Planetary Health Report Card (Medicine) 2026:

Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University

2025-2026 Contributing Team:

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Land acknowledgment: We respectfully recognize that the Medical College of Georgia, located in Augusta, Georgia, is located on land that is ancestrally owned by the Muscogee and Cherokee peoples.

Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	D

Curriculum — D

- The Medical College of Georgia (MCG) at Augusta University (AU) currently does not offer any specific elective courses with the primary focus of environment, safety and health (ESH) or planetary health. However, the university has a required 4-credit course for all medical students called Healthcare Matters, which within the last year included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." The learning objectives of this lecture were to: 1. Raise awareness of climate change in healthcare, 2. Establish the responsibility of medical students in sustainability, 3. Promote sustainable healthcare practices, and 4. Inspire engagement in sustainable healthcare initiatives. This lecture covered many key points pertaining to planetary health and sustainability in healthcare.
- **Recommendations:** To provide students with a more in-depth knowledge of planetary health and sustainability in healthcare, MCG at AU could first take the following steps to improve sustainability and planetary health's inclusion in the curriculum:
    1. Most planetary health curriculum topics may be addressed through minor additions to existing core curriculum lectures or Case-Based Learning (CBL) small-group discussion, recommendations shared with faculty. These recommendations are most concentrated in the Foundations of Medicine, Cardiopulmonary Hematology, and Brain and Behavior modules in the preclerkship training and address the impacts of climate change and extreme weather on healthcare, cardiac, respiratory, and mental health.
    2. Encourage conversation during CBL through tailored questions incorporated into the weekly cases. This may build on a prior student initiative that outlined environmental health topics in the CBL curriculum.
    3. Design an environmental history-taking Patient Centered Learning (PCL) patient encounter and/or simulation.
    4. Dedicate a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as themes throughout the course.

Interdisciplinary Research — F+

- AU has multiple separate research efforts related to planetary health across university faculty, medical school faculty, and medical school students; however, it is difficult to find information and resources to get involved.
- **Recommendations**: MCG would significantly benefit from centralized resources to contribute to planetary science research. In the short term, creating a website for current and past projects, faculty directory, and student initiatives that are committed to planetary health research would increase awareness of current work. To improve research initiatives around the topic of sustainability and planetary health, MCG could also encourage opportunities for researchers to attend planetary health symposiums and environment-related conferences. Such opportunities can help students and faculty gain insight on current research and inspire projects at our institution. On a longer time horizon, establishing a faculty member or committee that serves to increase access, training, and funding to planetary science research would be highly beneficial. Joining a national or international planetary health organization (e.g, Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education), which other GA medical schools participate in, may be an effective step to start conversations with medical school leadership to invest resources in these initiatives.

Community Outreach and Advocacy — D-

- The MCG has limited structured community outreach promoting planetary health, with much of the engagement occurring through student-led initiatives or isolated departmental efforts rather than a

centralized institutional strategy. While there has been collaboration through the Georgia Cancer Center with organizations such as Black Health (BLKHLTH) and Girl + Environment for an environmental justice–focused Earth Day event, MCG does not maintain a formal, ongoing institutional partnership explicitly dedicated to planetary health. Additional initiatives such as Georgia Food 4 Health in partnership with Augusta Locally Grown, as well as community programs encouraging active transportation and preventive health, promote environmentally supportive behaviors but are not formally framed within a cohesive planetary health agenda. MCG does not offer recurring community-facing courses specifically centered on planetary health or climate change and health. Furthermore, there are no regular student communications dedicated to planetary health topics, nor are there identifiable Continuing Medical Education (CME) or professional development offerings focused on planetary health or sustainable healthcare for postgraduate providers. While Wellstar MCG Health provides some patient education materials addressing environmental triggers such as allergens and heat exposure, there are no accessible materials explicitly discussing the health impacts of climate change.

- **Recommendations**: In order to strengthen community collaboration and leadership in planetary health, MCG should prioritize establishing formal partnerships with local and national organizations dedicated to environmental health and sustainability. Building on existing collaborations through programs such as the Georgia Cancer Center and Georgia Food 4 Health may provide a practical starting point. Additionally, MCG should consider developing recurring community-facing educational events focused on climate change and health, as well as structured communication updates for students on sustainability initiatives. Expanding professional education opportunities for postgraduate providers through CME-accredited courses and creating patient-facing materials that explicitly address environmental exposures and climate-related health risks would further enhance institutional commitment to planetary health and sustainable healthcare.

Support for Student-Led Initiatives — B

- Augusta University and MCG supports student engagement in planetary health by providing faculty advising, indirect funding for student-led organizations, and exposing opportunities to volunteer. Organizations are eligible for funding from the Graduate Student Government Association. Although there is no direct allocated fund for sustainability initiatives, students are able to seek funding from general sources through faculty mentorship and research. MCG also features co-curricular opportunities through the Food Recovery Network, urban farming initiatives, guest speaker events, and local environmental organizations. AU and MCG also include numerous outdoor programs such as Wilderness Medicine Interest Group, Augusta Outdoors, and the Augusta Biking Club to further promote sustainability and environmental awareness at MCG.
- **Recommendations:** While MCG has many active student-led sustainability initiatives, there is no dedicated faculty member, allocated funding, or structured programs for students to engage in sustainability-related causes. We recommend that the medical school establish easier access to ongoing student or faculty-led climate health efforts by creating a centralized web page with information on current planetary health faculty mentors, research projects and sustainability initiatives. Additionally, we encourage the medical school to not only expand funding for student-led quality improvement (QI) projects but also integrate QI projects into the core curriculum. This will ensure all medical students better understand the intersection between climate change and healthcare while having the necessary resources to engage in meaningful sustainability initiatives.

Campus Sustainability — F+

- AU has demonstrated some meaningful progress in areas of campus sustainability, particularly due to a larger movement within the state of Georgia's university system. The university's main achievements include the use of Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards for new construction, university-run public transportation and shuttle system, a campus-wide and easily accessible recycling program, dining initiatives that employ local agricultural and food industries, as well as a reusable container program. However, sustainability initiatives at AU are fragmented, lack centralized leadership, and rarely provide transparent reporting. This overall hinders many initiatives from achieving university-wide

implementation, particularly between the academic university and its associated facilities such as the university's hospital.

- **Recommendations:** The most immediate action AU should take to advance campus sustainability is to establish a centralized Office of Sustainability with permanent and dedicated staff. The new department would need to integrate into and unify different university facilities, including Augusta's many colleges, campuses, and hospitals. Of second most importance, the new Office of Sustainability would need to develop metrics and regularly publish transparent reports covering institutional energy sourcing, endowment investments, and green-house-gas reduction plans. Additional initiatives we would encourage AU to implement include expanding renewable energy use across academic buildings and student housing, implementing composting and lab sustainability programs, and strengthening accessible and low-fossil fuel emitting transportation. We believe that these actions would greatly unify existing efforts, improve accountability, and mark AU as a regional leader in sustainable healthcare.

