

## **Proposal for a Swarthmore College Environmental Studies Center**

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The purpose of this proposal is to demonstrate the need of an Environmental Studies Center (ENVSC) as a physical space to build community and identity among Environmental Studies (ENVS) majors and minors, establish greater ENVS faculty resources, and act as a repository for all sustainability projects on campus.

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**Table of Contents**

I. Introduction..... 3

II. Methods ..... 5

III. Need for an ENVSC ..... 7

IV. Benchmarking Study..... 15

V. Recommendations ..... 17

VI. Closing Remarks .....20

VII. Appendix ..... 21

## I. Introduction

The campus community of Swarthmore College has demonstrated deep and lasting interest in environmental issues across disciplines and departments. With support from the academic sphere for further exposure to environmental impact and tangible sustainability efforts by the college and student activists, several important groups within the College have shown interest in further education and execution of environmentally conscious projects. From President Rebecca Chopp signing the American Colleges and Universities Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2010 to the Swarthmore College Sustainability Framework that was set in place in 2015 to audit campus infrastructure and implement more green infrastructure, the College continues to promote education and action about complex environmental challenges that impact our campus and the world<sup>1</sup>. With its updated commitments, plans, and an overall greater cross-campus emphasis on the environment and sustainability, a growing want for increased student opportunities in sustainability served as the impetus for the introduction of President's Sustainability Research Fellowship (PSRF) in 2016, which provides students with the opportunity to carry out a project that pushes campus sustainability goals. PSRF provides students both an academic and project-based experience through a yearlong course and associated internship to carry out a project addressing a specific sustainability challenge on campus. The PSRF website<sup>2</sup> outlines:

*“In the program’s pilot year, our Fellows are doing all we could have asked: redesigning our waste management system, developing a 3-year vision for campus woods stewardship, implementing Swarthmore’s internal carbon price, launching behavioral change strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and creating a system to track sustainability progress across campus.”*

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<sup>1</sup> Swarthmore College Bulletin from [https://bulletin.swarthmore.edu/bulletin-issue-archive/archive\\_p=446.html](https://bulletin.swarthmore.edu/bulletin-issue-archive/archive_p=446.html)

<sup>2</sup> President's Sustainability Research Fellowship website at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/sustainability/presidents-sustainability-research-fellowship>

Encouraged by the work of PSRF projects, President Valerie Smith joined Second Nature's *We Are Still In* coalition with thousands of other college presidents, mayors, governors, tribal leaders, and CEOs in June 2017. This action showed Swarthmore's continued commitment to uphold the goals of the Paris Climate Agreement, despite the United States retracting its support. Swarthmore has positioned itself as an up and coming leader for sustainability and environmentally responsible practice among higher education institutions.

Further, the Environmental Studies Program at Swarthmore has recently been rapidly expanding. The Environmental Studies Program at Swarthmore began in 1992, and in 2011 began to offer a Tri-College minor program. Just starting last year, Swarthmore now offers its own Environmental Studies major. With a rapid increase of students into the program, there will be a need for more faculty to teach a greater number of courses, and to ensure that incoming students will have advisors that are not strained for time between a large number of advisees. Currently, Swarthmore's Environmental Studies Program only has one full-time faculty member dedicated strictly to ENVS with two joint tenure-track faculty members. Most ENVS courses are taught by professors who are housed in other departments and are cross-listed between ENVS and another department. To truly achieve an interdisciplinary Environmental Studies Program, Swarthmore needs to incorporate faculty members who identify as interdisciplinary practitioners into the program. Therefore, more generally, Swarthmore needs to devote more resources to bolster the program. With a growing number of students choosing Environmental Studies as their course of study, there is a demonstrated need for more full-time department faculty.

This clear demonstration of interest and expansion in ENVS should be aided by the College with a physical space to foster ideas and a sense of community, and more importantly to serve as a hub for ENVS academia, with core program offices, offices for core professors, and

resources for professors of other departments teaching ENVIS-related courses. Ideally this Environmental Studies Center would house a library where information on past ENVIS and sustainability projects can be consolidated, and where students could search for updated resources as climate change is a dynamic subject with ever-changing parameters and discoveries. It could serve as an office space for ENVIS professors, whereas currently they have offices in various buildings across the academic campus.

