



Sustainable Creighton Initiative

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY'S COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY AND
COMMITMENT TO BETTER CARE FOR OUR COMMON HOME

4/26/2022

The Sustainable Creighton Initiative (SCI) is the culmination of a two-and-a-half-year process involving over fifty stakeholders and decision makers within and external to the Creighton community. Father John Schlegel, SJ, signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in 2010, committing Creighton to climate neutrality by 2050. Creighton's first Climate Action Plan was published in 2013. The SCI expands upon and updates the 2013 Climate Action Plan. The SCI was created by the Sustainability Governance Committee (SGC).

Father Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, formed the SGC in September 2019 to operate as the administrative authority over sustainability at Creighton University. The SGC is intentionally comprised of leaders from across campus because sustainability is the duty of the entire Creighton community not an isolated department or few passionate individuals.

To this end, the implementation of the Sustainable Creighton Initiative is the responsibility of the Sustainability Governance Committee.

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Introduction

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis wrote, “In any discussion about a proposed venture, several questions need to be asked: What will it accomplish? Why? Where? When? How? For whom? What are the risks? What are the costs? Who will pay those costs and how? In this discernment, some questions must have higher priority.”ⁱ

Thirty-five years ago, the United Nations Commission on Environment and Development described the goal of sustainability as “...meeting the needs and aspirations of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to do the same.”ⁱⁱ The latest Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) assessment report suggests the world is not accomplishing that goal.ⁱⁱⁱ

The report documents “widespread and pervasive” impacts on people and the natural world from increasingly frequent and intense heatwaves, droughts, wildfires, storms, and floods. Some consequences are now irreversible. Heat is killing more people, drought is killing more trees, and warming oceans are killing more coral reefs, the nurseries of the oceans.

The IPCC report concluded that without action, worse effects are coming faster than scientists had previously thought. The good news is that a livable future remains within grasp, but the window of opportunity for action is “brief and rapidly closing.” Action is needed at every level of society, including at universities where future decision-makers are being formed, energy is consumed, and waste is produced.

The Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus prioritize care for planet Earth—our common home—with particular attention to climate change as essential to their mission.^{iv} Global warming beyond 1.5°C risks an existential catastrophe that contradicts Catholic social teaching themes,^v the Universal Apostolic Preferences of the Society of Jesus,^{vi} the Vatican’s *Laudato Si'* Action Platform to which Creighton University is a signatory,^{vii} and the Sustainable Creighton Initiative (SCI) Guiding Principles.

Mitigating this risk requires sweeping greenhouse gas emission reductions across the world. Even then, the IPCC warns that peaking global greenhouse gas emissions by 2025, cutting emissions in nearly half by 2030, and reaching carbon neutrality around 2050 only gives humanity a >50% chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C.^{viii} The U.N. thus declared “carbon neutrality by 2050 the world’s most urgent mission.” The Vatican has committed to this goal.^x

The Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus call for discernments and “return on investment” calculations prioritizing more than financial considerations alone. Pope Benedict XVI observed that “environmental degradation is often due to the lack of far-sighted official policies or to the pursuit of myopic economic interests.”^{xi} He stressed the need for discernments that “consider the cost entailed—environmentally and socially—as an essential part of the overall expenses incurred.”^{xii}

The Society of Jesus thus calls Jesuit universities to ecological discernment in which “the criterion should not be exclusively economic” but consider the common good and future generations.^{xiii} The Vatican’s *Laudato Si'* Action Platform describes this holistic approach as “ecological economics” and identifies its operationalization as a goal for signatories.^{xiv}

Guided by these principles and priorities, the Catholic Church and the Society of Jesus stress the constant need to strive for ever-greater sustainability. This is especially the calling for the organizations and individuals most responsible for climate-warming emissions and for those with the resources to achieve carbon neutrality. Pope Francis emphasized that “regarding climate change, there are differentiated responsibilities”^{xv} and “to whom much is given, much is required (Luke 12:48).”^{xvi} Animated by *magis*, Jesuit universities are particularly called to ever-bolder action commensurate with their responsibilities and capacities.

The Sustainable Creighton Initiative (SCI) outlines Creighton’s comprehensive strategy and commitment to better care for our common home. The SCI seeks to meet the seven goals of the Vatican’s *Laudato Si'* Action Platform: Response to the Cry of the Earth, Response to the Cry of the Poor, Ecological Economics, Adoption of Sustainable Lifestyles, Ecological Education, Ecological Spirituality, and Community Resilience and Empowerment.

In humble Ignatian poverty of spirit, Creighton University recognizes the SCI is incomplete. This recognition is developed in the section “Future Pathways.” Nevertheless, as His Eminence John Cardinal Dearden described in a homily quoted by Pope Francis, “It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way.”^{xvii} For Creighton University, the SCI is an important next step along the way toward better caring for our common home.

Timeline

Creighton has a storied history of sustainability achievements. As illustrated below, sustainability has never been the job of one office or specific disciplines. Sustainability has always been a campus-wide undertaking.