Statement of Purpose

Planetary health is human health.

The Planetary Health Alliance describes planetary health as "a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth's natural systems on human health and all life on Earth." This definition is intentionally broad, intended to encompass the multitude of ways that the environment can affect health, including water scarcity, changing food systems, urbanisation, biodiversity shifts, natural disasters, climate change, changing land use and land cover, global pollution, and changing biogeochemical flows. The health of humanity is dependent on our environment, and our environment is changing rapidly and in disastrous ways. Although the World Health Organization has called climate change "the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century," many health professional school's institutional priorities do not reflect the urgency of this danger to human health.

As future health professionals, we must be prepared to address the impacts of human-caused environmental changes on our patients' health. This preparation is in the hands of the institutions providing our health professional training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating health professional students about the health impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic environmental changes, generating research to better understand health impacts and solutions, supporting related student initiatives, embracing sustainable practices as much as possible, and engaging with surrounding communities that are most affected by environmental threats. Because climate change and environmental threats disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (for example, communities of colour, older adults sensitive to health threats, and individuals in low-resource settings), these issues are inherently ones of equity and justice.

With the purpose of increasing planetary health awareness and accountability among health professional schools, we have created a Planetary Health Report Card that students internationally can use to grade and compare their institutions on an annual basis. This student-driven initiative aims to compare health professional schools nationally and internationally on the basis of discrete metrics in five main category areas: 1) planetary health curriculum, 2) interdisciplinary research in health and environment, 3) university support for student planetary health initiatives, and 4) community outreach centred on environmental health impacts 5) school campus sustainability.

Definitions & Other Considerations

Definitions:

- **Planetary Health:** is described by the Planetary Health Alliance as "the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends." For example, topics such as climate change, declining biodiversity, shortages of arable land and freshwater, and pollution would all fall under the realm of planetary health. Both planetary health and traditional 'environmental health' examine the relationship between human health and the external environment, including extreme temperatures, chemicals, vector-borne diseases, etc. Planetary health explicitly concerns itself with the potential health harms associated with human-caused perturbations of natural systems. Therefore, the human health focus of planetary health makes the field well-adapted for the context of health professional education. Throughout this report card, we use the term planetary health to refer to this broad swath of topics, but resources do not need to explicitly include the term "planetary health" to satisfy the metric.

- **Sustainable Healthcare:** As defined by the Academy of Royal Colleges, sustainable healthcare involves ensuring the ability to provide good quality care for future generations by balancing the economic, environmental, and social constraints and demands within health care settings. A sustainable healthcare system maintains population health, reduces disease burden and minimises use of healthcare services.

- **Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH):** is defined as the process of equipping current and future health professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and capacity to provide environmentally sustainable services through health professional education, thus working to decrease the enormous environmental impact of the healthcare industry. Planetary Health Education is an integral part of this education rather than an end in itself. This is because knowledge on Planetary Health is required to be able to fully understand the necessity of sustainable healthcare as well as being part of the broader knowledge needed to fully protect and promote health. In summary, ESH is covered by the three Priority Learning Outcomes of the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare below, and Planetary Health Education is embraced in the first learning objective and is a fundamental requirement to achieve learning outcomes 2 and 3:

    1. Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels.
    2. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
    3. Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment.

- **Medical School/Department vs. Institution:** When "Medical school" is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/department of Medicine and does not include offerings from other parts of the university (e.g. undergraduate departments (USA), other related departments (e.g. Public Health, Population Health departments). In contrast, when "institution" is specified in the report card, we are referring to the university more broadly including all of its campuses. Any resource reasonably accessible by medical students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is

specifically targeted for medical students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicits patients' exposures and environmental risk factors. Historically, this has included consideration of exposures like pesticides, asbestos, and lead, though in the modern era shaped by climate change, it can be expanded to include things like wildfire smoke exposure, air pollution and mould after flooding. Key components include place of residence over the lifecourse, occupational history, food and water sources (e.g. meat from industrial feeding operations, regular fishing in contaminated water, access to clean drinking water), and exposure to air pollution. Please be as specific as possible when providing evidence for this metric.

- **Elective:** The word "elective" refers to an optional course or lecture series that a student can opt to take part in but is not a requirement in the core curriculum. Generally, these elective courses take place in the preclinical curriculum but vary by school.

- **Core Curriculum:** This refers to the taught material that is delivered to the entire cohort of students in one year.

- **Clerkship / Outreach:** This is a term used in the USA to refer to placements that medical students go on e.g. Pediatrics, General medicine, Psychiatry. In the UK these are referred to as rotations, outreach or placements. This is a relatively short (approximately 4-8 weeks) period of study and patient-centred clinical experience that takes place as part of the undergraduate programme.

- **Clinical rotation:** This is a term used to refer to placements that students go on (e.g., ophthalmology, surgery, cardiology).

- **Physiotherapy vs Physical Therapy:** For the purposes of this report card these terms are considered interchangeable. However, physiotherapy will be used primarily.

- **Community organisations:** For most institutions, there are existing groups that are not directly affiliated with the university and exist as a product of what the community the institution exists in cares about or needs. These specific community organisations relevant to this report include those that are focused around some aspect of climate and health preservation. These community organisations can include but are not limited to local mutual aid initiatives, underserved-resource distribution groups, clean-up and nature conservation groups, community gardeners, and other environmental-related organisations. If your institution does not have access to local volunteerships with community groups, please report any community organisations your institution or school has collaborated with.

- **Climate justice:** The idea that certain population groups and geographical locations which are disproportionately more impacted by climate change are already economically and socially disadvantaged. This double vulnerability sits alongside pre-existing social justice concerns and should therefore shift policy and practice to mitigate the inequitable effects of the climate crisis.

- **Extractivism:** The removal of natural resources typically in large quantities. Within anthropology this term is often used in the context of colonialism to refer to the

historic seizing of natural resources, a practice which has developed business models tied to ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.

- **Global South:** Nations that often have less economic and industrial development and are typically in the southern hemisphere. These nations have been found to be disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.

- **Low socioeconomic status (SES):** An individual or geographical area that across a variety of socioeconomic factors (e.g., income, education, race/ethnicity) is considered vulnerable. This vulnerability has been correlated to more adverse health outcomes often as a consequence of encountering more barriers in accessing and receiving healthcare.

