

WESTERN WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN PROGRESS REPORT 2023



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Executive Summary

On behalf of the Sustainability Engagement Institute (SEI), we respectfully submit this 2023 progress report on Western Washington University's 20-year Sustainability Action Plan (SAP). Educational scholar, Ernest Boyer, believed that the role of higher education is to promote the public good.¹ The world's climate crisis necessitates bold action from higher education entities, and Western Washington University is well-positioned to take leadership.

The intentions of this report are to celebrate the sustainability and climate change work many members of the Western community have dedicated their time, attention, and resources to, and to encourage more of the Western community to work towards Western's shared sustainability goals moving forward. Addressing sustainability and climate change challenges must be the work of everyone. This work requires collaboration, innovation, creativity, and experimentation, through grassroots efforts and leadership support.

This report outlines progress provided by contributors to the SEI and the President's Sustainability Council. To learn more, ask a question, or get engaged, visit the SEI website at <https://sustain.wvu.edu/>, or send us an email at sustain@wvu.edu.

Highlights

This report includes significant progress made in many aspects of Western's SAP. A few of these points of progress are highlighted below:

- 169 students enrolled in sustainability-related majors, minors, or certificate programs.
- In partnership with tribal organizations, Western hosts a number of programs focused on indigenous-settler relationship-building and healing, and integrating sustainability and tribal sovereignty into education systems.
- The Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund (SEJF) funded 17 grants amounting to \$338,000. More than half of these proposals were led by students.
- Western continued to support student, staff, and faculty community learning opportunities through the Sustainability Pathways fellowship program, the Climate Leadership Certificate program, Community Engagement Fellows, and the Students in Community program.
- Western began managing two community farms, which has included initiating a seed-saving project, providing produce to a local community health center's free farm stand, and connecting with nearby neighborhoods.
- Western continued to establish itself as a leader in researching and advocating for social, environmental, and economic improvements in the Salish Sea region and along the Canada-U.S. border.
- Western purchases 95% of its electricity from renewable sources through Puget Sound Energy's Green Direct program. Facilities, Development and Operations (FDO) is continuing to develop a community solar project at the Administrative Services Building, and is analyzing purchasing additional green power to cover 100% of Western's electricity usage.

¹ Rice, Eugene, Ernest Boyer's "Scholarship of Engagement" in Retrospect, *Journal of Higher Education Outreach and Engagement*, Volume 20, Number 1, p. 29, (2016), <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1097218.pdf>,

- Western committed to and began planning for hosting the regional Washington Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC), which will be occurring in March 2024.
- Western received funding to install three micromobility counters on campus and has committed to developing an integrated University Transportation Plan beginning in 2025.
- Western has successfully transitioned most of its grounds management fleet to electric equipment, and has continued transitioning its vehicle fleet to electric by adding battery electric vans and a battery electric truck to its fleet in FY2023.
- Western is developing a sustainable purchasing guide, which will provide purchasers with product diversity classifications, company sustainability statements, and eco-certifications or ecolabels.

Common themes

In collecting feedback from those working on implementing the SAP, we heard some common themes.

- **Lack of leadership support and funding:** many individuals and groups mentioned that lack of funding and perceived lack of leadership support are the biggest barriers to progress on Western's SAP.
- **The COVID-19 pandemic:** the COVID-19 pandemic brought significant changes to Western's programs and operations, and to the needs of its students, staff, and faculty. In FY2023, many programs that were operating before the COVID-19 pandemic have restarted or regained momentum. However, there are some programs that were put on hold during the COVID-19 pandemic that have still not been restarted. In FY2023, Western also responded to new ways of operating and meeting student, staff, and faculty needs that have changed or become more apparent since the COVID-19 pandemic began.
- **Food insecurity:** numerous groups mentioned food insecurity as a significant, persistent sustainability issue that Western students are facing and that groups on campus are working to address. However, food security is not a part of Western's SAP, so progress on food insecurity work has been included in this progress report at the end of the Campus and Community Engagement section. This is a topic that could be included in a future update to the SAP.


About this report


This report outlines known progress made in FY 2023 (July 2022 – June 2023) on Western's [20-year SAP](#), adopted in 2017.² Western's SEI collects feedback on SAP progress from members of campus annually, as it has done in this report (previous annual reports can be found [here](#)).


