Working Members of the Environmental Awareness Group in Academic Year 2009-2010 were: Betsy Andress (Staff), Mary Brickle (Student, Westhampton College, 2013), David Dean (Chair, Faculty), Karen DeBonis (Student, Westhampton College, 2010), Mary Finley-Brook (Faculty), Al Lane (Staff), Van Nall (Faculty), Steve Nash (Faculty, served in Fall Semester while Mary Finley-Brook was on Research Sabbatical), and Chelsea Prue (Student, Westhampton College, 2010 for Fall Semester).

The EAG met six times during the academic year at monthly meetings held in September, November, December, January, February, and March. Being inactive in 2008-2009, the first order of business was the appointment of three student representatives who were affiliated with GreenUR. It was also determined that Trey McDonald, the UR Sustainability Working Group (SWG) Coordinator should be invited to subsequent meetings.

The first topic of discussion was the relationship of the EAG with the SWG and GreenUR so that potential EAG initiatives would complement and not duplicate the work of these groups. A major undertaking by the EAG members was to review and make revisions and suggestions to the University’s Climate Action Plan developed by the SWG. In December, the EAG drafted a resolution to the SWG that recommended that the University take all necessary steps to install a solar power, geothermal or sustainable bio-fuel power generating facility on campus within five years in order to supply ten percent of our current electrical energy consumption, using any available financing including federal stimulus funds, or a public fund-raising campaign.

During the meetings in the spring semester the EAG decided to pursue three initiatives:

- Improving those areas of the Green Report Card on which UR received lower grades, particularly on the transparency of the reporting of investments by the endowment.
- Community outreach involving the development of an environmental education curriculum focusing on sustainability and recycling initiatives for local middle school students taught by UR elementary education majors and/or environmental studies majors.
- Developing a “socially responsible” student-managed investment fund with linkages between the Robins School of Business and the other UR schools

In order to implement these and future EAG endeavors (e.g., recycling, conservation initiatives) it was determined that faculty representation should be expanded to include all schools, including Continuing Studies, Law, and Leadership, so that any EAG undertakings will have broader campus support. The EAG also determined that in order to operate more effectively that the mission of the Committee should be altered in light of the Climate Action Plan.

Submitted by David Dean
April 29, 2010