- **Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC):** Countries that have lower degrees of economic affluence.

- **Anthropogenic:** Created through human activity

- **Marginalized communities:** Groups excluded from mainstream economic, educational, social, and/or cultural experiences due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status (Sevelius et al., 2020).

Scoring Matrix

- Elective coursework (1 point): This score applies to material that is actively selected by the students such as a module choice, or additional lecture series. By implication, only a given proportion of the cohort will receive this taught material.
- Brief coverage in the core curriculum (2 points): This score applies where a topic is covered only briefly in a core curriculum session. This implies that the entire cohort receives the same material. At minimum brief inclusion would qualify as inclusion in a single lecture slide in a single year.
- In depth coverage in the core curriculum (3 points): This score applies where a topic is taught in significant detail or where a topic is repeatedly brought up in different years. This might look like several dedicated lecture slides, or inclusion of the same topic in different lectures and teaching formats.

Other considerations:

- If there are more than one “tracks” at your institution with two different curricula (for example, Harvard Medical School has a Pathways and HST curriculum track), you can choose to fill out a report card for each track, or fill out just one report card and average the scores received by each track in cases where the scores are different (see the 2021 Harvard or Oxford report cards as examples). Where possible please indicate the proportion of students that are on each track.

Updated in 2025, a complete literature review by metric is available for the 2024/25 Medicine Report Card Template. This largely translates across disciplines although we are hoping to expand this process across all of our covered disciplines. A link to the 2025 literature review by metric is available here.

Planetary Health Curriculum

Section Overview: ***This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the medical school curriculum.*** *Today's health professional students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that students are trained to understand the health effects of these changes, as well as planetary health issues and principles more broadly. Topics like the changing geography of vector-borne diseases, the health consequences of air pollution, environmental health inequities, and disaster response principles must be part of every medical school's core curriculum.*

Curriculum: General

1.1. Did your medical school offer elective courses (student selected modules) to engage students in Education for Sustainable Healthcare or Planetary Health in the last year?	
Yes, the medical school has offered **more than one** elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (3 points)	
Yes, the medical school has offered **one** elective whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health in the past year. (2 points)	
The medical school does **not** have any electives whose primary focus is ESH/planetary health, but there are one or more electives that include a **lecture** on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the medical school has **not** offered any electives on planetary health or electives that include ESH/planetary health topics in the past year. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: MCG at AU does not currently offer specific elective courses primarily focused on ESH/planetary health. However, all medical students are required to take a 4-credit course called Healthcare Matters, which recently included a one-hour lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare" with learning objectives to: 1. Raise awareness of climate change in healthcare, 2. Establish the responsibility of medical students in sustainability, 3. Promote sustainable healthcare practices, and 4. Inspire engagement in sustainable healthcare initiatives. Global Health and Public Health pre-clerkship electives may also address environmental health through guest speakers and student-directed projects; however, environmental health is not integrated into course syllabi/objectives, and related guest speakers are not guaranteed with each offering. Finally, the Radiology clerkship elective requires completion of Radiology-TEACHES (Technology-Enhanced Appropriateness Criteria Home for Education Simulation) modules via the American College of Radiology, which include content on healthcare systems and radiology's climate impacts.	

Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change

1.2. Does your medical school curriculum address the relationship between extreme heat, health risks, and climate change?
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured a few slides discussing the correlation between a rise in heat-related illness and cardiovascular failure and rising temperatures and climate change. The relationship between extreme temperatures and health impacts was briefly mentioned, primarily through the use of infographics. The lecture is scheduled to recur this calendar year.	

1.3. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impacts of extreme weather events on individual health and/or on healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled:"Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic which discussed the impact of severe weather on rising injuries, fatalities, and mental health impacts. The Global Health elective occasionally covers extreme weather and natural disasters in their course through guest speakers. However, this topic is not integrated into the elective's syllabus or learning objectives and thus is not taught every time the elective is offered.	

1.4. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the impact of climate change on the changing patterns of infectious diseases?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic on how rising temperatures lead to more extreme weather patterns and ultimately, changes in vector ecology with implications on infectious	

diseases, such as malaria, dengue, encephalitis, hantavirus, Rift Valley fever, Lyme disease, chikungunya, and West Nile Virus.

The Global Health elective occasionally covers the relationship between climate change and infectious diseases. Lectures and activities on infectious disease are incorporated throughout this course, but as discussions are student-led and not integrated into the course's syllabus/objectives, mention of climate change is dependent on interests and may vary each time the course is offered.

1.5. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the respiratory health effects of climate change and air pollution?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic which addressed the correlation between air pollution, asthma, and cardiovascular disease. This topic is also briefly addressed in a M1 core curriculum lecture titled "Asthma Diagnosis and Treatment." This lecture lists allergens, pollutants, and weather changes among a list of "genetic and environmental factors" that affect asthma. MCG also required reading and discussion of an article titled "Long-term Traffic-related Air Pollutant Exposure and Amyotrophic Lateral Sclerosis Diagnosis in Denmark" as part of its core curriculum CBL course. This facilitated discussion of the connection between air pollution and disease.	

1.6. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the cardiovascular health effects of climate change, including increased heat?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic which briefly addresses the association between extreme heat and heat-related illnesses, cardiovascular failure, and death.	

1.7. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the mental health and neuropsychological

effects of environmental degradation and climate change?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic which addressed the correlation between environmental degradation and forced migration, civil conflict, and mental health impacts. Additionally, the core curriculum also included a lecture titled "Trauma, Dissociative, and Amnestic Disorders" that notes natural disasters are a risk for trauma.	

1.8. Does your medical school curriculum address the relationships between health, individual patient food and water security, ecosystem health, and climate change?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture featured an infographic which addressed the correlation between water and food supply impacts and malnutrition and diarrheal disease. This lecture additionally featured an infographic that illustrates the pathways between climate change drivers on waterborne diseases. This includes worsening water security, e.g. "contamination and overflow from combined sewers" and "lack of clean water for hygiene."	

1.9. Does your medical school curriculum address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, homeless populations, and older adults?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: This topic was not addressed in core or elective curriculum.

1.10. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the unequal regional health impacts of climate change globally?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: The Global Health elective occasionally addresses the unequal regional health impacts of climate change. Lectures and activities on infectious disease are incorporated throughout this course, but as discussions are student-led and not integrated into the course's syllabus/objectives, mention of climate change is dependent on interests and may vary each time the course is offered.	

Curriculum: Environmental Health & the Effects of Anthropogenic Toxins on Human Health

1.11. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the reproductive health effects of industry-related environmental toxins (e.g. air pollution, pesticides, microplastics)?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Prenatal Timeline and Congenital Anomalies." This lecture lists teratogens, such as prescription drugs, alcohol, smoking, infections, dietary deficiency, and radiation, but does not specifically acknowledge environmental toxicants.	