This year's progress report includes contributions from 18 groups at Western. These contributors are among the many individuals and groups doing the on-the-ground work to

² Due to lateness in reporting on FY2023 objectives, some of the progress in this report occurred in early FY2024. The progress that was completed in FY2024 will be moved to the FY2024 progress report when it is written, and this document will be updated to only include FY2023 progress.

make Western's commitments to social, environmental, and economic sustainability a reality. Contributors' titles are included in parentheses following the narrative about progress that they have reported. In some cases, contributors noted that objectives were high priority, or were in need of leadership support or additional funding. These objectives have been marked with the following symbols. These symbols do not indicate all objectives that need additional resources and support, just those noted by contributors.

 more resources needed

 additional leadership support needed

 high priority

Some of the objectives in this report are marked with the statement “no known progress in FY2023”. This statement does not necessarily mean that no progress on these objectives has been made. It simply means that, in the outreach that the SEI did in collaboration with the President's Sustainability Council, nothing was reported in these areas. If readers are aware of progress not included in this report, please reach out to sustain@wwu.edu to report on it.

Contributors

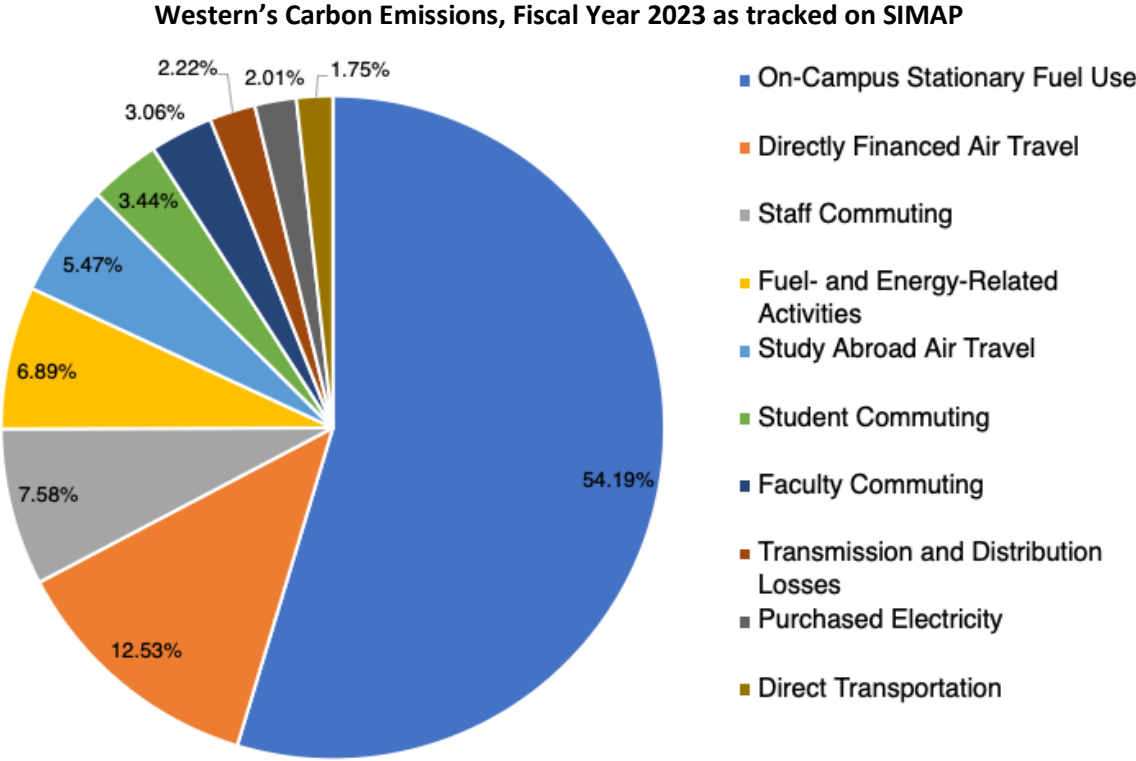
- The President's Sustainability Council
- Sustainability Engagement Institute (SEI)
- Facilities, Development & Operations (FDO)
- Transportation Services
- Travel Services
- Sustainability Pathways
- Foundation for WWU & Alumni
- The Center for Community Learning (CCL)
- Office of Tribal Relations
- Institute for Energy Studies
- College of the Environment
- College of Business and Economics (CBE)
- Human Resources
- The Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI)
- Entrepreneurship & Innovation Academic Programs
- Procurement and Contract Administration
- University Residences
- The Wellbeing Collaborative

Sustainability and Greenhouse Gas Reporting

In FY2023, Western recertified itself through the Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS), a program the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) operates. The program acts as a comprehensive and standardized means for universities around the world to measure and compare their unique sustainability programs and performance relative to other institutions. Western received a silver ranking in 2023, in line with the ranking it received in 2019 and 2013. Western’s STARS report is available [here](#).