- 1991** The Environmental Science major is founded
- 1995** Creighton begins recycling (suspended for 10 months due to COVID-19 in 2020)
- 2008** Facilities Management forms the Sustainability Council
- 2009** Facilities Management publishes a sustainable purchasing policy
- 2010** Creighton President the Rev. John Schlegel, SJ, PhD, signs the Association of American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, pledging Creighton will reach climate neutrality by 2050
- 2011** The Energy Technology Program is founded (sunset in 2018)
- 2013** Creighton's first Climate Action Plan is written
- 2013** Creighton President, Rev. Timothy Lannon, SJ, signs the *St. Francis Pledge to Care for Creation and the Poor*
- 2013** The Division of Student Life begins partnership with Goodwill to annually divert over 60 tons of material from residence halls during move-out
- 2014** The inaugural Spirit of St. Francis award is presented
- 2015** The Sustainability Studies program is founded
- 2016** Creighton President, the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, convenes the Presidential Advisory Committee on Sustainability
- 2017** Creighton establishes the Office of Sustainability Programs and hires its first full-time sustainability coordinator
- 2017** Sustainability is integrated into the Creighton 150 Strategic Plan: *Lighting the Way*, under *Living Our Mission and Global Partnerships*
- 2017** Global Engagement Office funds the Planetary Emergency Lecture Series
- 2018** Creighton receives Bronze STARS rating. Before 2018, dedicated staff and faculty worked together to submit a STARS report without a rating; in 2018, their work was memorialized with Creighton's first STARS rating of Bronze.
- 2018** Creighton President, the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, signs two presidential commitments: *the Catholic Climate Declaration* and the *St. Francis/Laudato Si' Pledge*
- 2018** Patrick Marta, 2018 CSU president, spearheads a campaign titled Referendum 2SI (2 Sustainability Initiatives), which approved two student government initiatives: phasing out plastic bags on campus (passed with 88% of the vote) and phasing out plastic straws on campus (passed with 81% of the vote)
- 2018** The Schlegel Center for Service and Justice (SCSJ) and Office of Sustainable Programs (OSP) collaborate to create virtual environmental justice orientations
- 2019** Creighton President, the Rev. Daniel S. Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, forms the Sustainable Governance Committee and the Climate Change Task Force.
- 2019** Creighton students organize "Silence for the Climate" demonstration that calls the University to three actions: 1) Divest the endowment from all holdings in fossil fuel companies, 2) set a more ambitious carbon neutrality goal than that of 2050, and 3) make climate change education a requirement for all students. CSU referendum 19–02 calling for fossil fuel divestment passed with 85.6% support.
- 2019** Creighton partners with Catholic Climate Covenant to co-sponsor the biennial "*Laudato Si'*" and the U.S. Catholic Church: A Conference Series on Our Common Home."
- 2020** Creighton hires the first Director of Sustainability
- 2020** Composting begins on campus
- 2020** Creighton commits to divesting from fossil fuel holdings
- 2021** Creighton becomes a *Laudato Si'* University by committing to participate in the *Seven Year Journey Toward Integral Ecology* of the Vatican Dicastery for Promoting Integral Human Development.
- 2021** The Office of Sustainability Programs launches the Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund

These achievements are significant, but in a spirit of *magis* and guided by the value of prudence, ***we all must do more.***



Forward by Father Hendrickson, SJ, PhD

The Sustainable Creighton Initiative is our University's commitment and comprehensive pathway to faithfully seek hope for and with our students.

In 2010, Most Reverend William S. Skylstad, Bishop Emeritus of Spokane and past president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, concluded *Sustainability and Catholic Higher Education: A Toolkit for Mission Integration* by affirming:

Care for God's Creation is not a new component of Catholic identity. It is as old as Genesis and must therefore be integral to Catholic colleges and universities' mission, identity, and everyday life.

Nine years later, the Society of Jesus announced four Universal Apostolic Preferences to guide Jesuit universities and other institutions through the next decade. These include "Journeying with Youth" and "Caring for Our Common Home."

Despite these Catholic and Jesuit calls to accompany young people through ecological action, this generation of students remains deeply concerned for their future. Our students need hope.

On February 24, 2022, one Creighton undergraduate student and one University alumna had the extraordinary opportunity to speak directly with Pope Francis about the climate crisis.

Representing their global peers from around the world, our students described to the pope how the climate emergency and its prospects of catastrophic population displacement, illness, and death are sources of profound anxiety for their generation. They also articulated their hope that the Church and civil society will take science-based action to protect their future. In prophetic witness, however, they named to the Holy Father:

Our generation values authenticity and deplors hypocrisy. U.S. Catholic leaders' failure to share and enact the Church's own climate teachings is

disillusioning young people. Our political leaders' similar failure to take climate action sows doubt and cynicism among us.

As a Catholic, Jesuit institution, Creighton University must be an authentic source of hope for our students—past, present, prospective, and future—who are deeply worried about the sustainability of our common home upon which their future depends.

In the Catholic tradition, hope is not passive wishing. Hope is a virtue that catalyzes bold local and systemic action to advance love, justice, peace, and sustainability—what Christians call the kingdom of God. As a virtue, hope must be informed by other virtues, especially prudence as right reason applied to action. Faced with modern ecological degradation and the climate crisis, hope requires action guided by the best available science.

As outlined in the Introduction, Creighton University recognizes prudent sustainability action will not be easy. It will require rapid carbon neutrality and waste reduction, sustainability curricula and ecological economics, fearless advocacy, and spiritual conversion. Prudent action in these areas will involve difficult conversations and choices, personal and institutional sacrifices, and calculations beyond finance.