1.12. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university's surrounding community?
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: This topic was not addressed in the core or elective curriculum.	

1.13. To what extent does your <u>medical school</u> emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health solutions?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: This topic was not addressed in the core or elective curriculum.	

1.14. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the outsized impact of anthropogenic environmental toxins on marginalised populations such as those with low SES, women, communities of colour, children, homeless populations, Indigenous populations, and older adults?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: MCG addresses inadequate healthcare access and disproportionate impact of various disease processes on marginalized populations throughout the core curriculum. However, this is not discussed in reference to environmental toxins specifically.	

Curriculum: Sustainability

1.15. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 point)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: This topic was not covered in the core or elective curriculum.	

1.16. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: MCG's M1 core curriculum included a lecture titled "Sustainability in Healthcare." This lecture details briefly the global carbon footprint of healthcare and harm to the environment associated with anesthetics. In addition, the "General Anesthesia" lecture briefly lists that inhalational anesthetics have harmful environmental effects.	

1.17. Does your <u>medical school</u> curriculum cover these components of sustainable clinical practice in the <u>core</u> curriculum? (points for each)	**Score**
The health **and** environmental **co-benefits** of **avoiding** over-medicalisation, over-investigation and/or over-treatment (2 points)	0
The environmental impact of **pharmaceuticals** and over-prescribing as a cause of climate health harm. Alternatively teaching on **deprescribing** where possible and its environmental and health co-benefits would fulfil this metric. (2 points) .	0
The health **and** environmental **co-benefits** of **non-pharmaceutical management** of conditions where appropriate such as exercise or yoga classes for type 2 diabetes; social group activities such as gardening for mental health conditions; active transport such as bicycle schemes. This is commonly known as social prescribing in the UK. (1 point)	1
Environmental impact of **surgical** healthcare on planetary health and the climate crisis, and how can it be mitigated. (1 point)	1
The impact of **anaesthetic** gases on the healthcare carbon footprint and ways to reduce anaesthesia's environmental impacts, such as total intravenous anaesthesia or choosing less environmentally harmful anaesthetic gas options with reduced greenhouse gas emissions. (1 point)	1
The impact of **inhalers** on the healthcare carbon footprint and the environmental benefit of dry powdered inhalers over metered dose inhalers. (1 point)	0

Waste production within healthcare **clinics** and strategies for reducing waste in clinical activities (e.g. single use items in the inpatient or outpatient setting) (1 point)	1

Score explanation: The curriculum addressed four components of sustainable clinical practice, earning 4 points total:

- *Impact of anesthetic gases (1 point): The M1 "Sustainability in Healthcare" lecture included multiple slides examining anesthetic gas contributions to healthcare's carbon footprint and presented mitigation strategies. The M2 "General Anesthesia" lecture reinforced this content with specific discussion of nitrous oxide's environmental impact.*
- *Environmental impact of surgical healthcare (1 point): The M1 lecture included slides and discussion addressing operating room contributions to healthcare's environmental footprint and global health implications.*
- *Waste production in healthcare (1 point): The M1 lecture presented slides quantifying waste generation within healthcare systems and an infographic illustrating proposed stages for integrating sustainability into healthcare delivery.*
- *Health and environmental co-benefits of non-pharmaceutical management of conditions (1 point): The M1 "Exercise as Medicine" lecture was focused on providing complementary approaches to managing cardiovascular disease, stroke, osteoarthritis, cancer, and other diseases. This theme was repeated throughout the course with multiple slides in other lectures in the curriculum for anxiety, type 2 diabetes, and depression.*

Curriculum: Clinical Applications

1.18. In training for patient encounters, does your medical school's curriculum introduce strategies to have conversations with patients about the health effects of climate change?	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
Yes, there are strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
No, there are **not** strategies introduced for having conversations with patients about climate change. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: The curriculum does not include formal instruction on communication strategies for discussing climate change and its health effects with patients. Climate health communication training would prepare students to address patient concerns about environmental health impacts and provide evidence-based guidance on climate-related health risks.

1.19. In training for patient encounters, does your medical school's curriculum introduce strategies for taking an environmental history or exposure history?
Yes, the **core** curriculum includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (2 points)
Only **elective** coursework includes strategies for taking an environmental history. (1 point)

No, the curriculum does **not** include strategies for taking an environmental history. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: The core curriculum includes instruction on obtaining occupational and travel histories during encounters, but teaching on environmental and exposure history-taking is not provided. Environmental history skills would enhance students' ability to identify environmentally mediated disease.	

Curriculum: Administrative Support for Planetary Health

1.20. Is your <u>medical school</u> currently in the process of implementing or improving Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH)/planetary health education?	
Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **major** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (4 points)	
Yes, the medical school is currently in the process of making **minor** improvements to ESH/planetary health education. (2 points)	
No, there are **no** improvements to planetary health education in progress. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: The Curriculum Office at MCG is receptive to implementing ESH in our preclerkship curriculum. These discussed improvements are in early stages and have not yet been implemented at the time of this PHRC; however, the medical school is in the process of making minor additions for future classes.	

1.21. How well are the aforementioned planetary health/Education for Sustainable Healthcare topics integrated longitudinally into the <u>core</u> curriculum?	
Planetary health/ESH topics are **well integrated** into the core medical school curriculum. (6 points)	
Some planetary health/ESH topics are appropriately integrated into the core medical student curriculum. (4 points)	
Planetary health/ESH is not integrated and is primarily addressed in **(a) standalone lecture(s).** (2 points)	
There is **minimal/no** education for sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: Planetary health and ESH content is delivered through one standalone lecture ("Sustainability in Healthcare") within the M1 Healthcare Matters module. Certain electives such as Global Health and Public Health occasionally incorporate related content, coverage is inconsistent. There are no other ESH or Planetary Health discussions outside of this lecture.	

1.22. Does your medical school employ a member of faculty to specifically oversee and take responsibility for the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the course?	
Yes, the **medical school** has a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (1 point)	
No, the **medical school** does **not** have a specific faculty/staff member responsible for overseeing curricular integration of planetary health and sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: MCG has not appointed a dedicated faculty member or staff position with specific responsibility for overseeing and coordinating planetary health and sustainable healthcare integration across the curriculum.	

1.23. Does your health professional curriculum include teaching on civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health?	
This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)	
This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: This topic was not addressed in the core or elective curriculum.	