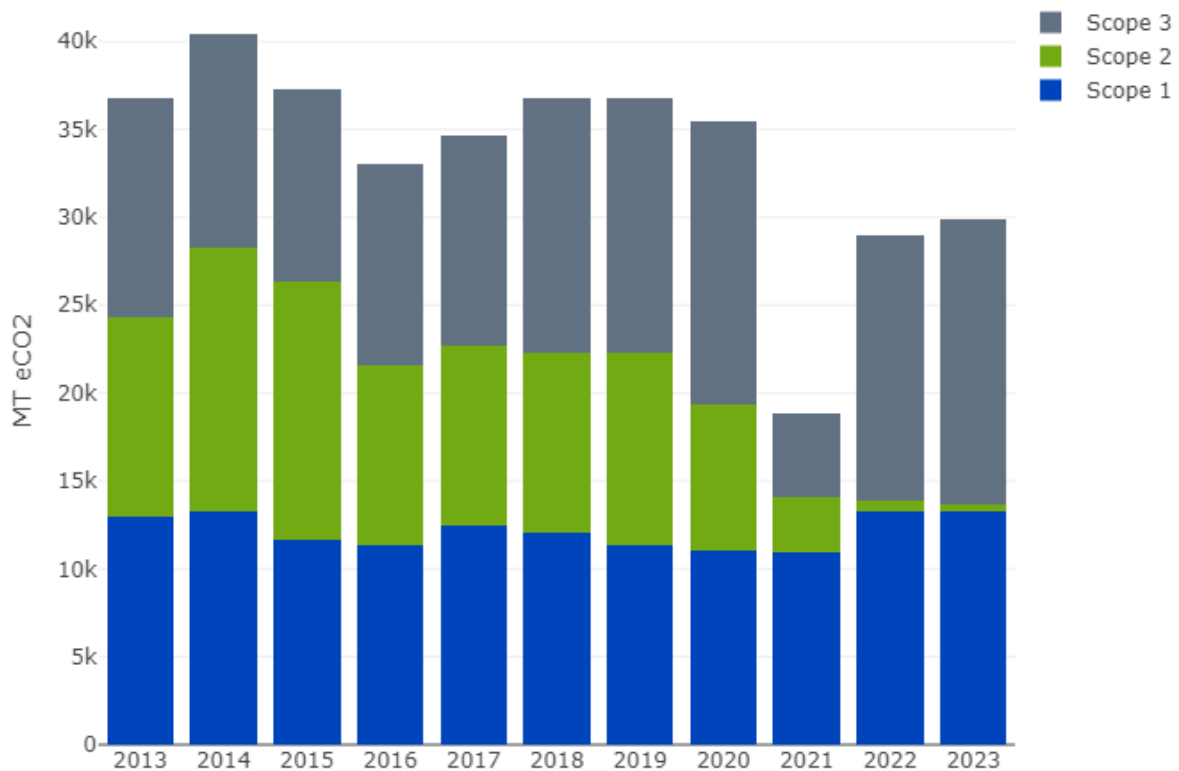
Western tracks its greenhouse gas emissions through Sustainability Indicator Management and Analysis Platform (SIMAP), an internationally used campus-specific greenhouse gas tracking platform. Although SIMAP methodologies and Western’s tracking methodologies have changed since Western began using the platform to track emissions in 2013, this data provides a general picture of how Western’s emissions compare over time.

Western’s main source of carbon emissions is from on-campus fuel use, which is mainly from the fuel used to heat buildings using Western’s steam plant. The next largest source of carbon emissions comes from Western-related air travel and commuting (see Western’s carbon emissions, 2023 graph).



Western’s carbon emissions are broken down into scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions. Scope 1 emissions are direct GHG emissions that are released from sources that are owned by Western, for example, emissions associated with Western-owned furnaces or vehicles. Scope 2 emissions are GHG emissions associated with Western’s purchase of electricity, heat, or cooling. As described above, scope 3 emissions are emissions released from assets that are not owned or controlled by Western, but that Western contributes to through other activities, such as purchasing, commuting, travel, or waste generation.³ The graph below shows changes in Western’s scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions tracked on SIMAP from FY2013 – 2023.