The current disjunctive spirit of the ENVIS Program, and what hopefully could eventually become a full environmental studies department, could be ameliorated by the introduction of an ENVIS Center. With greater emphasis on the academic connection to sustainability, Swarthmore can further substantiate its environmental initiatives. In light of this clear and consistent demonstration of institutional interest in sustainability efforts by the college and students, the ENVIS 91 Capstone group is proposing an Environmental Studies ENVIS Center to demonstrate the value to the student experience and greater community of an expanded and established Environmental Studies Program.

## **II. Methods**

To create this proposal, we gathered information through three main areas: 1) research of Swarthmore's institutional history in environmentalism, 2) research of peer institutions' growth of Environmental Science/Environmental Studies programs and departments, and 3) conducting a series of interviews to compile ethnographic data on the ENVIS community and the faculty and student experiences in the recent past. All three methods involved an extensive network of interviews, and compiling the data in a form that conveyed a narrative that we believed was needed to re-enforce the logistical notion that an ENVIS space was needed. Experts in the field of

ethnographic studies outline the importance of ethnographers to immerse themselves in the daily experience of the culture they are trying to document. By interviewing faculty, alumni, and members of programs at other schools, we were able to compile a profile of the greater ENVS community. As the last class with solely ENVS minors, this Capstone seminar has a unique perspective of having seen the program grow but experiencing specific pitfalls of the program as well. Through our academic experiences we have been able to track the culture of the program and have a vision for its future, which we outline in this proposal.

On May 8th, we presented our ideas for this proposal to the Swarthmore ENVS community at the end of the year gathering. After a brief presentation, the five Capstone students hosted breakout groups and asked the following questions to students, faculty, and students in attendance:

1. Do you support the idea of trying to create a space like this? How would you have used the center if it currently existed?
2. What components would you want to see incorporated in this center, and are there any spaces would you suggest for this?
3. What are your hesitations or concerns with this proposal?

The conversation from this session was productive and driven by the interests and needs of the different stakeholders from lived experience in the ENVS Program. Feedback and ideas from the session have been included in this proposal.

### III. Need for an ENVSC

#### ENVS Student Resources

The ENVS Program was established at Swarthmore in 1992 out of an identified need by Swarthmore students, faculty, and staff that as a leading institution in higher education committed to social responsibility and engaged scholarship. Swarthmore was missing a critical piece of the puzzle: an established academic path for students to pursue an interdisciplinary study of the social, political and economic facets of environmental challenges and potential solutions. Since 2011 Swarthmore, Haverford, and Bryn Mawr have offered students a Tri-College Environmental Studies minor through which students can take required coursework at any of the institutions to earn credit for their minor. Just in 2017, the ENVS Program at Swarthmore established a Environmental Studies major. In this academic program students are encouraged to explore the socio-political complexities of environmental topics with an interdisciplinary lens.

With Swarthmore's commitment to environmental stewardship and sustainability, it would be expected that the academic programs that educate students on the intricacies of anthropogenic impact on environment would reflect these initiatives. The Environmental Studies Program at the college is a rapidly growing entity that has no central location for students and faculty to collaborate. In the Class of 2018 (the first to offer a full major for ENVS.) there are 7 ENVS minors, and that number grows to 11 majors, 6 minors, and 2 special majors in the Class of 2019, and 14 majors, 10 minors, and 1 special major in the Class of 2020. This is comparable to Swarthmore's smaller full departments, and is about half of the size of the 2018 Biology department class, which has approximately 20-25 majors<sup>3</sup>. The program has grown about 32% each year; this fact, coupled with the inevitable truth that climate change will be a persisting and

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<sup>3</sup> Information was provided by Cassy Burnett, Administrative Coordinator for Engineering and Environmental Studies.

pressing issue into the foreseeable, future additionally explains the need for more resources to be put into the ENVS Program.