Section Total (26 out of 75)	**34.67%**

Interdisciplinary Research

***Section Overview:* This section evaluates the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary planetary health research at the broader institution.** *Interactions between health and the environment are complex and multifactorial. While climate change has been extensively studied from an environmental science perspective, planetary health is an emerging field. As leading health institutions with talented researchers and research resources, institutions should fund research studying the health effects of climate change and anthropogenic environmental toxins. This obligation is particularly strong because the public and policymakers are more attentive to climate change when its implications for human health are emphasised.*

2.1. Are there researchers engaged in planetary health research and healthcare sustainability research at your institution?	
Yes, there are faculty members at the **institution** who have a **primary** research focus in planetary health **or** sustainable healthcare/vetcare. (3 points)	
Yes, there are individual faculty members at the **institution** who are conducting research **related** to planetary health or healthcare sustainability, OR are part of a national/international sustainability working group, but it is not their primary research focus. (2 points)	
There are sustainability researchers at the **institution**, but not specifically associated with healthcare/vetcare. (1 point)	
No, there are **no** planetary health and/or sustainability researchers at the **institution** at this time. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation:

- *AU has a few individual faculty members that conduct research related to planetary health:*
  - *Dr. Michael Murray is an environmental scientist and assistant professor in the AU Department of Biological Sciences with three decades' experience in teaching, research, and policy work on a wide range of water-related and environmental health issues, in both the nongovernmental and academic sectors. He has researched and published on environmental cycling and/or exposures and effects of PCBs, mercury, and PFAS; nutrients and impacts in the Great Lakes; environmental indicators, and other topics. He has served on dozens of advisory and other committees, including an Augusta University sustainability committee in process of reforming. Current research interests include examining exposures and effects of PFAS in aquatic invertebrates and environmental cycling of and exposures to microplastics.*
  - *Dr. Rebecca Larson is an assistant professor in the Department of Community & Behavioral Health Sciences. Her project "Extreme Temperatures and Health Risks in the Urban South" received funding as a pilot project for Emory's Climate and Health Actionable Research and Translation Center.*
  - *Dr. Wesley L. Meares is a Professor of Public Administration and the director of the Master of Public Administration program at AU. In recent years, he has conducted research on the relationship between neighborhood design, pollution, emissions, and health.*
- *Note, this list is not comprehensive of all AU faculty involved in research on these topics.*

2.2. Is there a dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at your institution?	
There is **at least one** dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. (3 points)	
There is **not currently** a department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research, but there are **plans** to open one in the next 3 years. (2 points)	
There is an **Occupational and Environmental Health department**, but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research. (1 point)	
There is **no** dedicated department or institute. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: The Institute of Preventive and Public Health claims that environmental and occupational health are part of their core missions in their public health research goals. However, there is not a dedicated department dedicated to this issue. Additionally, AU has a Department of Environmental Health & Safety, but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research.	

2.3. Is there a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda at your institution?	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have **decision-making power** in the climate + environmental research agenda. (3 points)	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice **advise** the climate + environmental research agenda. (2 points)	
No, but there are **current efforts** to establish a process for community members to advise or make decisions on the research agenda. (1 point)	
There is **no** process, and **no** efforts to create such a process. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: Research driven by community engagement can be initiated by community members through the Community Partner program at AU, but there is no current direct process for disproportionately impacted communities to give input.	

2.4. Does your institution have a planetary health website that centralises ongoing and past research related to health and the environment?

There is an **easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive** website that **centralises** various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities. (3 points)
There is a website that **attempts to centralise** various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is hard-to-use, not updated, or not adequately comprehensive. (2 points)
The **institution** has an **Office of Sustainability website** that includes **some** resources related to health and the environment. (1 point)
There is **no** website. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: There are multiple websites that discuss various initiatives and resources related to health and the environment, but none that attempt to centralize research:

- *The Green Team - Sustainability in Anesthesiology*
- *Department of Environmental Health & Safety*
- *Student Holistic Wellness: Environmental Wellness*
- *Outdated "Green Team" initiative website*

2.5. Has your institution recently hosted a conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health?
Yes, the **institution** has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health in the past year. (4 points)
Yes, the **institution** has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past year. (3 points)
Yes, the **institution** has hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health / sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past three years. (2 points)
The **institution** has not hosted any conferences directly, but they have provided financial support for a local planetary health event. (1 point)
No, the **institution** has not hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health in the past three years. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: MCG has not hosted conferences or symposiums. Last year, AU Department of Social Sciences and the Department on Institutional Access, Success, & Belonging has held a panel on the impacts of climate change on health.

2.6. Is your institution a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation?

Yes, the institution is a member of a national or international planetary health **or** ESH/ESV organisation. (1 point)	
No, the institution is **not** a member of such an organisation. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: AU is not a part of any planetary health organizations.	

Section Total (3 out of 17)	**17.65%**

Back to Summary Page here

Community Outreach and Advocacy

Section Overview: ***This section evaluates a school's engagement in community outreach and advocacy efforts associated with planetary health.*** *Researching and teaching planetary health is necessary but not sufficient. It is critical that institutions also directly engage with communities most affected by environmental health harms. Although climate change is a problem largely created by those with power and resources, its impacts fall disproportionately on under-resourced populations and communities of colour. Institutions should partner with local communities affected by climate change and pollution to share information about environmental health threats, advocate together for change, and provide opportunities for students to be a part of this work.*

3.1. Does your institution partner with community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health?	
Yes, the **institution** meaningfully partners with **multiple** community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. (3 points)	
Yes, the **institution** meaningfully partners with **one** community organisation to promote planetary and environmental health. (2 points)	
The **institution** does not partner with community organisations, but participates in community focused events relating to planetary health. (1 point)	
No, there is **no** such meaningful community partnership. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation: MCG does not currently maintain a formal institutional partnership explicitly dedicated to planetary or environmental health promotion; however The Georgia Cancer Center at AU partners with BLKHLTH, an Atlanta-based non-profit, as part of their Cancer Equity - Georgia Environmental Justice program. Joined by Girl + Environment, they hosted an Earth Day event in 2025 for students to learn more about environmental disparities in Georgia and provided advocacy training for attendees.

Additionally, MCG students participate in recurring community-based initiatives that intersect with sustainability and environmental determinants of health. Notably, Georgia Food 4 Health partners with Augusta Locally Grown to provide produce prescriptions, plant-based nutrition education, and wellness programming to community members. In addition, the Augusta Bicycle Club promotes active transportation and cycling within the Augusta community, and Always Active Augusta encourages preventive health and physical activity in community settings. While these initiatives are primarily student-led and not formally framed under a centralized planetary health strategy, they promote sustainable food systems, local agriculture engagement, and environmentally supportive health behaviors.