Western’s Carbon Emissions, 2013-2023, as Tracked on SIMAP



³<https://www.epa.gov/climateleadership/scope-1-and-scope-2-inventory-guidance>,
<https://unhsimap.org/cmap/resources/scope3-mapping>

Curriculum and Research

Goal 1: Western’s curricula provide all students opportunities to nurture and create the conditions for a thriving society, economy, and environment (SEE).

1.1: Increase enrollment to 50 students in the Sustainability Studies minor.⁴

Intended completion date: fall 2021

- In 2023, 169 students were enrolled in a sustainability-related program. Western added a Food Security and Policy Minor in 2023, and Western is working on a major update to the Business and Sustainability degree in Winter/Spring 2024.

Number of Students Enrolled in Sustainability-Related Programs, 2023

Sustainability-related program	Number of students enrolled
Urban Planning and Sustainable Development major	52
Business and Sustainability major	46
Urban Sustainability major	20
Climate Leadership Certificate	24
Disaster Risk Reduction minor	5
Environmental Education minor	4
Environmental Justice minor	4
Climate Change minor	4
Sustainability Studies minor	4
Sustainable Design minor	4
Food Security minor	2
Total	169

1.2: Every major has curricular options that include sustainability content.

Intended completion date: 2020

- As of 2023, every college at Western has at least one sustainability-related course. However, every department does not yet have a minimum of one sustainability-related course. The Sustainability Fellows program works towards achieving this objective by supporting faculty in developing new sustainability curriculum. (SEI)
- Students participating in the Sustainability Pathways fellowship and the Climate Leadership Certificate, described in more detail in objective 1.3 and 1.4, complete a 3-credit Campus Sustainability Planning Studio Course. Both programs are open to all majors and are interdisciplinary. (Sustainability Pathways)

1.3: Identify and promote opportunities for engaged learning in the area of sustainability.

⁴ Since the Sustainability Action Plan was adopted in 2017, new curricular options in sustainability have emerged and expanded. We now report on enrollment in all sustainability-related programs.

Intended state date: 2020

- Learning Environment Action Discovery (LEAD), a longstanding eco-restoration and service-learning program at Western that is co-directed by College of the Environment graduate students, furthers sustainability education in both the curricular and co-curricular environment, through a spring quarter seminar class and regular volunteer work parties. (College of the Environment)
- Sustainability Pathways supports undergraduate students pursuing careers in the emerging green economy while advancing sustainability initiatives in the Methow and Okanogan Valleys of North Central Washington. The 11-week residential program pairs paid practicum work experiences in a wide range of sustainability fields with aligned coursework in community-based project management. Sustainability Pathways awarded over \$60,000 in FY2023, bringing capacity to 19 organizational partners in the Methow and Okanogan Valleys while providing immersive experiential learning for students. The students and program partners come from interdisciplinary fields connected to sustainability. This structure helps students develop and apply systems thinking skills. Professional practicum experiences included town planning, ecological restoration, public health, regenerative agriculture, circular economy development, zero waste, rare carnivore research, among others. The third cohort completed their fellowships in August 2022 (18 students). (Sustainability Pathways)
- The Border Policy Research Institute (BPRI) was awarded a partnership grant with collaborators at Simon Fraser University to conduct a 2-year study on the equity impacts of the Canada – US pandemic border restrictions. (BPRI)

1.4: Expand sustainability-related student research opportunities, Independent Study Projects (ISP), to all interested students.

Intended start date: 2020

- The [Climate Leadership Certificate](#) program, started in 2021, includes an independent study (ISP) or senior project component that allows those students to pursue sustainability research and leadership of their choosing on an annual basis (4-8 credits/student).
- Students are eligible to work on sustainability projects for their Climate Leadership Certificate or SEJF grant application through ISP credits, typically overseen by either the SEI's Associate Director or the Business & Sustainability program. In 2023, students worked on a variety of ISP projects, including determining the feasibility of installing an anaerobic digester on campus. (SEI)
- Students participating in the Sustainability Pathways fellowship complete the 3-credit Campus Sustainability Planning Studio Course, which is centered around a needed community-engaged project sponsored by an organization in the Methow Valley. The project teams are interdisciplinary and develop project management skills while completing the necessary background research, analysis, and ability to generate recommendations and materials to advance their projects. Final reports and presentations are delivered for the course, sponsors, and interested community members. Examples of past projects can be viewed on the [Campus Sustainability Planning Studio website](#). (Sustainability Pathways)

Goal 2: Western supports scholarship and teaching that contribute to the understanding and promotion of sustainability.

