

Exploration of Creation Care and Sustainability Among Council for Christian Colleges and Universities (CCCCU) Members

Catherine Wright, Wingate University

Bailey Freeburn, Wingate University (Undergraduate 2020)

Debra Rowe, US Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development

This exploration highlights CCCU members who are creatively contributing to the common good and building a just, thriving world for all via environmental stewardship.

“We hold the Christian belief that the Earth and the entire universe are God’s good creation. We advocate for the sustainability and preservation of the Earth.”

CCCCU Environmental Stewardship Statement



*Students from an Ecotheology Honor Seminar (Wingate University)
Mediation at dawn at the Rachel Carson Reserve, Outer Banks NC ... watching a schools of dolphins in the distance*

Methodology:

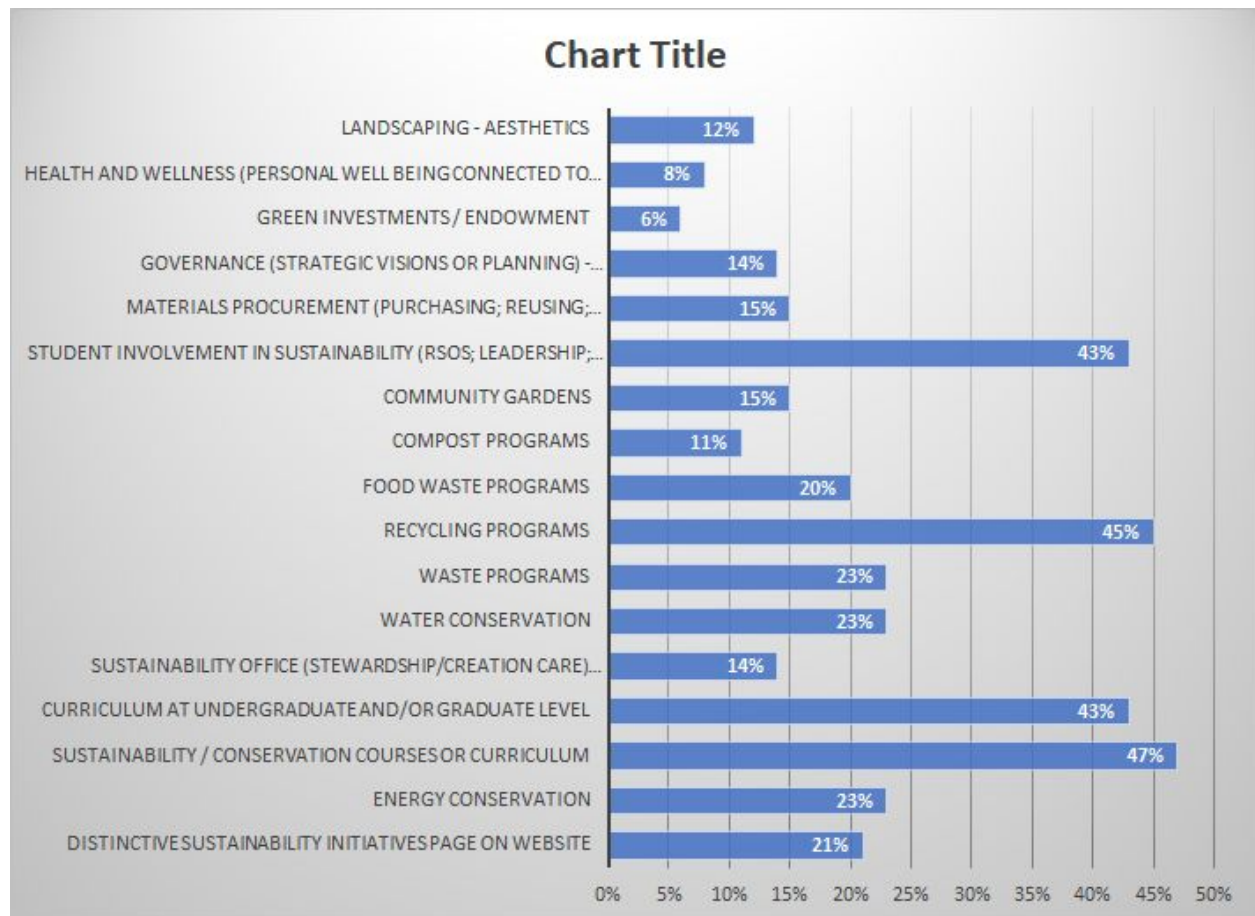
Associate Professor Catherine Wright and undergraduate Religion major ('20) Bailey Freeburn from Wingate University (NC) collected data easily accessible on official university websites to determine how CCCU members were communicating their environmental stewardship and being advocates for justice. The rubric for determining evidence or levels of environmental stewardship was inspired from Mitchell Thomashow's text "Nine Elements of a Sustainable Campus," international standards or goals for sustainable development ([SDGs](#)), and dimensions suggested by Disciplinary Associations Network for Sustainability ([DANS](#)) and Higher Education Associations Sustainability Consortium ([HEASC](#)). Quality or depth of each commitment was not investigated; the evidence collected was only that it was easily found on websites. These are meant to illustrate what percentage of CCCU members are participating in some way in the following aspects of creation care. It can also point CCCU members to where improvements could be made.