However, we also recognize that in fidelity to our Catholic, Jesuit mission, we must commit our resources to science-based action that gives authentic hope to our students and for our common home.

As president of Creighton University, I am pleased to share the Sustainable Creighton Initiative as our faithful, hopeful University commitment to this and future generations.



Executive Summary

Father Hendrickson, SJ, PhD, established the Climate Change Task Force (CCTF) in November 2019, charging the CCTF to work with the Sustainable Governance Committee (SGC) to accelerate Creighton's carbon neutrality goal and update Creighton's climate action plan. The SCI accomplishes both goals by approaching sustainability strategy comprehensively, holistically, and pragmatically. The SCI development process consisted of three phases:

Phase 1: Benchmarking

November 2019–December 2020

Phase 2: Planning

January 2021–April 2022

Phase 3: Implementation, Monitoring and Responding

April 2022 and beyond

After initial meetings and hiring a Director of Sustainability, the CCTF established Guiding Principles for the SCI in May 2020. The Guiding Principles listed below serve as Creighton University's unique definition of sustainability and guided the entire SCI process.

- The Mission of Creighton University
- Truth
- Peace, Justice, and Preservation of Creation
- Stewardship through Prudence
- Education
- Integral Ecology
- Responsibility, Accountability, and Transparency

In May 2020, the CCTF organized into 10 Action Teams (AT). Each AT was composed of at least one student, one faculty member, and one staff member. ATs focused on one specific area of the Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS).¹

CCTF members self-selected their AT to align with their expertise and interest. The eight ATs (Climate & Buildings, Grounds & Water, Purchasing & Transportation, Academics, Public Engagement, Campus Engagement, Dining & Waste, and Planning & Administration) collected STARS data between August 2020 and January 2021.

During Phase Two, ATs used the data collected in Phase One to guide the planning process. Each AT developed projects, programs, or ideas to improve baseline metrics. By September 2020, the SGC received three proposals with ideas developed by each AT. The proposals were organized into three larger theme areas (Academics, Engagement, and Operations). The SCI's structure mirrors those themes.

¹ STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure and benchmark sustainability performance. SCI metrics are generally derived from STARS because 1) STARS is the standard tracking and benchmarking tool for institutes of higher education, 2) the metrics used in STARS were explicitly created for higher education over 13 years by experts in the field, and 3) Creighton can benchmark sustainability data against the more than 1,000 institutions that have submitted data through STARS.



The SGC is ultimately responsible for Phase Three of the SCI. Administrators from across campus constitute the SGC because sustainability is the shared responsibility of the entire Creighton community. Individual units have distinct responsibilities throughout the SCI, but together, the SCI is the responsibility of all. The SCI is a living document; it is the responsibility of the SGC to monitor all associated metrics and update the SCI annually. Committee formation is one action the SGC will consider when addressing various goals. All SGC subcommittees will have broad and transparent representation with clear charges and timelines.

After two and a half years of preparation, the Sustainable Creighton Initiative is a plan that charts a course for accelerated impact.

The goals and actions outlined in this plan over the next six years (2022–2028) are intentionally focused on greenhouse gas (GHG) emission reduction, waste diversion, education, and co-curricular engagement. All goals are interrelated concerning Creighton’s commitment to the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform and carbon neutrality.

Creighton is committed to the following goals:

- Achieve a STARS Gold rating by 2028 (STARS, or the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System, is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance)
- Ensure that 20% of academic courses include sustainability-related content, and 90% of academic departments offer at least one sustainability-related course by 2028
- Develop a Campus Sustainability Literacy and Culture Assessment and achieve a yearly 25% response rate in first and fourth-year cohorts by 2028
- Reduce scope 1 and 2 Greenhouse Gas emissions by 50% over a 2010 baseline by 2028, and that same year publish concrete steps to achieve carbon neutrality well before 2050
- Decrease total campus waste generation by 25% over a 2019 baseline and achieve a minimum of 35% waste diversion rate across the University by 2028
- Establish an Eco-Fellows Program
- Grow the Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund funding by 20% annually until 2025 and double applications annually until 2025
- Create and sustain a Fundamentals of Sustainable Living Certificate by 2026
- Create and sustain a Green Office Certification Program by 2024
- Offer Sustainability Focused Campus Tours by 2023
- Expand the Green Games program to all spectator sports by 2026

The SCI is the next step for Creighton to enhance its position as a regional, national, and global leader in higher education by addressing the world’s most demanding and significant issues.



Acronyms and Definitions

Acronyms

- AASHE:** Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
- CCTF:** Climate Change Task Force
- CSSAF:** Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund
- CSU:** Creighton Students Union
- GHG:** Greenhouse Gas Gases
- MteCO₂:** Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent
- OSP:** The Office of Sustainability Programs
- SATC:** Sustainability Across the Curriculum subcommittee
- SCI:** Sustainable Creighton Initiative
- SCT:** Sustainable Commuting and Travel subcommittee
- SGC:** Sustainable Governance Committee
- SPFS:** Sustainability Pedagogy Faculty Seminar
- STARS:** Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System
- SWM:** Sustainable Waste Management subcommittee

Definitions

MteCO₂: Metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent—a unit used to measure total greenhouse gas emissions. MteCO₂ is standardized to one unit mass of carbon dioxide (CO₂), based on the gas’s global warming potential.

