 footprint is maintained, there are surveys about sustainability etc.

- The faculty follows the sustainable pillars of the UMCG, for example working without paper.

- IFMSA (an umbrella association for medical students) promotes sustainability and amongst others, vacancies for Green Ambassadors.

- The faculty has a lot of Green Ambassadors.

- Management takes sustainability into account, it is a point in the agenda. Also when distributing the finances sustainability is being discussed.

- Lecturers and employees give the right example when it comes to healthy and sustainable behaviour.

- Healthy aging, working out, healthy food and behaviour are important themes for research and in the curriculum. There are not specific courses about sustainability, instead it is a part of the total programme.

- Employees and students are nudged towards healthy behaviour by visual clues: posters and stickers everywhere in the building.

- In cooperation with FEB there is a minor More Healthy Years, about the influence of policy on the stimulation of healthy choices.

- There are special theme days and actions to give extra attention to sustainability and health.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

DESIRE & AMBITIONS

- As of now, sustainability is not a topic for the students from the faculty. It is possible that a lot is happening but is not visible.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- The Green Office does not offer a lot of input regarding sustainability at this faculty.
Faculty of Law
>4000 students
X staff members
4 building(s)

FACTS

- (Note: law is currently located in the same building as arts. The contact person at laws is also one of the contact persons at arts. Consequently, some info may overlap.
- Sustainability is mainly done by the department of Health, Safety and Sustainability.
- Sustainability is reported in the progress reports.
- There is an arbo-task group, which consists of managing directors, students, an arbo-coordinator and HR-employees.
- Waterless urinoirs.

DESIRES & AMBITIONS

- Communication on building level: what’s already happening in this building?
- Planned: 170 solar panels on the roof (has already been approved).
- A charging dock for electric cars
- Replace lamps by lamps that turn off automatically
- Put stickers on the stairs that indicate the number of burned calories.
- The facility manager would like to have more contact with ambassadors
- Possibility: pilot for a compost machine on the Harmony building
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Renovations are coming up, which provide a chance for more sustainable buildings.
- Rather no motivational stickers on the walls. Staff members are not allowed to change their rooms.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Spatial Sciences
950 students
82 staff members
1 building

FACTS

- Education is all about ‘making places better together’, causing sustainability to play a role in almost every course offered at the faculty.

- The visibility of sustainable courses is not always equally high. A number of courses are open for students outside of the faculty, but there is no capacity at the faculty to set up larger interdisciplinary courses.

- Are participating in setting up an energy minor together with the FEB, UMCG and other faculties.

- Sustainability is often mentioned by the education commission and is regarded as an important topic by students.

- Sustainability is not a priority, because they’re currently working on a number of other large projects.

- Students can choose to follow sustainable courses; there’s a lot of room in the different programs to follow elective courses.

- There are learning communities (project groups) in which students can visit events or set up their own, which can also be about sustainability.

- The facts, wishes and opportunities concerning the facility management of the FSS are largely the same as the FEB (these faculties share buildings):
  
  - Building: good isolation, windows, energy-efficient lighting, light sensors in every room. Ergonomic working environment and central bins instead of private bins.
  
  - There are goals for achieving a certain percentage of energy-efficient cars at Zernike-west.
  
  - The facility managers at the faculty are given a lot of goals from the UG, resulting in more commonality between the management of buildings at Zernike-West.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

DESIRE & AMBITIONS

- Wish: to connect the UN SDGs explicitly to courses.
- There’s a need for smarter systems, for example in pcs that stay on all night, sensors for ventilation and heating systems, etc. There are often possibilities, but those require experimentation first and the faculty doesn’t always want to be the frontrunner in that.
- Will be working on water- and energy-efficient toilets. There was a pilot with waterless urinoirs, but that wasn’t a big success.
- There will be more small pilots, such as sustainable floor maintenance and electric management of the car park.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Would love to collaborate more with other faculties, but the differences in culture, roster and programs are large and make it hard to do so.
- The study associations produce a lot of waste (for example in goodiebags).
- Smoking students are (/remain) a challenge.
- Would love to place more office plants.
- Students don’t ask for more sustainable measures themselves.
- Students do ask for longer opening hours. This creates a dilemma: by giving in to these demands, the faculty uses more energy (but also: a student who does not study at the Zernike, but at home, still uses energy. This doesn’t show on the energy bill of the UG, but it matters for the grand picture and should be kept in mind).
Faculty of Science and Engineering
6000 students
3000 staff members (PhDs included)
4 buildings (plus off-site research facilities, such as the ‘Herdershut’)

- A big part of the education at FSE revolves around sustainability.
- Sustainability is important in the faculty, the focus is mostly on energy, energy saving methods, environment and national law regarding health and safety. There is a big team called Health Safety and Environment.
- FSE is the owner of the Energy Academy, this building is an icon of sustainable building in Groningen. FSE is also owner of some older buildings that could improve with regards to sustainability, for example Nijenborgh
- Most buildings use a WKO-installation (ground-coupled heat exchanger).
- One of the student associations won the title of most sustainable study association. All student associations are aware of and working on sustainable practices.
- This faculty works along with other faculties and businesses often when it comes to sustainability. Especially when it comes to more technical questions about sustainability this is the first faculty many people turn to.
- Waste is actively separated and dangerous waste is intensively monitored.
- Parking policy is strict and is reinforced: no parking spaces for people who live close to the faculty.
- In the laboratories, sustainability is important but so is safety. Students should not use too much, but also not too little gloves, for example. Students receive information about this issue.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

DESIRE & AMBITIONS

• To have a clearer view on energy use, both for FSE as other faculties. By knowing where and when energy is used, actions can be taken.