Beyond MCG, AU has participated in several community-focused events related to planetary health, such as a Climate Change panel that included the Executive Director of Savannah Riverkeeper. Historically, AU has also maintained partnership with the City of Augusta and Phinizy Center for Aquatic Sciences; however, this has not been formally maintained while the Green Team has been on hold. There has been some continued involvement of AU faculty in coordinating events, such as Eath Day clean-up teams locally.

3.2. Does your institution offer community-facing courses or events regarding planetary health?	
The **institution** offers community-facing courses or events at least once every year. (3 points)	
The **institution** offers courses or events open to the community at least once per year, but they are not primarily created for a community audience. (2 points)	
The **institution** has promoted community-facing courses or events, but was not involved in planning those courses or events. (1 point)	
The **institution** has not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: While MCG participates in public health outreach initiatives that engage the surrounding community, it does not offer recurring community-facing courses or events specifically designed around planetary health or climate change and health. For example, the Rural Obese At Risk (ROAR) program involves MCG faculty and students attending community events such as school wellness nights and health fairs to provide preventive health education and screenings. Additionally, student organizations conduct community health outreach events and educational programming for local populations. While these initiatives are not explicitly centered on planetary or environmental health, they represent institutional participation in community-facing health education events.	

3.3. Does your institution have regular coverage of issues related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare in university update communications?	
Yes, all students **regularly** receive communication updates dedicated to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare. (2 points)	
Yes, planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare topics are regularly included in communication updates to **some courses**. (1 point)	
Students **do not** receive communications about planetary health or sustainable healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: MCG does not currently provide regular student communications dedicated to planetary health or sustainable healthcare. There is no recurring newsletter, official mailing list, or institutional update specifically focused on climate change and health, environmental health, or sustainability for MCG students. While certain departments engage in sustainability-related efforts, such as the Department of Anesthesiology's past initiatives addressing waste reduction and environmentally conscious anesthetic practices, these efforts are not consistently communicated to the broader student body through structured updates. Additionally, institutional news platforms such as Jagwire occasionally feature stories related to health research and community engagement, but they do not regularly include dedicated coverage of planetary health or sustainable healthcare topics directed at medical students.	

3.4. Does the institution or main affiliated hospital trust engage in professional education activities targeting individuals post-graduation with the aim of ensuring their knowledge and skills in planetary health and sustainable healthcare remain up to date during their professional career?	
Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers multiple in-person or online courses relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers, including at least one with a primary focus of planetary health. (2 points)	
Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers one course relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers. (1 point)	
There are **no** such accessible courses for post-graduate providers. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: There is no evidence of CME or Continuing Professional Development (CPD) courses specifically focused on planetary health, climate change and health, environmental health, or sustainable healthcare practices. While sustainability-related initiatives may exist within certain departments, such as waste reduction efforts in Anesthesiology , these do not appear to be structured as formal CME courses dedicated to planetary health for post-graduate providers.	

3.5. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about environmental health exposures?	
Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)	
Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)	
No affiliated medical centres have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: Some affiliated hospitals provide patient-facing educational materials that address environmental health exposures. Wellstar MCG Health, the primary affiliated teaching hospital of the Medical College of Georgia, offers publicly accessible patient education resources that discuss environmental triggers and exposures in the context of specific conditions. For example, the Wellstar asthma education page references allergens and environmental irritants as triggers for respiratory disease. Additionally, Wellstar provides guidance on heat-related illness and prevention , which relates to environmental exposure risks. While these materials are condition-specific and not organized within a centralized environmental health or toxin-exposure education hub, they demonstrate that at least one affiliated hospital provides accessible patient education materials that acknowledge links between environmental exposures and health outcomes.	

3.6. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about the health impacts of climate change?	
Yes, the **institution** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)	
Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)	
No affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: There is no evidence that MCG or its primary affiliated teaching hospital, Wellstar MCG Health, provides publicly accessible patient education materials specifically addressing the health impacts of climate change. While hospital webpages and specialty services offer condition-specific educational resources, such as information on asthma, heat-related illness, allergies, or respiratory disease, these materials do not explicitly connect health outcomes to climate change or provide guidance framed around climate-related health risks. A review of patient education resources available through Wellstar's public-facing website does not reveal brochures, blog posts, or educational pages dedicated to climate change and health, extreme weather preparedness related to climate trends, climate-related mental health impacts, or similar topics.	

Section Total (3 out of 14)	**21.43%**

Back to Summary Page here

Support for Student-Led Planetary Health Initiatives

Section Overview: ***This section evaluates institutional support for student-led planetary health initiatives, such as funding, fellowships, programming, and student groups.*** *Planetary health is a young field and, as young people facing a future deeply shaped by climate change, students are often some of the first at an institution to engage with it. Institutions should provide support for students to engage in sustainability quality improvement (QI) initiatives, discover mentors in their area of interest, and receive funding for planetary health projects.*

4.1. Does your institution offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?	
Yes, the **institution** *either* offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects *or* sustainability QI projects are part of the core curriculum. (2 points)	
The **institution** encourages sustainability QI projects (to fulfil clerkship or longitudinal requirements) and offers resources to help students succeed in these projects, **but** there is no student funding available and there is no requirement to participate. (1 point)	
No, the institution does not offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: Neither the MCG nor AU have established programs or dedicated resources for student-led sustainability initiatives or sustainability-focused QI work. The medical school curriculum also does not require involvement with sustainability or QI projects. However, the school encourages student-led QI projects generally and offers an award for QI projects at our biannual MCG Research Day. Should students take initiative to engage in sustainability-related projects, there is a pool of general funding available, and these projects can count towards general Scholarly Project requirements.	

4.2. Does your institution offer opportunities for students to do research related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare?	
The **institution** has a **specific** research program or fellowship for students interested in doing planetary health/sustainable healthcare/vetcare research. (2 points)	
There are research opportunities for students to perform research related to planetary health/sustainable healthcare, but these **require student initiative** to seek them out and carry them out in their spare time. (1 point)	
There are **no opportunities** for students to engage in planetary health/sustainable healthcare research. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: While the MCG offers general support for students interested in research through mentorship and funding, students looking to engage in planetary health/sustainable health	

research would have to take initiative to seek these opportunities out. There are multiple examples from recent years of successful planetary health research projects completed by students:

- *Supporting One Health for Pandemic Prevention: The Need for Ethical Innovation*
- *Empowering learners through student-led integration of environmental health into small group discussions*

4.3. Does the institution have a webpage where students can find specific information related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare activities and mentors within the institution? For example, projects achieved, current initiatives underway at the medical school and/or contact of information of potential mentors.	
The institution has a webpage with specific information related to planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare that includes up-to-date information on relevant initiatives and contact information of potential mentors. (2 points)	
There is an institution webpage that features some information on projects and mentors within planetary health and sustainable healthcare within the institution, but it lacks key information. (1 point)	
There is **no institution** specific webpage for locating planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare projects or mentors. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: MCG and AU maintain few affiliated webpages that touch on sustainability efforts, such as the 'Sustainability' page within the Department of Anesthesiology and Perioperative Medicine. While students can reach out to mentors listed on these pages or contact our research dean for guidance on faculty mentorship in sustainable healthcare research, there is no centralized or well-connected web resource. The existing pages lack comprehensive information about ongoing projects or research opportunities, making it difficult for students to efficiently locate and engage with planetary health initiatives.	