Scope 1 Emissions: are direct emissions from Creighton-owned and controlled resources.

Scope 2 Emissions: are indirect emissions from the generation of purchased energy from a utility provider.

Scope 3 Emissions: are indirect emissions from assets not owned or controlled by Creighton but that are directly created from Creighton’s value chain (*e.g., emissions generated from university-sponsored travel, commuting, waste disposal and capital goods*).

Second Nature: is a nonprofit that works with campuses to solve climate change. Creighton committed to carbon neutrality by signing the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2010. The ACUPCC is now known as the President’s Climate Leadership Commitment, which Second Nature maintains. Creighton reports carbon neutrality process to Second Nature using a tool called SIMAP.

SIMAP: a carbon and nitrogen-accounting platform that tracks and analyzes campus-wide emissions. Creighton uses SIMAP to calculate campus carbon emissions and report yearly totals.



Academics

Creighton exists to provide an excellent Catholic and Jesuit educational experience for all students. Sustainability, or caring for our common home, is a fundamental pillar of the Jesuit tradition. Therefore, Creighton is uniquely positioned to prepare students to understand and address sustainability challenges holistically.

Sustainability is a broad and interdisciplinary field that uses systems thinking to address existential threats for future generations. For years Creighton faculty, staff and students have demonstrated success in the field of sustainability. Students can currently major or minor in sustainability and environmental science. Sustainability-related courses are offered throughout the University in various departments such as biology, philosophy, history, sociology, justice and peace studies, and theology. Researchers at Creighton investigate wide-ranging sustainability topics, including social and ecological problems associated with coal extraction, Catholic social teaching and climate change, and grassland ecology, among others.

The SCI aims to integrate sustainability across the curriculum, allowing all students to understand how sustainability can be an integral feature of their future endeavors.

Goal: 20% of academic courses will include sustainability-related content, and 90% of academic departments will offer at least one sustainability-related course by 2028.

Creighton offers a major or minor in sustainability, and this program is exceptional for students interested in a sustainability-focused career. However, because most Creighton students will not major in this or a natural science focused field, they will benefit from studying sustainability through the unique lens of their discipline. Sustainability science can enrich any area of the curriculum.

Action #1: Develop a Sustainability Across the Curriculum Subcommittee

The first step toward increasing the number of sustainability-related courses is defining what a sustainability-related course is. There is no consensus on the definition of sustainability within the curriculum at Creighton. The SGC will form the Sustainability Across the Curriculum Subcommittee (SATC) to address this issue. The SATC will have representation from all nine colleges and schools, and be constituted by those faculty who have demonstrated the highest expertise shown by records of teaching and or publishing related to sustainability as it aligns with the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform goals and underlying principles of the Catholic intellectual tradition.² Once sustainability in the curriculum is well-defined, the SATC will monitor sustainability-related courses annually, work with faculty to support such courses or to integrate sustainability in additional courses, and explore and ways to expand capacity for new course offerings in underrepresented areas.

² In the event that it is established that no faculty member in a college has any such demonstrable expertise in sustainability an appointment may be made with reference to other indicators of expertise or interest.



Action #2: Develop a Sustainability Pedagogy Faculty Seminar and Sustainability Fellows Program

The flagship method for developing more sustainability-related courses will be a Sustainability Pedagogy Faculty Seminar (SPFS). The SATC will be charged with maintaining the SPFS. Sustainability pedagogy applies to most disciplines and enhances the curriculum when thoughtfully applied. However, not all faculty have had the opportunity or training necessary to incorporate sustainability science into their existing course material. The SPFS would provide interested faculty with tools to accomplish this no matter their discipline.

The SATC will adhere to best practices when developing the SPFS (e.g., *The Piedmont Project at Emory University* and *The Sustainability Across the Curriculum Program at Santa Clara University*.) The SPFS will be a multiday seminar featuring a combination of on and off campus experts. Content will focus on fostering creativity, building faculty community, interdisciplinary teaching, and expertise. Faculty will be awarded a stipend upon submitting an updated course syllabus. Once faculty complete the program, they will be admitted to a Sustainability Fellows program that will meet quarterly to discuss challenges and opportunities for sustainability education and research. The SATC also will support recruitment opportunities to ensure interdisciplinary capacity to offer courses in requisite areas (e.g., “ecological economics” which is a goal of the *Laudato Si’* Action Platform and, as Pope Benedict XVI described, requires scholars to “correct models of growth that seem incapable of guaranteeing respect for the environment and for integral human development, both now and in the future”^{xviii}).

Action #3: Develop and grow sustainability-focused co-curricular groups in all nine colleges

Sustainability-focused co-curricular organizations currently exist within the College of Arts and Sciences (Environmental Science Club and Biology Club), School of Law (Energy, Environment and Sustainability Law Club), and the School of Medicine (Planetary Health and Sustainability Committee). Students and faculty within the Heider College of Business have informally met about forming a sustainability-focused organization for business students. New organizations will be formed organically as student interest in sustainability increases yearly.