The growing number of students choosing ENVS as their path of study in the next three years suggests that this is a likely new trend, especially as the College's commitment to the environment and sustainability is strengthened by various initiatives. These initiatives include the continued development of the PSRF program, a greater focus on more sustainable campus operations through projects in energy, new buildings, and waste management, and the announcement of the creation of sustainability strategic plan in the next few years. With the trajectory in mind, it is essential for more resources to be allocated to the growing ENVS Program.

Additionally, the lasting impacts of climate change into the foreseeable future have continuously led to the deterioration of economic and social systems. Environmental change inevitably exacerbates systems of injustice in communities that already face these challenges. Many courses in the ENVS program, including Giovanna DiChiro's "Race, Class, Gender, and the Environment" and "Environmental Justice: Theory and Action" and Lee Smithey's "Climate Disruption, Conflict, and Peacemaking" explore how power, conflict, and the struggle for environmental justice act as hallmarks of modern climate change. In addition to these course offerings, the creation of a space where students can gather to research and have discussions about these topic is needed. Sustained faculty support and interest in these topics—as demonstrated by the continuation of the courses mentioned above as well as the creation of new courses—is just as important. It is the mission of Swarthmore is to encourage students to reach their full potential while instilling a *deep sense of ethical and social concern*<sup>4</sup>. Therefore, the

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<sup>4</sup> Swarthmore College website at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/assessment/college-mission-goals-and-planning>



purpose of the creation of this center should directly reflect the College's mission with the close link of ENVS to issues of equity and justice.

### Faculty Resources

The growth of interdisciplinary ENVS programs is a national trend seen over the past several years<sup>5</sup>. The paper outlines the importance of interdisciplinarity to Environmental Studies, as it is the only way “to understand the complex, adaptive interaction of social and natural systems.” If Swarthmore wants to adhere to its mission to make students *more valuable human beings and useful members of society*, adequate resources, including faculty, course offerings, and opportunities for experiential study, must be available to the ENVS Program. For us, the most tangible and useful way to provide these resources would be the creation of a designated ENVS Center that is supported by dedicated, critically thinking faculty members. Many of our peer institutions have established and robust environmental studies programs with a physical space for the community to gather and grow.

Although Swarthmore has followed the national model for interdisciplinary curriculum by including the aforementioned courses that tie social structures into environmental issues, it lacks the number of dedicated staff required to continue to develop and expand these courses. By extending our ENVS staff, which currently consists of two joint faculty and one full-time faculty, Swarthmore would be able to provide a larger set of resources and mentorship to students, as well as create a larger base of students interested in ENVS.

A larger faculty base would provide prospective environmental studies students more opportunities for mentorship throughout their course of study. Research on environmental studies

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<sup>5</sup> Vincent, S., & Focht, W. (2011). Interdisciplinary environmental education: elements of field identity and curriculum design. *Journal of Environmental Studies and Sciences*, 1(1), 14-35.

programs at higher education institutions emphasizes the importance of flexibility within ENVS programs<sup>4</sup>. Students should be able to enter programs that have faculty with diverse backgrounds that connect them to ENVS, so students can receive tailored advice for career tracks specific to their interest in the field. With the growing number of majors and minors there will be a need for more advisors. The current structure places members of the Environmental Studies Program Committee as advisors for ENVS students in addition to students within their own discipline, which requires faculty to split their time between their home department and ENVS. This imbalance of advisors to advisees makes it challenging for students to receive the necessary recommendations and advice. If the ENVS faculty were to expand and incorporate a designated program head as well as specialized faculty, it could benefit majors and minors greatly.

A larger faculty base and higher diversity of ENVS courses offered would allow students who may not be majors or minors to engage in material specific to their interest that intersects with environmental issues. Some students have turned away from pursuing interests in ENVS due to the current structure of the program. The shallow pool of ENVS faculty available to meet with and advise students, causes non-program students to be less inclined to inquire further about ENVS. The hope of expanding the faculty base within the ENVS Program being that there is to provide an effective way for students to be exposed to ENVS and pursue their passion to its full potential.

