

## Your Carbon Footprint

### Week 1

Let's take the opportunity to get to know each other. You'll find three folders in the Week 1 area, one called Introductions, one called Perceptions, and one called Questions.

During a normal week, unless otherwise directed, always remember to post at least two times.

We'll begin our reading and discussing next week. With this in mind, we want you to do a few things this first week.

1. Post an introduction in the Introduction folder. What are your interests? Do you have experience travelling overseas? What do you hope to learn in the Global Module? Also, take the opportunity to greet your fellow students and find out more about them. Be sure to include contact information such as your email address or IM.
2. What are your perceptions of your partners in the Global Module? For the \_\_\_\_\_ students, what do you think of the US? For the American students, what do you think of when you think of \_\_\_\_\_? Post your initial views in the Perceptions folder.
3. Post any questions that you might have in the Questions folder. Some of you are probably quite experienced in working online, and might have even participated in Global Modules before, and could help out your classmates if they have any concerns.

Keep in mind that you should always feel free to contribute to the Casual Conversations folders found elsewhere on the site. Feel free to introduce a topic or post questions. The password for the Casual Conversations folder is: moose.

Thanks, and we're really looking forward to getting started.

### Week 2

This week we begin our discussion of ecological and carbon footprints. We will be using four short articles. The first is *Measuring Footprints: A Tale of Two Families* (<http://www.nwf.org/nationalwildlife/article.cfm?issueID=45&articleID=532>); the second entitled *Big Foot* ([http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/02/25/080225fa\\_fact\\_specter](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2008/02/25/080225fa_fact_specter)); the third is entitled *UAE Beats Americans' Environmental Harm* (<http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/16640176/>) and the fourth is entitled *Why Bother?* (<http://www.nytimes.com/2008/04/20/magazine/20wwln-lede-t.html>). Please follow these links and read the four articles.

Once you have read the texts you will answer a series of questions. You will be required to post answers at least twice, although you can contribute more often if you wish. You can either post an original answer to a question or comment on the posting of another student. Either way, your postings should be detailed and analytical. If you are late posting for the week do not simply answer a question that has already been answered by another student – contribute in a new way. Build upon your fellow students' answers. Think of it as the class as a whole answering the question.

1. What do the terms ecological footprint and carbon footprint mean? What type of activities contribute to it and why?
2. Compare your life to the two individuals in the “Measuring Footprints” article. To which one are you most similar? Would you be willing to live like Jyoti if you knew that it would significantly improve life for the next generation? What comforts of your life are you willing and unwilling to give up?
3. What are possible solutions for reducing carbon emission? Are they viable?
4. If carbon usage and emissions had a specific price tag attached, who do you think would be most seriously affected? Do you think a “carbon tax” is socially just? Why or why not?
5. Does it make sense for an individual to adopt a “greener” lifestyle if his or her greater community doesn’t embrace change as well? Why or why not?

### Week 3

Let’s continue our discussion this week, focusing on specific examples from our two countries. Work on the following question. Be sure to post at least twice this week.

1. Go to <http://www.footprintnetwork.org/en/index.php/GFN/page/calculators/> and <http://independent.footprint.wwf.org.uk/> and calculate your ecological footprints using both sites. Don’t worry that the sites are limited to certain geographical regions. How big is your ecological footprint? How does the data gathered from these two sites compare?
2. Go the <http://www.patagonia.com/usa/footprint/index.jsp>. Pick an item of clothing and trace its path. What can you learn from this process?
3. Can you suggest specific actions for reducing footprints on an individual level?
4. Can you suggest specific actions for reducing footprints on a community level?
5. Can you suggest specific actions for reducing footprints on a national level?
6. Can you suggest specific actions for reducing footprints on a global scale?

### Week 4

Sadly, it’s already time to say goodbye. Each student should post at least once this week.

1. What have we learned about environmental sustainability in our two countries, and in the larger world?
2. Is this a problem that is too big for an individual to even think about solving?
3. What are the biggest obstacles to bringing about change?
4. What have we learned about each other and ourselves from this discussion?
5. Would you like to say goodbye to your new friends? What do you want them to know about your country?

In addition, Champlain College students should write a short reflective piece to be posted in their ePortfolio. What did you learn from the process? What were the similarities and differences that you discovered? What might explain them?