Co-curricular groups provide a forum for students, faculty, and staff to plan co-curricular programming focused on sustainability and to organize the infusion of sustainability topics into course content. SATC and the Office of Sustainability Programs (OSP) will organize meetings each semester with co-curricular group leaders to exchange ideas, share programming and network. SATC will develop co-curricular groups in colleges without sustainability-focused organizations.

Goal: Develop a Campus Sustainability Literacy and Culture Assessment and achieve a yearly 25% response rate in first- and fourth-year cohorts by 2028.

Sustainability literacy assessments are designed to evaluate students’ understanding of the interconnectedness of social, economic, and environmental issues and challenges. Sustainability cultural assessments are designed to evaluate sustainability values, behaviors and beliefs and determine the level of awareness of campus sustainability initiatives. The OSP and SATC will work with Analytics and Institutional Research to develop a combined sustainability cultural and literacy assessment.

The assessment will be developed by on-campus experts integrating best practices from the Sulitest, developed by the United Nations’ Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI), and the Assessment of Sustainability Knowledge (ASK) Scale, developed by the Environmental and Social Sustainability Lab at Ohio State University. For best results, a representative sample of the student body will be surveyed during their first and last year on campus. Survey results will inform the OSP, SATC and SGC about the impact of SCI academic goals and actions. The Analytics and Institutional Research team will work with SATC to distribute the yearly survey.



Operations

Creighton University is responsible for more metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent (MteCO₂) yearly than 2,000 single-family homes.^{xix} Carbon footprint reduction will be Creighton’s most impactful action to combat climate change. The SCI is accelerating Creighton’s 2028 emission reduction goal from 40% by 2028 to 50% by strategically reducing emissions while improving campus sustainable practices. As Creighton works toward a 50% reduction in emissions over the next 6 years, SGC will also develop a concrete action plan for achieving carbon neutrality before Creighton’s 2050 commitment.

Creighton produces over 1.6 million pounds of waste a year—much of this waste can be diverted. Creighton has been recycling waste since the ‘90s and composting since 2020. The SCI will outline Creighton’s next giant leap in waste reduction and diversion.

Goal: Reduce scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 50% over a 2010 baseline by 2028 and that same year publish concrete steps to achieve carbon neutrality well before 2050.

Using 2010 emissions as a baseline, Creighton will reduce scope 1 and 2 emissions 50% by 2028. In 2010, Creighton University accounted for 59,550.35 MteCO₂—by 2028, Creighton will be responsible for at most 29775.175 MteCO₂ per year.

Creighton will be carbon neutral before 2050.

Second Nature defines carbon neutrality as no net GHG emissions across all three scopes. The SGC has already begun to work with the University administration to outline concrete steps to reach carbon neutrality. Discussions have focused on eliminating GHG from scopes 1 and 2, producing onsite renewable energy, and/or by purchasing carbon offsets.



Action #1: Develop a scope 3 GHG tracking mechanism

Scope 3 emissions are indirect emissions from assets not owned or controlled by Creighton, but that are directly impacted by Creighton's value chain (e.g., *emissions generated from university-sponsored travel, commuting, waste disposal and capital goods*). Creighton Facilities Management historically collected budgets associated with travel to calculate a portion of campus scope 3 emissions. Outside firms have worked with Creighton to estimate commuter trends. Scope 3 tracking was paused after 2017 due to staffing changes and internal processes.

By 2023, the OSP will develop a new method and mechanism to track scope 3 GHG from University-funded travel and commuting—additional scope 3 emissions will be added to the mechanism by 2028. OSP will partner with Strategic Sourcing, Study Abroad, Athletics, and others to track university-sponsored travel and with Public Safety to track employee and student commuting. OSP will integrate scope 3 emissions into SIMAP to develop a complete GHG inventory. Emission data will be submitted to Second Nature and AASHE STARS annually.

Action #2: Develop a sustainable commuting and travel strategy

University-sponsored travel and employee/student commuting account for most of Creighton's scope 3 emissions. Scope 3 emissions must be eliminated or offset before 2050 to achieve carbon neutrality. The SGC will form the Sustainable Commuting and Travel subcommittee (SCT) while the scope 3 tracking mechanism is being developed. The SCT will be charged with maintaining the scope 3 tracking mechanism and working with the SGC to reduce scope 3 emissions. By 2028, the SCT will submit a plan to the SGC to eliminate university scope 3 emissions before 2050.

Goal: Decrease total campus waste generation by 25% over a 2019 baseline and achieve a 35% waste diversion rate across the University by 2028.

Recycling and composting already exist on campus—these tremendous efforts have allowed Creighton to divert waste since the '90s successfully. The entire Creighton community can do better. Creighton currently diverts between 10% and 25% of the waste produced on the Omaha campus. This number is likely underestimated due to a lack of rigor in data collection.

Action: Establish a Sustainable Waste Management Subcommittee

The SGC will establish a Sustainable Waste Management Subcommittee (SWM). The SWM will consist of Creighton and non-Creighton members at the beginning and end of the campus waste chain (supply to disposal). The SWM will be charged with:

1. Accurately and consistently tracking waste generation and diversion across all campuses
2. Recommending strategies to improve and standardize waste diversion infrastructure
3. Developing a culture of sustainable waste management
4. Integrating composting across campus
5. Eliminating single-use plastic on campus
6. Streamlining and internalizing waste collection

Engagement

Educating students about sustainability through coursework alone is not enough. Creighton has a history of exceptional co-curricular engagement opportunities related to sustainability. For years, the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice has offered environmental justice themed community orientations and service trips. The OSP provides sustainability-focused internships, and sustainability is infused into campus orientation.