With this demonstrated need for a larger number of joint and full-time ENVS faculty, Swarthmore will need to address office space issues. As the program continues to grow, the expansion of students and personnel will inevitably call for need of office space. For this primary reason, faculty would greatly benefit from an ENVS Center. It would provide extra space for the growing number of ENVS faculty, and provide a central location for faculty from various

departments to meet as a program. It would also alleviate some of the disjunctive feeling students in the program currently feel. With program faculty spread across over 8 buildings on campus, it is extremely difficult for students to view ENVS as a cohesive unit. With a centralized faculty location, students would have more exposure to ENVS staff in departments and disciplines they never considered engaging with, and more importantly would be able to have a central location for seeking out faculty.

The center could provide faculty with resources beyond office space. It could act as a repository for literature and research materials, a hosting space for guest lecturers, and as a meeting place with other faculty both ENVS and non-ENVS. There are limitless possibilities for events and talks faculty could host in the space. For example, mini seminars could be hosted by regional experts in various topics in climate change and environment. Each faculty in the program could be provided an opportunity to bring in an expert from their field or fields adjacent, which would further promote Swarthmore's approach to interdisciplinary learning and community outreach.

Current environmental studies staff have expressed interests in these types of projects in the past. Professor Jensen, the current head of the ENVS program and a Professor of Astronomy, expressed a desire for a central program office or administrative space, and an attached or associated common area; as he put it, a "physical space that could help build community within the major", which he felt was important given that the ENVS Program is soon to become a full major, complete with honors. He further expressed a desire to hire new personnel for the ENVS program with primary training in environmental studies rather than in some other primary field; the program, he believes, must centralize to some extent as it gains major status.

Professor Jensen further believes that it is essential for the ENVS Program offices to be located in a relatively central area on campus; a large issue for ENVS students in the current situation is that professors' offices (including that of the head of the program, who is *de facto* coordinator) are located in many buildings not centrally located on campus, and it can be difficult to find time to meet with someone who can help with schedule concerns in the program, as opposed to a department like Biology, where there is a clear central office with a non-faculty coordinator tasked with assisting students with scheduling issues. He explained that this situation contributes to the relatively non-cohesive structure of the ENVS Program on campus, and that creating new offices/centralizing the ENVS Program would greatly improve the experience of ENVS students.

### **Ecosphere Student Groups Resources**

Swarthmore has a variety of opportunities for students to become engaged in environmental stewardship and sustainability initiatives. In this section we describe these groups and how they have potential to benefit from, or contribute to, the implementation of an ENVS Center as the hub for ENVS on campus. The center would provide a physical space for these varied groups to grow together and create more dialogue and innovative environmental solutions on campus. It would also cure the sense of disconnection that is felt by many students involved in sustainability across campus. The need for a physical space for ENVS to establish a sense of community and foster growth is obvious.

The Office of Sustainability is another group that could benefit from an ENVS center. Currently, the Office is housed in the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility with a total of 3 offices and a conference room<sup>6</sup>. The Office is a part of the greater Swarthmore

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<sup>6</sup> Swarthmore College Office of Sustainability website at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/sustainability>

Ecosphere governance structure, which is comprised of several working groups and committees that all coordinate and report to the President's Staff. An ENVS Center would provide the Office of Sustainability and these separate working groups a meeting place, an office space, and most importantly more agency as groups. Currently there is no consistent meeting place for all of the groups involved in the Swarthmore Ecosphere. The aforementioned library could be a place where students and faculty from these groups could store projects, collect resources, and thoroughly document the progress of Sustainability at Swarthmore. Providing this space for the Office of Sustainability would allow them the space and resources to expand their student engagement, as their current structure only allows for two to three interns.