• Technical innovations, for example the new Feringa building: labs will be ventilated by sensors, so they only turn on when someone enters the room and turn off on their own after everyone has left.

• Desire: a dashboard for all faculties where you can get an insight into energy use. Not just for technical staff but for everyone, to gain understanding of your own behaviour and how this reflects in energy used.

• Facility managers should be able to have detailed insight into their own energy use.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

• There are no opening hours, buildings are always opened because of research. This leads to a higher energy use for heating, ventilation and light use.

• Sustainability is important for the faculty and faculty managers, also because there is a financial motivation for many sustainable improvements. However, this should not mean that sustainability is only considered when money can be saved.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of Philosophy
400 students
X staff members
1 building

FACTS

- There’s research by Andreas Schmidt on nudging (sustainable behaviour) and democratic innovation processes, ethics, political and social philosophy...
- There’s a gender-neutral toilet
- Conferences at Philosophy are organised with vegan/vegetarian dishes
- Every student is taught ethics (which isn’t necessarily aimed at sustainability, but sustainable topics always have an underlying ethical dilemma).

DESIREs & AMBITIONS

- The storage of goods in the vicinity of Haren / Eelde (see also the report of the Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies for a similar idea).
- Collaboration with the province of Groningen to construct better infrastructure, for example more bicycle routes towards the north of the province.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- Sustainability is not structurally embedded in the board’s agenda.
- In terms of facility management, the main priority is comfort, not the environment.
- Dilemma: considerations. Opening the faculty during the weekends means more usage of energy for lighting and heating.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

Faculty of University College
X students
23 staff members
1 building

FACTS

• Sustainability is the main focus of a large course that students can follow, which is all about energy, healthy ageing and societal participation. It’s mostly aimed at teaching a sustainable way of thinking.

• They organise a lot of lectures about sustainability, for example with the directors of Tony Chocolonely and Van Hulleys. These courses are limitedly available for students from outside the faculty.

• The products in the vending machine are -based on demand from students- replaced by healthier alternatives.

• There has been a student committee has arranged for a sustainable first years’ camp. This committee has been disbanded since.

• There are two students in a task group who advice the board of the faculty, who can also pass through questions and demands from students.

• They have distributed Doppers so that first year students would use less plastic, but this project wasn’t very effective.

• There’s a campaign to close the doors in the colder months.

• Energy usage is shown on the digital screens throughout the building.

• Has won a prize from the Green Office for the most sustainable faculty.

• Employees are actively encouraged to set an example for students, for instance by talking about the topic or doing volunteer work.

• For a while, there was a sustainability committee but it disintegrated after one year.

• Students have been appointed to check up on the lights, windows and heaters at the end of the day.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

FACTS

• Thermostats are installed at visible spots so that people don’t forget to turn the heaters off.

DESIRE & AMBITIONS

• There are no concrete ambitions for sustainability.

• Request: less printing of books, readers, etc. There is currently a lack of policy on that.

• There’s a plan to set up fermentation bin to process biologic waste, but the UG is approaching that cautiously and wants to do experiments first.

• Desire: solar panels on the roof.

• Desire: more natural light by establishing an open and glass building

• Bio-box to turn organic waste into biogas, for which they have to wait on the municipality.

• Smart sensors, which are too expensive for now.

• Need more time to really create awareness around sustainability among students; this is now often limited to 15 minutes at the start of a year.

• Would love posters from the Green Office in the building.

• Would love more ambassadors. They could for example set up a movie evening at the UCG.

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

• They’re moving to the healthy ageing campus in 2021. In terms of energy, this new location doesn’t necessarily offer a lot of opportunities, because they will resettle in an existing (and relatively old) building. There is however a lot to gain in creating more visibility for sustainability.
SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

- UCG is settled in an old building that is hard to make more sustainable. In addition, there are limited funds for the management of the building. A task group has been established to decorate the new building.
Faculty of Campus Fryslân
84 students
52 staff members
1 buildings

SUSTAINABILITY IN THE FACULTY

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- Sustainability is a focus area in the masters. These are part of the master programs (so not an elective course). Once they’re finished, students can show that they have acquired certain competences. These courses are only open to students from the faculty.

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OPPORTUNITIES & CHALLENGES

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- Students can show more clearly that there is a demand for sustainable courses.
- The study associations produce a lot of waste (for example in goodiebags).
- Smoking students are (/remain) a challenge.
- Would love to place more office plants.
Firstly, we would like to thank you for reading this report. If you by any chance have questions regarding this document, or if there are any remarks due to this report, then please let us know. Setting up an appointment can be done easily by sending us an e-mail to: greenoffice@rug.nl.

For further information about the Green Office and what we do on a daily basis, we would kindly like to refer you to our website: www.rug.nl/greenoffice. You can also stay tuned of a variety of sustainable projects and initiatives via our social media channels. You can find these below.

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