The potential for learning outside of the classroom is unlimited. The SCI aims to expand sustainability programming with a focus on peer-to-peer learning. Additionally, programming will be thoughtfully expanded to include faculty and staff.



Goal: Establish Eco-Fellows

A sustainability-focused fellowship program (Eco-Fellows) will be offered to first-year students starting in August 2023. Eco-Fellows will have an academic and residential component. Each first-year residence hall will have a minimum of two Eco-Fellows; Eco-Fellows will be evenly distributed throughout first-year halls.

All Eco-fellows will take a course together, focused on the foundations of sustainability, and change management. Eco-Fellows will work in teams (designated by where they live) to provide peer-to-peer education to their hallmates throughout the year. All coursework will focus on residence hall peer-to-peer education and change management. Eco-fellows will be a vital liaison between the OSP and first-year students.

Goal: Increase the Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund funding by 20% each year until 2025 and double applications annually until 2025

The mission of the Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund (CSSAF) is to contribute to building a culture of sustainability at Creighton University by enabling, supporting, and financing student-driven initiatives that collaboratively tackle interconnected environmental, social, and economic sustainability issues. For the fund to continue, increased funding will be necessary. During 2021, the OSP raised approximately \$5,000 for the CSSAF. By 2025, the fund should regenerate \$10,000 a year to remain financially sustainable beyond initial investments. OSP will be the primary champion of this goal and will work with University Relations to increase funding yearly.

To maximize the funds' effectiveness, OSP will double applications to the fund each year until 2025, with the goal of eight annual applications by 2025. OSP will partner with the Kingfisher Institute to host two idea generation workshops per semester starting in 2023. Idea generation workshops will be evening events for students to transform ideas into applications.

Goal: Create and Sustain a Fundamentals of Sustainable Living Certificate by 2026

One of the biggest questions asked of the OSP is, "How can I become more sustainable?" This certificate offered to all Creighton faculty and staff will answer that question in a holistic and interdisciplinary way. The course will be developed and delivered similarly to the NOVICE program over one academic year with monthly hour-long lessons. Potential sections of the course will include 1) History of Sustainability; 2) Sustainability at Creighton; 3) The Climate Crisis Part 1; 4) The Climate Crisis Part 2; 5) A Sustainable Diet; 6) Ecological Economics (or Sustainable Political Economy); 7) Global Sustainability Part 1; 8) Global Sustainability Part 2; 9) Advocacy and Social Action.



Goal: Create and Sustain a Green Office Certification Program by 2024

A Green Office Program will engage faculty and staff in adopting environmental best practices in the workplace. The program will offer guidance on conserving energy and water, reducing waste and increasing environmental awareness on campus. OSP will create a checklist and rating scale for offices to follow. The more boxes an office checks, the higher their green office rating will be.

An OSP student intern will manage the program, including promotion and certification. Participating offices will be given a sticker or other recognition according to their rating, which they can affix to their door or display otherwise. This program will impact all facets of sustainability, but most importantly, it will infuse sustainability across the University. Participating offices will be assessed yearly to determine program impact.

Goal: Offer Sustainability Focused Campus Tours by 2023

The OSP will partner with Admissions to incorporate sustainability into campus tours and develop self-guided virtual sustainability tours. Virtual tours will be created using an interactive map to display sustainability features across campus. The OSP will work with Admissions to pull data from post-tour surveys to determine program impact.

Goal: Expand the Green Games program to all spectator sports by 2026

In 2021, OSP and Athletics partnered to promote one women's and one men's soccer game as Green Games. Each game was climate neutral through carbon offsets and zero waste through compost and recycling. Additionally, the players wore green warm-up shirts and information was provided on sustainability. OSP and Athletics will expand the Green Games program to incorporate more sports and involve more intentional marketing.

Goal: Advocate for science-based climate, energy, and other ecological public policies

In the Catholic tradition, social justice that advocates to reform systems, structures, and policies is an expression of love and essential to the fullness of faith.^{xx} This is especially true regarding care for our common home.

Pope Francis emphasizes, "Along with the importance of little everyday gestures, social love moves us to devise larger strategies to halt environmental degradation."^{xxi} Pope Benedict XVI stresses, "The Church has a responsibility towards creation, and she considers it her duty to exercise that responsibility in public life, in order to protect earth, water and air as gifts of God the Creator meant for everyone, and above all to save mankind from the danger of self-destruction."^{xxii}

The Society of Jesus recognizes social justice as essential to the mission of Jesuit universities and explicitly calls them to "social projection" that shapes society through civic engagement.^{xxiii} The society has also identified "Caring for Our Common Home" as one of its four Universal Apostolic Preferences.^{xxiv}

In fidelity to its mission, Creighton University will advocate for city, state, regional, national, and global climate, energy, and environmental public policies that care for our common home commensurate with the best available science. Activities may include, but are not limited to, direct lobbying or facilitating expert testimony and consultation. As part of this work, the University will look for collaborative advocacy opportunities with other stakeholders.