4.4. Does your institution have registered student groups dedicated towards fostering a culture of planetary health engagement, scholarship, and advocacy on campus, supported by faculty advisors?	
Yes, there is a student organisation **with faculty support** at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)	
Yes, there is a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare but it **lacks faculty support.** (1 point)	
No, there is **not** a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score explanation: MCG Medical Students for a Sustainable Future (MS4SF) is a student-led organization dedicated to environmental education and action surrounding climate health at the Medical College of Georgia. The group is an affiliate of the international organization MS4SF. The organization receives funding from the Graduate Student Government Association. The MCG MS4SF group can be reached via GroupMe or via direct contact with 2026 Co-Presidents Victor Lim (vlim@augusta.edu) and Matthew Kededa (mkededa@augusta.edu).

4.5. Is there a student liaison representing sustainability interests who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council to advocate for curriculum reform and/or sustainability best practices?	
Yes, there is a student representative who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 point)	
No, there is no such student representative. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: MCG does offer students roles to influence decision making on an institutional level; however, there is no sustainability-specific role.	

4.6. In the past year, has the institution had one or more co-curricular planetary health programs or initiatives in the following categories? (1 point each)	**Score**
Projects where students are able to gain experience in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems, such as gardens, farms, community supported agriculture (CSA), fishery programs, or urban agriculture projects.	1
Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Events in which students learn directly from members of a local environmental justice community about the climate and environmental challenges they face, and how health professionals can partner with their community to address these exposures and impacts.	1
Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	0
Local volunteer opportunities related to building community resilience to anthropogenic environmental impacts.	1
Wilderness or outdoors programs (e.g., that organise hiking, backpacking, kayaking, or other outings for students)	1
Score explanation: • *Organic agriculture and sustainable food systems (1 point): MCG's Student Doctors Against Hunger (SDAH) organization has the goal of educating student doctors about food insecurity which features directly working on a rooftop garden.*	

- *Panels and speakers series (1 point): MCG MS4SF hosted medical faculty to speak about their experiences in international and wilderness medicine with students in attendance.*
- *Engagement with Local Environmental Justice Communities (1 point): In the Wild, AU's official podcast, featured an episode titled "Is AU Building a Greener Campus?" The discussion explored sustainability initiatives at AU and the broader community, featuring students from the Food Recovery Network. The event highlighted waste reduction strategies in medical settings and the impact of environmental policies on public health. Additionally, the Georgia Cancer Center at Augusta University hosted an Earth Day event in partnership with BLKHLTH and Girl +Environment, non-profits with aims in local environmental justice.*
- *Local Volunteer Programs (1 point): AU's environmental wellness website provides links to volunteer with local organizations that have a focus on environmental wellness, including: Augusta Canal National Heritage Area and Columbia County Parks and The Environment.*
- *Wilderness and outdoor program (1 point): Wilderness Medicine Interest Group provides students with medical training for resource-limited settings, hiking trips, and the opportunity to participate in MedWAR (Medical Wilderness Adventure Race), a national race which was originally founded at MCG in 2000.*

Section Total (10 out of 15)	**66.67%**

Back to Summary Page here

Campus Sustainability

Section Overview: ***This section evaluates the support and engagement in sustainability initiatives by the institution.*** *The healthcare industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution that harms local, regional, and global ecosystems. While healthcare is, by nature, a resource-intensive endeavour, the healthcare sector is well poised to lead the world to a more sustainable future. This will involve scrutinising every aspect of how our systems operate, from where we source our energy, to how we build our infrastructure, to what companies we invest in. Our institutions, clinics, and hospitals must set the standard for sustainable practices, and show other sectors what is possible when it comes to minimising environmental impact.*

5.1. Does your institution have an Office of Sustainability?	
Yes, there is an Office of Sustainability with multiple full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability. If the Office of Sustainability serves the entire campus, there is **at least one designated staff member** for sustainability at the hospital. (3 points)	
There is an Office of Sustainability with one or more full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability, but **no specific staff member** in charge of hospital sustainability. (2 points)	
There are **no salaried sustainability staff,** but there is a sustainability task force or committee. (1 point)	
There are **no** staff members **or** task force responsible for overseeing campus sustainability. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: AU does not have a centralized Office of Sustainability with salaried staff that oversee university-wide sustainability planning. However, there are multiple on-campus and university-associated groups that support environmental engagement. For example, the largest institution maintained group is the Green Team, which operates as a volunteer sustainability governance body and involves staff members from multiple units across campus. The team describes its responsibilities as fostering sustainability practices and accomplishments like campus-wide recycling, establishing metrics, and sponsoring events like Earth Day activities. However, this team has been on-hold for the past several years without activity. Via personal communication, there is faculty interest in reconstituting this committee with hope of establishing a charter and formal home within a campus department or group.	

5.2. How ambitious is your institution's plan to reduce its own carbon footprint?
The institution has a **written and approved plan** to achieve carbon neutrality by **2030** (5 points)
The institution has a **written and approved plan** to achieve carbon neutrality by **2040** (3 points)
The institution has a stated goal of carbon neutrality by **2040** but has **not created a plan** to reach that goal or the **plan is inadequate** (1 point)
The institution does **not** meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)

Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: A publicly available, written, approved and actively implemented carbon neutrality plan for AU, MCG, , or the University's hospital is not available. Although the University's medical center has won 3 Energy Stars since 2006 for reducing its greenhouse emissions, this accomplishment does include AU or MCG. There appears to be no institutional commitment to carbon neutrality, climate action plan, and no system-wide published greenhouse gas emissions baseline. While individual groups or units may promote these initiatives, these do not meet the above criteria.	