Creation Care Dimensions Explored:

- Distinctive Sustainability Initiatives Page on website
- Energy Conservation
- Sustainability / Conservation courses or curriculum
- Curriculum at undergraduate and/or graduate level
- Sustainability Office (stewardship/creation care) Institute / Center
- Water Conservation
- Waste Programs
- Recycling Programs
- Food Waste Programs
- Compost Programs
- Community Gardens
- Student Involvement in Sustainability (RSOs; leadership; governance)
- Materials Procurement (purchasing; reusing; restoring; chemicals)
- Governance (Strategic vision or planning)
- Green Investments / Endowment
- Health and Wellness (personal well being connected to Earth well being)
- Landscaping - Aesthetics

Analysis

The following is an overall analysis of what was found for each of CCCU's 174 members on their public websites in the following 17 dimensions of creation care and environmental stewardship. For each indicator the percentage represents what percentage of CCCU members indicate they do this facet of creation care on their websites.



Reflection:

1. There was no real geographic area (e.g., California) that was doing creation care and stewardship more
2. Campuses with sustainability or Creation Care centers were able to be more holistic stewards and tell the story of this dimension of advocacy
3. There is no ideal size to do environmental stewardship well -- Baylor University has 16k students but Houghton College has just over 1000 and both are Gold Star Stewards

-
4. Recycling is done by many members but harder stewardship efforts (composting; green investments) are not. This makes them great targets for future environmental stewardship and justice efforts.
 5. Student engagement is a strong indicator or barometer of the value of sustainability and environmental stewardship on campuses

Gold Star Stewards

We are calling Gold Star members those who embrace at least 14 of these 17 dimensions of environmental stewardship. The following is a list of Gold Star CCCU members. These are not in order of greatest to least but ordered alphabetically.

- Baylor University - Waco, TX (16,787 enrolled; Baptist) <https://www.baylor.edu/sustainability/>
- Biola University - La Mirada, CA (6,222 enrolled; Inter-denominational) <https://www.biola.edu/facilities-management/sustainability>
- California Baptist University - Riverside, CA (11,045 enrolled; Southern Baptist) <https://calbaptist.edu/programs/bachelor-of-science-sustainability/>
- Calvin University - Grand Rapids, MI (3,840 enrolled; Christian Reformed Church) <https://calvin.edu/about/sustainability/>
- Houghton College - Houghton, NY (1,014 enrolled; Wesleyan) <https://www.houghton.edu/campus-life/creation-care/>
- John Brown University - Siloam Springs, AR (2,613 enrolled; Inter-denominational) <https://www.jbu.edu/sustainability/#gsc.tab=0>
- Judson College - Elgin, IL (1,200 enrolled; American Baptist)** last posts in 2011 <https://www.judsonu.edu/sustainability/>
- Lipscomb University - Nashville, TN (4,018 enrolled; Christian Churches) <https://www.lipscomb.edu/sustainability>
- Messiah College - Mechanicsburg, PA (2,734 enrollment; Interdenominational) <https://www.messiah.edu/sustainability/>
- Pepperdine University - Malibu, CA (7,632 enrolled; Churches of Christ) <https://www.pepperdine.edu/sustainability/>
- Point Loma Nazarene University - San Diego, CA (3,480 enrolled; Church of the Nazarene) <https://www.pointloma.edu/offices/sustainability>

-
- Samford University - Birmingham, AL (5,471 enrolled; Baptist)
<https://www.samford.edu/departments/sustainability/>
 - The King's University - Edmonton, AB (1,579 enrolled; Christian Reformed)
<https://www.kingsu.ca/research/featured/project/how-are-faith-communities-engaging-environmental-sustainability-in-canada1>
 - Wheaton College - Wheaton, IL (2,850 enrolled; Interdenominational)
<https://www.wheaton.edu/academics/programs/envsci/green-operations-at-wheaton-college/>

Creation Care Allies

We are calling creation care allies those CCCU members who embrace at least 10 of these 17 dimensions of environmental stewardship. The following is a list of Creation Care Allies within CCCU membership. These are not in order of greatest to least but ordered alphabetically.