Action: Document climate, energy, and ecological advocacy activities on STARS report

Consistent with the SCI guiding principle of Responsibility, Accountability, and Transparency, the SGC will document its climate, energy, and other ecological advocacy activities in the "Engagement—Public Engagement—Participation in Public Policy" section of each STARS report. Additionally, the SGC will include a Social Projection report as a part of the annual SCI update. The Social Projection report will summarize sustainability-focused advocacy by Creighton and the Creighton community.



Reporting

Each goal and action within the SCI will have at least one attached performance indicator or metric. All SCI metrics will be reported to the SGC through various channels. The table below outlines the metrics associated with each goal and action. All goals and actions will be at least reported annually.

The SGC will report metrics to STARS and Second Nature annually, starting in 2023 (reporting year 2022). The SGC will also report to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform when appropriate. SIMAP will be used to inventory campus GHG emissions. The OSP will work with the Analytics and Institutional Research team to develop a qualitative assessment to determine individual program impacts by 2023. Finally, the SGC will release an SCI update each April at a signature Earth Month event.





Name	Timeline	Reporting Party	Metric(s)
Increase sustainability-related courses	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2028	SATC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of sustainability-related courses • % of academic departments with a sustainability-related course
Develop a Sustainability Across the Curriculum subcommittee	Launch: 2022	SGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcommittee established • Curricular sustainability definition established
Develop a Sustainability Pedagogy Faculty Seminar and Sustainability Fellows Program	Launch: 2024	SATC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of participating faculty • # of courses developed through the program • # of students taking SPFS courses • Sustainability literacy, and cultural assessment scores
Develop and grow Sustainability-Focused Co-Curricular Groups in all nine colleges	Launch: 2022	SATC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of Colleges with an associated group • % of students involved • Qualitative assessment of group programming
Develop a Sustainability Literacy and Cultural Assessment	Launch: 2025	SATC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First and fourth year response rates • Change in scores from year one to year four
Reduce scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions and publish concrete steps to achieve carbon neutrality well before 2050	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2028	SGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scope 1 & 2 % reduction over 2010 baseline • Published plan to reach carbon neutrality before 2050
Develop a scope 3 GHG tracking mechanism	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2023	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mechanism created
Develop a sustainable commuting and travel strategy	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2028	SCT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Published plan to eliminate/offset scope 3 emissions before 2050
Decrease total campus waste generation and increase waste diversion	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2028	SWM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total waste produced (lbs.) • Waste diversion (%)
Establish Sustainable Waste Management subcommittee	Launch: 2022	SGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subcommittee established
Establish Eco-Fellows	Launch: 2023	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of students enrolled • % of first-year class interaction • Course evaluations
Increase Creighton Student Sustainability Action Fund funding and applications	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2025	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • % of funding increase • % of application increase
Create and sustain a Fundamentals of Sustainable Living Certificate	Launch: 2026	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enrollment • Course evaluations
Create and sustain a Green Office Certification Program	Launch: 2024	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of offices at each level • # of staff and faculty involved • Yearly participation assessments
Offer Sustainability Focused Campus Tours	Launch: 2023	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of tours • # of participants • % of student applicants from tour
Expand the Green Games program to all spectator sports	Launch: 2022 Complete: 2026	OSP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • # of spectators • Waste diversion (lbs.)
Advocate for climate, energy, and other ecological public policies	Launch: 2022	SGC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Engagement–Public Engagement–Participation in Public Policy” section of each STARS report • Annual Social Projection report summarizing advocacy activities for past year



Future Pathways

In October 2020, Pope Francis initiated a “synodal process” to discern future pathways in the Catholic Church. Synodality is rooted in dialogue and requires persons, as the pope describes, “to speak with courage and frankness (*parrhesia*), namely to integrate freedom, truth and charity. Only dialogue can help us grow. An honest, transparent critique is constructive and helpful.”^{xxv} He continues that “humility in listening must correspond to courage in speaking.”

As recognized in the Introduction, the SCI is an incomplete step along the way toward better caring for our common home. Informed by honest dialogue in a spirit of synodality, and in reference to the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform, Creighton acknowledges the need for work beyond that explicitly outlined in the SCI.

For example, the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform identifies the goal of “Community Resilience and Empowerment.” As a university with campuses in Omaha and Phoenix, Creighton must continually discern innovative ways to sustainably partner with our communities. This will yield activities not outlined in the SCI but important to Creighton’s on-going sustainability work.

The *Laudato Si'* Action Platform also recognizes the goal of “Ecological Economics.” Grounded in Church teaching, this goal entails working for “the defence [sic] and preservation of common goods such as the natural and human environments, which cannot be safeguarded simply by market forces.”^{xxvi} This requires “correcting models of growth which have proved incapable of ensuring respect for the environment”^{xxvii} though actions such as “ethical investments, divestment from . . . any activity harmful to the planet and people . . . and protecting the dignity of workers.”^{xxviii}

Recognizing the relationship of this goal to “Community Resilience and Empowerment” as part of the SCI

guiding principle “Integral Ecology,” an Action Team recommended the university pursue a living wage policy.^{xxix} Pursuant to the SCI guiding principle of Responsibility, Accountability and Transparency, the Team also recommended a Committee on Investor Responsibility to study and raise awareness about social and environmental impacts of financial investments by the university community.