The President's Sustainability Research Fellowship, as mentioned before, is a program open to all students which "matches small teams of advanced students with staff and faculty mentors to research, develop, and implement projects in a year-long course and associated internship"<sup>2</sup>. Responsibilities of the PSRF students include enrolling in a 1-credit course each semester, participate in weekly seminar with written assignments including a case study, a benchmarking study, a mid-project report, and a final report, meeting every two weeks throughout the year with a faculty mentor in a specific discipline, working on their project for 6-8 hours per week through the academic year, attending a launch meeting in the fall semester, presenting initial work mid-year to the extended Fellowship community; present final projects at the end of the year at a public meeting. The PSRF program is one that requires high levels of motivation and research skills that could be better cultivated in an ENVS Center. The program had its pilot year in the 2016-2017 academic year, and could benefit from an ENVS library where all previous projects and reports are held for future PSRFs to continue research projects for a more cohesive program. We have seen this issue hinder our academic growth personally in

the ENVS 91 course, as we did not have easy access to past projects to aid our research and ensure we were not repeating any previously suggested projects. A clearly documented library of PSRF projects would be an immense resource for PSRFs themselves, as well as any other interested students.

The Crum Woods Stewardship Committee (CWSC) is an ad-hoc committee of the Ecosphere governance structure formed in 2000 consisting of administrators, faculty, and students with that creates plans to evaluate and preserve the biodiversity of the Crum Woods, engages the greater Swarthmore Community in education, and hires professional in the field to attain these goals <sup>7</sup>. The committee is currently composed of students, faculty, staff from the College and the Scott Arboretum, and administration. Clearly, there is a wide distribution of disciplines, life-stages, and experiences involved in this committee. The CWSC meets monthly to discuss items put on the agenda ahead of time that may be items of budget, proposals from individuals outside the committee, and guests brought by members. It would be highly beneficial for the CWSC to have a space where they could consistently meet every month, as of now they meet in the lower level of the science center. This further emphasizes our idea that initiatives relating to the ENVS Program are spread across campus without a single space to connect these groups. With a physical space for gathering, the Ecosphere student groups, Ecosphere governance structure groups, and the ENVS Program could continue to work towards individualized goals but use the ENVS Center as a space for collaboration and parallel growth.

As outlined above, a ENVSC would benefit a wide breadth of Swarthmore's campus community in multiple ways beyond serving as a hub for ENVS academic functions. Given the

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<sup>7</sup> Crum Woods Stewardship Committee website at <https://www.swarthmore.edu/crum-woods-stewardship-committee/committee-members>

evidence of its benefits to several campus groups, and the rapidly-increasing needs of the ENVIS Program, we believe it is essential to consider this project of high priority.

## **V. Benchmarking Study**

To meet the needs of Swarthmore's growing ENVIS Program, the ENVSC will be a space that accommodates the diverse needs of various campus stakeholders. We envision the ENVSC to contain a lounge or classroom space adjacent to or close by faculty offices. It may also house a seminar room for classes and would serve as the consistent meeting location for the ENVIS Capstone students. Ideally, the center would serve as a space for enrichment of the Swarthmore student's environmental studies experience and act as a location for productive conversation on the necessity of approaching environmental studies with a critical interdisciplinary lens. The center would serve the needs of both students and faculty, providing a space specifically devoted to collaborative efforts on academic and extracurricular work that reaffirms the College's mission to produce students with a social and ethical concern.

With staff, space, and funds specifically dedicated to environmental and sustainability studies, other higher education institutions offer useful examples for Swarthmore to use as points of comparison. Looking to liberal arts peer institutions as an example, we will make recommendations that are feasible since they have been implemented elsewhere, and simultaneously tailored to meet Swarthmore's unique situation and needs. We have conducted a benchmarking study with 20 other peer, liberal arts institutions to offer some ideas of what other schools are doing that can be a role model for Swarthmore, particularly when thinking of the creation of a designated space for ENVIS on campus. The results of our complete benchmarking study can be found in Appendix A.