5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?	
Yes, institution buildings are **100%** powered by renewable energy. (3 points)	
Institution buildings source **>80%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)	
Institution buildings source **>20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)	
Institution buildings source **<20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: AU does not report their energy usage to the public. A review of campus facilities did not identify many renewable energy sources like solar installations, geothermal systems, renewable power purchase agreements, or certificates for academic buildings. A new building on campus, the Dental College building, does receive 70% of its power from a renewable energy provider; however, there is no mention of a similar agreement for older, other buildings. Overall, this indicates that MCG likely relies on conventional energy systems.	

5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the institution's campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?
Yes, sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus and the **majority** of old buildings **have been retrofitted** to be more sustainable. (3 points)
Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have **not been retrofitted.** (2 points)
Sustainable building practices are **inadequately or incompletely** implemented for new buildings. (1 point)
Sustainability is **not considered** in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: AU has designed and constructed a majority of its new buildings to LEED sustainability standards and has received the silver certification for the J. Harold Harrison, M.D. Education Commons (the primary teaching building for the medical school), the Dental College, and new undergraduate housing. Additionally, publicly documented capital projects show that older campus infrastructure (particularly on the Summerville campus) have undergone energy-efficiency retrofits (HVAC, central energy plant, etc.) under University System of Georgia guidelines. However, it appears that this 'green construction' initiative was a brief phase for the university as newer constructions the the Georgia Cyber-security center and the Science and Mathematics building, while described as 'modern' do not hold LEED certifications.	

5.5. Has the institution implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options for students and reduce the environmental impact of commuting?	
Yes, the institution has implemented strategies to encourage and provide **environmentally-friendly transportation options** such as safe active transport, public transport, or carpooling and these options are well-utilised by students. Alternatively, the campus location is not amenable to unsustainable forms of transportation by default. (2 points)	
The institution has implemented **some** strategies to provide environmentally-friendly transportation options, but the options are **unsatisfactorily** accessible or advertised. (1 point)	
The institution has **not** implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: AU has implemented some environmentally-friendly transportation strategies for students which are moderately utilized. There is a free campus shuttle system which connects students to the Health Sciences campus that houses the medical school and the primary teaching hospitals and clinics. However, run times for the shuttle are limited and wait times long, thus reliance on cars is not eliminated. The Health Sciences campus is walkable with some limited biking infrastructure. However, as the majority of students and faculty live off-campus and have a significant commute, car-centric transportation is still the main mode of transportation.	

5.6. Does your institution have an organics recycling program (compost) and a conventional recycling program (aluminium/paper/plastic/glass)?
Yes, the institution has **both** compost **and** recycling programs accessible to students and faculty. (2 points)
The institution has **either** recycling **or** compost programs accessible to students and faculty, but not both. (1 point)
There is **no** compost or recycling program at the institution. (0 points)

Score Assigned:	1
Score explanation: There is a university recycling program that is accessible to students and faculty through campus-wide collection bins for material such as paper, cardboard, plastics, and aluminum, with some limitation regarding receptacles and further clarity on the disposal process. However, there is no evidence that the university implants an accessible organics recycling program.	

5.7. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about the campus food and beverage selections (e.g. local sourcing, reduced meat, decreased plastic packaging)?	
Yes, the institution has a**dequate s**ustainability requirements for food and beverages, including meat-free days or no red-meat, and **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (3 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (2 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional.** The institution is **not** engaged in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (1 point)	
There are **no** sustainability guidelines for food and beverages. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
Score explanation: AU partners with Sodexo for campus dining services. While the sustainability information provided is broad and does not include quantitative targets or reporting metrics, the dining program publicly outlines several sustainability practices. These include partnerships with local produce distributors and local dairies, sustainable seafood sourcing, and the use of reusable to-go containers.	

5.8. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about supply procurement?	
Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for supply procurement **and** is **engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (3 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional.** The institution is **engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (2 points)	
There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional.** The institution is **not engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (1 point)	
There are **no** sustainability guidelines for supply procurement. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0

Score explanation: According to AU's Procurement of Goods and Services Policy, most recently approved in January 2022, there is no reference to environmental or sustainability criteria in the supply procurement process or procedures.

5.9. Are there sustainability requirements or guidelines for events hosted at the institution?	
Every event hosted at the institution **must** abide by sustainability criteria. (2 points)	
The institution **strongly recommends or incentivizes** sustainability measures, but they are **not required.** (1 point)	
There are **no** sustainability guidelines for institution events. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: There are currently no publicly documented sustainability standards for event planning, logistics, or operations for events at AU or MCG.	

5.10. Does your institution have programs and initiatives to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable?	
Yes, the institution has **programs** and **initiatives** to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable. (2 points)	
There are **guidelines** on how to make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable, but not programs or initiatives. (1 point)	
There are **no** efforts at the institution to make lab spaces more sustainable. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: There is no publicly available evidence of current organizations or initiatives at the MCG that make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable.	

5.11. Does your institution's endowment portfolio investments include fossil-fuel companies?
The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels **and** has made a **commitment to reinvest divested funds** into renewable energy companies or renewable energy campus initiatives. (4 points)
The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels. (3 points)
The institution has **partially divested** from fossil fuel companies **or** has made a **commitment to fully divest**, but **currently** still has fossil fuel investments. (2 points)

The institution has **not divested** from fossil-fuel companies, but faculty and/or students are **conducting organised advocacy** for divestment. (1 point)	
Yes, the institution has investments with fossil-fuel companies and there have been **no efforts** to change that. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
Score explanation: The MCG Foundation endowment does not publicly disclose specific portfolio holdings. Furthermore, there is no statement or evidence indicating that the institution has committed to divestment from fossil-fuel companies.	

Section Total (5 out of 32)	**15.63%**

Back to Summary Page here

Grading

Section Overview
This section focuses on the grading of the report card. The institution received a grade for each of the individual sections as well as an overall institutional grade. Section point totals were tallied, divided by the total points available for the section, and converted to a percentage. The overall institutional grade is a weighted average of the section grades, with curriculum receiving a higher weight owing to its larger number of metrics. Letter grades for each section and the institution overall were then assigned according to the table below.

Letter Grade	Percentage
A	80% - 100%
B	60% - 79%
C	40% - 59%
D	20% - 39%
F	0% - 19%

Planetary Health Grades for the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University
The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the Medical College of Georgia on this Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	(26/75) x 100 = 34.67%	D
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	(3/17) x 100 = 17.65%	F+
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	(3/14) x 100 = 21.43%	D-
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	(10/15) x 100= 66.67%	B
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	(5/32) x 100 = 15.63%	F+
Institutional Grade	**(Ax0.3 + Bx0.175 + Cx0.175 + Dx0.175 + Ex0.175) = 31.64%**	**D**

Report Card Trends

Section Overview
This graph demonstrates trends in overall and section grades for the years in which the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University has participated in the Planetary Health Report Card initiative.