Although these recommendations were not included in the final SCI, Creighton University affirms the *Laudato Si'* Action Platform principle that worker’s rights and social equity—bedrock principles of Catholic social teaching^{xxx}—are essential to integral ecology. These considerations are thus intrinsic to Creighton’s understanding of sustainability and must be part of all future sustainability considerations.

Since *Laudato Si'* emphasizes that “ecological education” which is an Action Plan goal should especially “enlighten those who possess power and money,” an additional pathway could be an integral ecology formation program for all senior administrators and trustees.^{xxxi} This would ensure that those empowered as chief stewards of Creighton’s Catholic, Jesuit mission are able make decisions with a shared awareness of how integral ecology encompasses all activities and that, as Saint John Paul II asserts, “their responsibility within creation and their duty towards nature and the Creator are an essential part” of the Christian faith that animates Creighton.^{xxxii}

The Ignatian charism *magis* and Jesuit motto *ad majorem Dei gloriam*, “for the greater glory of God,” inspire Creighton University to always strive for deeper love of neighbor and all creation. As we celebrate release of the SCI, we do so already discerning our next steps along the way to better care for our common home.





Acknowledgments

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Appendix A—Guiding Principles

The Guiding Principles of the Sustainable Creighton Initiative guided the sustainability planning process, serve as Creighton University’s unique definition of sustainability, and inform continued institutional action. The Guiding Principles describe the desired future for Creighton University; therefore, they are written in the present tense to make the future easier to imagine.

The Mission of Creighton University

As a Catholic university, Creighton is informed by the Catholic intellectual tradition and Catholic Social Teaching. As Jesuit, Creighton is animated by the spiritual and intellectual resources of the Ignatian charism and by the Ignatian commitment to *magis* or the service of God and the universal good. This *magis* is expressed in part through the pursuit of science-based actions in the protection and Renewal of God’s Creation. Caring for our common home and attention to the environmental crisis are essential to our Catholic, Jesuit mission. As comprehensive, Creighton approaches sustainability from a holistic and transdisciplinary lens.

Truth

The scientific and Catholic communities agree that anthropogenic climate change is an existential crisis for creation. To care for our common home, Creighton draws on authentic encounter with human and non-human creation, the best available peer-reviewed science, Christian Scripture and Catholic magisterial teaching. Creighton is particularly attentive to the truth that anthropogenic climate change is an existential and moral crisis for humanity. These truths are the foundation of Creighton’s discernment process. Therefore, these truths, as they relate to sustainability, are shared on the SCI webpage as a reminder of procedural justice.

Peace, Justice and Preservation of Creation

Justice requires reconciliation of injustices between persons, communities and creation. Integral social justice equally considers ecological, spiritual, social, political and economic factors in the discernment of institutional policies and institutional social projection of values into society. Creighton engages in deliberations and actions that emerge from socially just processes that are inclusive, prioritize expertise and pursue reconciliation.

Stewardship through Prudence

The Catholic tradition understands prudence as right reason applied to action. Intergenerational solidarity is best achieved through the application of the precautionary principle. This principle suggests that actions should be taken to avoid or diminish morally and unacceptable harm to human life and future generations. In solidarity with all creation, Creighton prudently stewards human, physical and financial resources informed by the truths available through faith and the best available peer-reviewed science.

Education

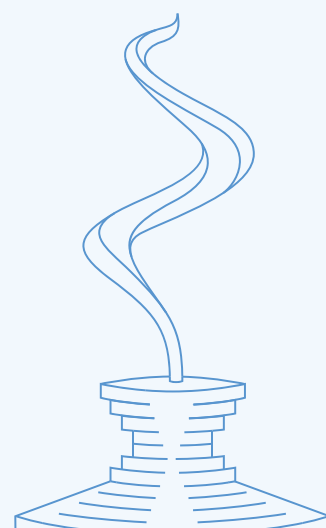
The Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm holistically incorporates context, experience, reflection, action and evaluation into the education process. Creighton promotes the ecological education and conversion of the Creighton, Omaha, Phoenix, state, national and global communities through teaching, research, scholarship, ministry, and collaborative, authentic encounter with human and non-human neighbors. Creighton is especially committed to academic service-learning and undergraduate research experiences.

Integral Ecology

The Catholic tradition views human persons as sacred, social, spiritual and creaturely beings whose authentic flourishing is bound up with morality that guides and transcends financial efficiency. Care for our common home requires systems-level thinking and integrated perspectives that consider the relationships between material, spiritual, emotional, moral, social, cultural, political and economic realities. Creighton advances interdisciplinary learning, applied scholarship and collaborative problem-solving that convene students, faculty, staff, administrators, community members and elected officials to enact just practices and policies.

Responsibility, Accountability and Transparency

Sustainability is the responsibility of the entire Creighton community—students, faculty and staff—all of whom are servant leaders. Effective and just servant leaders authentically encounter others, listen to all points of view, prioritize truth and morality, and respond to feedback. Creighton diffuses the responsibility and accountability of care for our common home across campuses, colleges, divisions, departments and offices. Creighton enacts transparent decision-making processes in which all involved personnel and decision justifications are made known.





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