

Net Zero Scope 3

Interns: Jake Gess, Matt Rourke, Siobhan Stimpson

The Greening of Rubenstein is a course/internship created to understand possible energy efficiency upgrades in the Rubenstein School's buildings with the ultimate goal of being Net Zero Energy in the School. This effort follows the goals of the [Climate Action Plan](#) signed by UVM. The Climate Action Plan is an agreement to be Net Zero in carbon emissions by the year 2025. Our group has the specific role in this plan of quantifying the energy used for RSENR business travel and commuting travel for faculty, staff, and students as well as other energy used in what is called Scope 3 energy use.



Interns Jake Gess (Environmental Sciences '21), Siobhan Stimpson (Environmental Sciences '19), and Matt Rourke (Forestry '22) work with Kathleen Wells of the Rubenstein School Business Service Center to collect travel data and other information.

At the beginning of the semester, we were tasked with quantifying Scope 3 emissions for the Rubenstein School. The first step in that process was defining what Scope 3 emissions actually are.

Through research of Net Zero definitions and how other colleges have conducted similar processes, we concluded that this scope would include carbon emission from business travel, commuting, lab and club travel, paper use, waste management, food, and water used. From there, we went on to figure out how we could collect this data. We found out that the School kept records of business flights that were paid for by the School, both domestic and foreign, and records of car rentals and travel reimbursement for faculty or staff who used their own vehicles to travel for business related events. We are using these records to quantify energy used for these activities.

However, we also needed to create a survey to collect the other Scope 3 activities of faculty, staff, and students as they themselves are the only ones who hold such information. We are currently in the process of finalizing the faculty and staff survey to find information such as commuting habits with help from former staff member Bill Valliere who informed us on how to go about extracting specific information from people using survey questions.

Once this survey is complete, we will soon begin constructing the student survey which will ask the same question on commuting but will include more questions such as the eating habits of students who live on campus and eat in the dining halls. These surveys will then be sent to all Rubenstein School faculty, staff, and students and using their responses, data will then be collected, interpreted, and quantified to estimate Scope 3 emissions by the members of the School. Once we have this information we hope to offset the amount of carbon necessary to complete Scope 3 activities using energy from future solar power generation.