A summary of the benchmarking data is as follows:

<b>Number of comparison institutions</b>	<b>Average number of full or joint tenure track ENVS faculty</b>	<b>Number of schools at which a major or equivalent is offered</b>	<b>Number of schools at which a ENVS minor is offered</b>	<b>Number of schools at which an interdisciplinary ENVS intro course(s) is offered</b>	<b>Number of schools at which an interdisciplinary ENVS methods course(s) is offered</b>	<b>Number of schools with a physical home for ENVS</b>	<b>Number of schools at which an annual lecture series or conference is held</b>
<b>20 schools</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>20/20</b>	<b>13/20</b>	<b>17/20</b>	<b>17/20</b>	<b>12/20</b>	<b>12/20</b>

Compared to peer institutions, Swarthmore—with two tenure track, joint ENVS faculty—has fewer faculty members designated to Environmental Studies Program when compared to our peers. The offerings of Swarthmore’s ENVS Program is arguably on par with our peer institutions since the College now offers a major, a minor, an interdisciplinary ENVS introductory course, and interdisciplinary methods course. More than half of our peer institutions (12/20) have designated physical spaces for their ENVS Program and departments. From our research, these spaces are tailored to fit the needs of the school at which they are located. For example, at Oberlin, the Adam Joseph Lewis Annex for Environmental Studies is a renovated home turned usable space that contains offices and lab spaces. At Colorado College, ENVS specific offices and classrooms share the Tutt Science building, alongside the math, psychology, and neuroscience departments. This study showed that Swarthmore’s ENVS Program growth is paralleled at peer institutions, but Swarthmore does not reflect the same initiative in establishing community space for its environmental studies and sustainability community Utilizing this data in combination with the needs of the Swarthmore ENVS community, we were able to comprise a set of tangible goals Swarthmore as an institution can review for implementation in the near future.



## VI. Recommendations

The ENVSC will not only satisfy a myriad of academic and organizational needs of both environmental studies students and faculty alike, but it will also provide a centralized physical home for the Environmental Studies Program. In the figure below, we have outlined the benefits that the ENVSC would yield in each of these three areas:

<b>Physical Space</b>	<b>Student Resources</b>	<b>Faculty Resources</b>
Lounge area	Central location for ENVS community	Mini-seminars with other ENVS professors & professionals
Faculty offices	Student group meeting & work space	Workshops/lecture series
Seminar room	Senior Capstone & thesis repository	Guest lectures
Library	Alumni networking	Curriculum planning

The following sections elaborate on these benefits, with each constituting a piece of our overall, general vision for the center. It is important to note here that this list is by no means an exhaustive one: we merely wish to illustrate, through concrete examples, the different types of uses for the center and what utility students, staff and faculty can derive from it.

### *Physical Space*

The first major contribution that the ENVSC would bring to our campus community is a consolidated hub for everything environmental studies. We envision that the center would encompass an entire floor or part of a floor of an academic building on campus, similar to how other academic department spaces are laid out. During our presentation break out sessions, various students and faculty suggested different possible locations for the ENVSC, including Martin and Shane Lounge. Given that there is intense competition at the moment for the use of

these spaces, and that the complex infrastructure and funding constraints associated with each area are beyond the scope of this initial proposal, we will focus our discussion on the advantages that a physical space would provide for the Environmental Studies Program. More specifically, we demonstrate below how **faculty offices, a seminar room, library and a lounge area** can be employed by ENVSC students and faculty. In the following sections, we draw on the examples of the Language Resource Center, Educational Materials Center, the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility and the Writing Center, as well as some academic departments, as models for how the ENVSC could operate to meet and service the needs of the ENVSC Program.

### *Student Resources*

The ENVSC would not only help to foster the growth of the ENVSC community at Swarthmore by providing a common space, but it would also serve multiple other pragmatic purposes for students: namely, a **student meeting/workspace, a repository of scholarship and project work, and a platform for alumni networking (which is discussed in the Faculty Resources below)**. For example, members of the PSRF program have access to workspaces in the Lang Center for Civic and Social Responsibility to engage in coursework and on campus sustainability initiatives. In a similar way, the ENVSC could be employed by ENVSC students and environmental groups, such as the newly formed carbon pricing group, to actively make interdisciplinary connections and connections between the classroom and the broader community.

