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Final project—Geo Science 206 – Professor David Dethier & Stephanie Boyd
Introduction: The need for a greater green initiative

As a freshman at Williams College, I have recognized my class as the perfect trial group for a sustainability challenge. I have witnessed how members of the freshman class fail to pay attention to their waste. Many do not recycle in their bedrooms, and few think about the amount of electricity that is wasted. There have been a myriad of occasions when I walk into an empty common room with not only multiple lights on, but also the television. Most of the members of my entry do not think about the simple things that they can do to help our college save energy. However I predict that this is the case because not only are they not held responsible for the amount of energy that they use, but also because there is no pressure on them to limit the amount of energy that they waste.

By implementing an environmental challenge such as Eph Gone Green, Williams College, will not only save money in waste disposal and energy, but will also help foster sustainable habits among each of their incoming classes.

Eph Gone Green will be a semester long sustainable challenge that will build community among the houses (mills, sage, Pratt, etc.), as well as the entry. It will include both individual and group assessments based on a cumulative point system. Each month students will have individual and group challenges that they can participate in in order to win the grand prize, a personal entry super stress busters, as well as biweekly individual prizes. As a base for Eph Gone Green, I will be looking at a sustainable competition currently used at the University of Hawaii. Additionally, I will look at initiatives that have been implemented at other colleges and Universities that I believe could work on the Williams campus.
Eph gone green

Eph gone green will be a culmination of many different programs that have been tried on campus as well as at other colleges and universities. However, the competition that holds the most influence in the Eph gone green competition is the Kukui cup at the University of Hawaii. Although the University of Hawaii is a much larger institution with ten campuses spread throughout the state of Hawaii, their sustainable indicative is not only one of the most interactive models available, but it is also one that can be adapted to fit the Williams community. The Kukui cup website describes the kukui cup as real world and online activities, all tied together through game mechanics. In the real world, players participate in workshops, excursions, and artistic/musical events. They win prizes, and most importantly, learn about their current lifestyle and its impact on sustainability behaviors. In the online Kukui Cup web application, players earn points, achieve badges, increase their sustainability "literacy" through readings and videos, and use social networking mechanisms to engage with friends and family about the issues raised. The challenge is designed to make the real and online world activities complementary and synergistic (Kukui cup).

According to a 2007 EDUCAUSE Center of Applied Research (ECAR) study, 98.4 percent of college students own a computer. Although this statistic is not specific to Williams, it is close to precise as the necessity to easily access a computer has grown. Moreover, according to two Pew Internet Project surveys 72 percent of all college students have a social media account and 45% of students use them at least once a day (Lenhart). Because we know that students are online so often, the Internet is a great place to begin our competition.

Eph gone green will be a similar competition to that of the Kukui Cup. There will be online games and activities that can be completed for awards. However there will be some differences. The Kukui cup is completely optional, and participants get to pick their own teams. Eph gone green will be an entry/ house competition among the freshman
class. Each entry will be its own team, however there will be moments when they have to work with other entries in their building (Sage, Mills, Pratt, etc.). Within each entry, students will also have the opportunity to win individual prizes based on their individual point accumulation.

**Individual v. group points**

At the beginning of the semester each first year student must sign up for Eph gone green, they will receive bonus points if they sign up by a certain day. On the webpage, there will be a task list, games, and videos that the participants can use to gain points. On the task list there will be both group and individual activities such as going on green river clean up trips, or attending a lecture. Depending on the difficulty of the task, the range of possible points may increase or decrease. The completion of each task will be equivalent to two forms of point: personal and team points.

Throughout the semester participates will be expected to check the monthly calendar. On the calendar, the deadlines for maximum points will be highlighted as well any dates for lectures, movies screenings, and log lunches, all of which will be worth points. Moreover, participates will be able to participate in monthly individual challenges. The winner of this challenge will be based on the number of individual points that are accumulated outside of the entry. These activities will include games, videos, surveys, photo submissions (to the sustainable Williams gallery on the Eph Gone Green website), submission of any poetry, or any other fun activities that are posted on the monthly calendar. The individual who wins the monthly challenge will win a small prize such as a 30-dollar visa gift card. The prize must be big enough to get people to work for it, but not nearly as big as the final prize. Individuals will also be encouraged to gain the
most points by the possibility of being named the Most Valuable Saver (MVS). When the winning entry is announced, a Most Valuable Saver will be selected based on not only their individual points but also by the opinion of their Junior Advisors (JAs). If there is a tie between any two entry mates, the JAs will choose a MVS based on the effort put forth by the tied participates, to get his/her fellow entry mates to partake in activities, and overall attitude towards the completion (is this person constantly reminding people to unplug or turn off their lights? Is this person proposing extra group activities? Etc.) Additionally there will be one large activity that will require the entire building to participate. Since we can only track energy usage of an entire building and not by entry or person, at some point early on in the competition there will be a building wide energy saving competition. Although this competition ask students to fulfill task similar to those it will ask them to continue doing during the year, this competition will be worth double the usually entry points for each entry in the winning building. Having the large competition will be a great way to push students to get serious about sustainable behavior early on.

