Make a difference and take ENVS187

Eco-Reps Column

By Steph Haynes

Published: Wednesday, March 27, 2013
Updated: Thursday, March 28, 2013 15:03

At UVM, students have the opportunity to make a difference in more ways than one.

From the water bottle ban and the spork program, to the bike users group and composting on campus, these sustainable projects have all been driven by student ideas.

Offered every spring, the service learning Campus Sustainably course ENVS187, provides students with another opportunity to make a difference in University practices.

Pooja Kanwar, co-teacher of Campus Sustainability, stressed, “This engagement and voluntary effort proves to yield results in a reasonable, and often impressive, time frame.”

ENVS187 has been offered since 2005 through the Environmental Program and focuses specifically on the sustainability of campus operations. The work that students put forth in this class directly benefits the office of sustainability and ultimately the UVM campus as a whole.

“The ENVS 187 course provides an ongoing connection between students and the Office of Sustainability supporting a culture of collaboration toward common goals,” said Tarah Rowse, co-teacher of the course.

Past classes have worked on tracking UVM’s sustainability efforts, filling out the operations sections of STARS and synthesizing operations data into media presentations for the office of sustainability’s website.

This year, the course is taking a more direct approach.

At the end of the semester our class will present our findings and suggestions in the form of academic poster. Our audience will consist of operations managers and university officials, otherwise known as the “suits.”

It is here that we will have the opportunity to make a real difference. We will be able to tell the
higher-ups what we think UVM is doing right and what we believe could use some improvement when it comes to campus sustainability.

Not only will we tell the suits our thoughts, but we also have the chance to make a lasting change on the UVM community. We will provide the Office of Sustainability with tangible products of value that the staff can use in the future.