Second, the ENVSC could promote the preservation of institutional memory and student accomplishment by functioning as a showcase of ENVSC scholarship. The Writing Center proudly displays and archives the final projects of recently minted Writing Associates; along the same vein, the ENVSC could showcase and archive scholarship within the Environmental Studies

Program, including but not limited to, senior capstone projects and theses. Also, just as the Language Resource Center includes a library consisting of class materials for modern language classes, the ENVS could include a library that consists of not only the scholarship archive, but also of exclusively environmental studies materials (both digital and printed literature).

### *Faculty Resources*

This Center would be especially beneficial for faculty. Not only would closer faculty offices make it easier for professors to share office materials (copiers, printers, etc.) and administrative staff, but the arrangement would also enhance **curriculum development and planning**: the economies of scale associated with clustered offices flattens the cost of professors meeting and communicating face-to-face, thus creating greater opportunities for program growth and dynamism. The seminar room and lounge gathering space could also be put to use for another important priority of professors: **workshops, guest lectures and conducting classes/presentations**. Events like another Sustainability Charrette or lunch bag seminars that host experts in the field and their work could be conducted in the ENVSC. Such activities also present excellent opportunities for alumni networking between Swarthmore students and graduates via guest lectures from alumni doing impactful and interesting work.

## **VII. Closing Remarks**

We hope we have impressed upon you the need and the usefulness of establishing the ENVSC at Swarthmore. While the proposal, at this stage, is admittedly more of a thorough description of our ambitious vision for a transformational revolution of the Environmental Studies Program, it is our wish that this is just the start of the conversation around making meaningful changes to the program. Many of these ideas grow out of our own experiences as

minors in the Swarthmore ENVS Program where we have felt a lack of community and cohesion among the ENVS community. This is also not a novel concept, as we have shown there has been previous interest in an ENVSc by Swarthmore alumni, and we have seen practical implementation of these ideas at peer institutions. Many more questions surrounding funding, space availability and student engagement/interest in the center need to be addressed in order to make this vision a reality. By constructively considering the ideas we have laid out here, we hope to continue the conversation on campus about the necessity of the continued development and allocation of resources to the growing ENVS Program.

## Appendix

### Appendix A: Benchmarking Study with 20 Liberal Arts Peer Institutions

The following table compares Swarthmore’s Environmental Studies Program to 20 peer higher education institutions. “Number of full or joint tenure-track ENVS professors” sums the total number of tenure-track professors titled as Environmental Studies faculty members. This group includes professors housed solely in ENVS (“full”) as well as those with official titles in both ENVS and another field (“joint”). *Physical home* refers to a designated building or section of a building for ENVS offices, classrooms, and devoted space. To gather this information, we called and emailed each of these Colleges to confirm the accuracy of this data.

School	Number of full or joint tenure track faculty	Major or equivalent offered?	ENVS minor offered?	Offers interdisciplinary ENVS intro course(s)?	Offers interdisciplinary ENVS methods course(s)?	Physical Home?	Annual lecture series or conference?
<a href="#">Amherst College</a>	1	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
<a href="#">Bates College</a>	3	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Bowdoin College</a>	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No
<a href="#">Carleton College</a>	3	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Colby College</a>	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<a href="#">Colgate University</a>	12	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Colorado College</a>	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Hamilton College</a>	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<a href="#">Hobart and William Smith College</a>	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<a href="#">Macalester College</a>	4	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Middlebury College</a>	4	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Mount Holyoke</a>	12	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<a href="#">Oberlin</a>	6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<a href="#">Reed College</a>	2	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<a href="#">Skidmore College</a>	4	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<a href="#">Smith College</a>	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<a href="#">Swarthmore College</a>	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
<a href="#">Vassar College</a>	0	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
<a href="#">Wellesley College</a>	3	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
<a href="#">Whitman College</a>	12	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
<b>20 schools</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>20/20</b>	<b>13/20</b>	<b>17/20</b>	<b>17/20</b>	<b>12/20</b>	<b>12/20</b>