In addition to the individual prizes, each entry will be given the opportunity to win a personal stress buster as well as a plaque that will be placed somewhere public on campus. This plaque will have their entry name, the year, and the name of their MVS. Entries can gain points by doing many different things. One way to gain points is to get 60 percent of an entry to complete a certain task on the monthly task list. The entry will receive points despite weather or not it was a group activity. For example, if a video is posted on the task list, each entry member can watch the video individually but if at least 60 percent of the entry watches the video, not only will each member receive individual
points but they will also receive entry points. However, more points will be awarded for activities that require the entry to participate as a whole, such as river cleanups, or attending a lecture for it is a bit harder participants to make the time to attend these activities, and they should therefore be accredited properly. Additionally, the entry will receive extra points for participating in sustainable activities not posted on the calendar. They will still have to meet the 60% participation baseline and have photo evidence as well as JA confirmation that the event did take place. This option will encourage entries to be creative about how they can gain the maximum amount of points each month.

**Publicity and promotion**

Because Eph Gone Green will be a new program, it will require plenty of advertisement. More importantly, since the purpose of the contest is to promote green behaviors, the majority of advertisement will be paperless. Reminders of upcoming deadlines, as well as the announcement of individual biweekly winners will be emailed, posted on WSO and in the Daily messages. Posters of the monthly initiatives will also be spread electronically. However, in addition to the monthly information about initiatives, there will also be monthly tips that will be printed and posted throughout campus. It is necessary to post these tips around campus as well as email them so that that the upperclassmen could benefit from the tips.

In addition to campus wide promotion, special attention must be paid to the first years, since they are the ones competing in the competition. Their first encounter with Eph gone green should come from their JAs. In the beginning of the semester JAs hold a few mandatory meeting with their entries ranging from RASAN meetings, to alcohol awareness, so why not add an introduction to Ephs Gone Green. Although not nearly as
immediately dangerous as the topics discussed in the two prior examples, an introduction to Ephs Gone Green will provide information about pressing sustainability issues as well as inform the first years about all of the rules and details of the competition. In order to make this easier for both the first years and their JAs they can be provided with a video and pdf version of a booklet that will include all of the information (of course points will be awarded for watching the video as an entry as well as downloading the booklet). This video and booklet will include information not only about the competition but it will also provide tips on simple things that students could do to help save energy such as making sure that all lights are turned off when they are unnecessary, taking shorter showers, and reading their homework online instead of printing it. Providing the first year class with this information early on in the semester, especially before the competition begins is important because if the students are not fully aware of the competition it will be harder to get them to commit to being an active participant.

**Making going green easier**

We cannot change sustainability on campus if we cannot change student’s habits.

Although Eph Gone Green is already extremely interactive, there is a lot more that can be done to make going green easier. For starters, the lighting in freshman dorm rooms needs to be changed. Currently, many students have a small round wall lamp as their main source of lighting. However, this lamp is extremely dim and requires students to purchase additional lamps (see Fig. 1). Note that figure 1, taken at midnight while no other lights were on in

*Figure 1. dorm lighting*
the room, does not provide much lighting. If instead of providing a small wall lamp, each room were equipped with a ceiling light that could actually light up the room during the winter nights, than students would use less lamps—thus lowering the plug load.

Additionally, we should consider changing the garbage cans that are provided for students. Currently, two garbage cans, one for regular garbage and another for recycling are provided. However, many students do not effectively use the recycling bins in their rooms. One reason that a few students gave me was that it was easier to carry down one can rather than both cans to the garbage room. Another reason students gave me was that they just forgot to recycle. Both of these tendencies could be fixed by providing Solecans, a new dual can that holds both recycling and garbage in one place (see fig. 2). As shown in figure 2, a Solecan can provide an easily carried can that practically separates the garbage from recycling. The Solecan also easily snaps apart and back together so that the bins can be emptied separately if desired. Additionally, Solecan is currently surveying customers on what new colors should be available. This survey is an indicator that the possibility of having a Solecan in our school colors is likely. This will be important because it will take advantage of the high school spirit, especially across the first year class. According to a study published by Professor Cialdini of Arizona State University, found that

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\text{norm based persuasive communications are likely to have their best effects when communicators align descriptive and injunctive normative messages to work in tandem rather than in competition with one another. Such a line of attack unites the power of two independent sources or normative motivation and can provide a highly successful approach to social influence (Cialdini, 108)}
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In taking his findings into account, I believe that it is important to connect garbage habits with the competition by not only using school schools, but by also putting a large Eph Gone Green sticker on each recycling portion of the bin so that students are reminded of their sustainable responsibility as a part of the Williams community.

**Funding and supervision**
The greatest issue with a program such as Eph Gone Green is that it is going to be expensive. Not only will the school need to hire someone to create and run the page, but money will also be needed to provide the initiatives. However, there are some ways to help lower the cost.

**Eph Gone Green store at Kellogg House**
As the college is planning Kellogg House, it should consider building a small section for an Eph Gone Green store. The store could sell Eph Gone Green attire, but most importantly, it could provide an economical alternative to buying sustainable products such as electrical strips, light bulbs, water bottles and mugs. The store can also create various new student jobs, as it will require someone to run the store during the day. As the new environmental building in the center of campus, Kellogg is the perfect place to house a store such as Eph Gone Green. Moreover, the proceeds of the store can go to help finance Eph Gone Green.

**Supervision**
As noted in the previous section, Kellogg House should be the Hub of the Eph Gone Green initiative. It will be necessary to hire a new faculty member, who will be responsible for Eph Gone Green.
Conclusion
Eph Gone Green is a large and expensive project. However, the results are sure to be worth it. With such a long competition, students will pick up sustainable habits as well as learn about the current sustainable issues that trouble our local and national communities. This competition will be a great way to foster friendly competition amongst students, and force them to think deeply about their effects on the environment. This project may be large, it may be expensive, but can we put a price on our community? Can we put a price on our environment?
Works Cited