- Avondale College of Higher Education - Coorombang, NSW, Australia (1309 enrolled; Seventh Day Adventist) <https://www.avondale.edu.au/greenavondale>
- Azusa Pacific University - Azusa, CA (10,020 enrolled; Non Denominational)
<https://www.apu.edu/clas/programs/environmental-studies-minor/>;
<https://www.apu.edu/articles/creation-care-making-steps-toward-a-sustainable-campus/>;
<https://www.apu.edu/articles/how-the-college-meal-plan-has-evolved-in-favor-of-food-sustainability/>
- Bethel University - St. Paul, MN (6,500 enrolled; Baptist)
<https://www.bethel.edu/environmental-stewardship-committee/>
<https://www.bethel.edu/dining-services/stewardship/sustainability>
- Eastern University - St. Davids, PA (2,045 enrolled; American Baptist)
<https://www.eastern.edu/about/offices-centers/facilities/green-initiatives>
- Friends University - Wichita, KS (2,800 enrolled; Nondenominational)
<https://www.friends.edu/news/2019/01/31/friends-university-embraces-sustainability-initiatives/>
- Mississippi College - Clinton, MS (5,270 enrolled; Southern Baptist) <https://www.mc.edu/offices/energy/>
- Oral Roberts University - Tulsa, OK (3,068 enrolled; Christian)
<https://oru.edu/current-students/my-campus-life/recycle/index.php>
- Ouachita Baptist University - Arkadelphia, AR (1,660 enrolled; Southern Baptist) <https://obu.edu/green/> **
had some trouble with the website (June 2020)
- Seattle Pacific University - Seattle, WA (3,894 enrolled; Free Methodist)
<https://spu.edu/depts/facman/sustainability/>

-
- Simpson University - Redding, CA (1,012 enrolled; Christian and Missionary Alliance)
<https://simpsonu.edu/Pages/About/Resources/Campus/Facilities/Greenability.htm>
 - Southern Nazarene University - Bethany, OK (2,110 enrolled; Church of the Nazarene)
<http://snu.edu/green-at-snu>
 - Walla Walla University - College Place, WA (1,855 enrolled; Seventh Day Adventist)
<https://www.wallawalla.edu/resources/facility-services/recycling/>
 - Westmont College - Santa Barbara, CA (1,298 enrolled; Christian)
<https://blogs.westmont.edu/garden/category/sustainability/>
 - Whitworth University - Spokane, WA (3,100 enrolled; Presbyterian)
<https://www.whitworth.edu/cms/about/sustainability/>

Shout Outs!

Shout outs for interesting concepts, project, partnerships that was eye catching to the undergraduate researcher on this project:

- Bethany Lutheran College Solar garden partnership is very cool
<https://blc.edu/2017/11/looking-to-the-sun-for-energy-at-blc/>
- Bethel University “Royal Honey Hives” and partnership with University of Minnesota Bee Squad
<https://www.bethel.edu/dining-services/stewardship/sustainability>
- Calvin University and Houghton College-- their web pages are an inspiration for other CCCU members
<https://calvin.edu/about/sustainability/>
<https://www.houghton.edu/campus-life/creation-care/>
- Messiah College -- this college has a great connection of economics, ecology, and justice
<https://www.messiah.edu/sustainability/>
- Eastern Nazarene College - 1,000 solar panels were installed on the roofs of four campus buildings
<https://enc.edu/campus-goes-green-through-sustainability-initiatives/>
- Ouachita Baptist University: This website is great and includes educational info on how students can be more environmentally conscious. Great stuff here *problems with website June 2020 <https://obu.edu/>
- Pepperdine University: This one has practically everything. Center for sustainability, environmental science minor, great website <https://www.pepperdine.edu/sustainability/>
- Taylor University - Sustainability week program 2019
<https://www.taylor.edu/news/education-and-biblical-stewardship-are-goals-of-sustainability-week-activities-at-taylor>

-
- Westmont College -- Great community garden and internship opportunities for their students!
<https://blogs.westmont.edu/garden/internship-info/>

Share Your Efforts!

Please [share](#) what your campus is doing concerning environmental stewardship and sustainability. We would love to know who your champions are, what you are doing, and what public documents and/or online websites you are using to share your good work with the world.

Link: <https://forms.gle/7xkkTPMY8FjBAY6X6>