2.1: Commit resources to promote Washington Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WAHESC).⁵

Intended state date: 2020



- Through a grant from the SEJF, 13 students attended the Washington Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) at Oregon State University in 2023.
- As of 2024, it is unclear whether SEJF funds can continue to support this objective. Additional funds are needed.



Students and SEI staff attending the Washington Oregon Higher Education Sustainability Conference (WOHESC) at Oregon State University in March 2023. (Photo source: SEI)

2.2: Provide funding for three faculty and staff across disciplines to attend conferences that promote sustainability.

Intended start date: 2018

- An SEJF-funded grant project allowed faculty and students from the Morse Leadership Institute (MLI) to travel to the International Leadership Association global conference in Vancouver, BC, in 2023. This conference provided an opportunity for the faculty

5

members to present about MLI's Community Engagement Projects, which are student-led projects grounded in the pedagogy of the UN Sustainable Development Goals and the University of BC's Okanagan Charter. (SEI)

Goal 3: Western recruits and retains faculty and staff who focus on sustainability.

3.1: Maintain annual funding of a total of \$10K for up to ten Sustainability Fellows.

- The Sustainability Fellows program supported five faculty fellows in 2023. The program is on hiatus in 2024, and will return in 2025. (SEI). This program is a faculty learning community, facilitated by the SEI Director, to “train” teaching faculty to infuse sustainability into their disciplinary curricula.

3.2: Create a tenure-track faculty line devoted to sustainability.

Intended completion date: next biennium (2019-2021)



- Due to budgetary constraints, there is no progress on this objective. To the best of our knowledge, it is unlikely that there will be funding to achieve this objective in the next five years. (SEI)

3.3: Increase faculty capacity to offer sustainability-related curriculum

Intended start date: 2019

- The Sustainability Fellows program (objective 3.1) increases faculties' capacity to offer sustainability-related curriculum, and SEI's director offers informal support to faculty who reach out for assistance in developing sustainability-related curricula. (SEI)

Goal 4: Western is home to an institute for sustainability (the Sustainability Engagement Institute – SEI).

4.1: Develop a 5-year strategic plan for the SEI.

Intended completion date: 2019

- In progress. (SEI)

4.2: Begin fundraising campaign for SEI.

Intended state date: 2019

- The SEI director is in contact with the Foundation staff regarding grant writing and fundraising. (SEI)

Campus and Community Engagement

Goal 1: Western is internally organized to support university and community engagement to advance sustainability.

1.1: Complete a university-wide public engagement alignment process to enhance Western's structure and function for public engagement.

Intended completion date: Fall 2019



- No known progress has been made on this objective. The objective is a high priority for those working in public engagement at Western, but there has been little support from leadership to focus on this objective. Other universities have developed similar systems that Western could model a public engagement alignment process after. (CCL)

1.2: Commit to a university-wide system for qualitative and quantitative assessment of public engagement efforts.

Intended completion date: fall 2019

- No known progress has been made on this objective. Objective 1.1 should be completed before this objective is addressed.

1.3: Follow recommendations of alignment process to incentivize community engagement for faculty, staff, and students throughout the university.

Intended start date: fall 2021

- No known progress has been made on this objective. Objective 1.1 must be prioritized before focusing on this objective.

Goal 2: Western's culture and community engagement efforts reflect a strong commitment to sustainability.

2.1: Redevelop student, staff, faculty, and visitor orientation programs to emphasize Western's commitment to education for sustainability.

Intended start date: spring 2017

- New staff orientation includes a presentation on community partnerships by the Center for Community Learning (CCL). (Human Resources, CCL)
- Staff and faculty orientation include links to sustainability initiatives, including information about getting to campus using sustainable transportation. (Human Resources, AVP for AA, SEI)
- See progress for objective 2.2 below for information regarding student orientation programs.

2.2: Expand courses and co-curricular programs for first-year students that teach about local and regional sustainability issues through community engagement.

Intended start date: fall 2018

- First year interest group programs (FIGs) include several sustainability related streams, including Environmental Justice, the Salish Sea, Diverse Voices/Distinct Voices, Global Citizenship, Leading for a Sustainable Future, Climate Change Cognition, Marketing for Social Change, and Clean Energy Transitions (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/first-year-interest-group-courses>)
- First year students are also able to participate in a number of Viking Launch courses that focus on sustainability, including Introduction to the Science of Sustainable Energy, Digging into Bellingham, and Mount Baker Geology (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/viking-launch-courses>)
- New Student Experience Seminars are designed to support new students in establishing their place and direction at WWU. These seminars aim to develop students' social and financial wellbeing on campus (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/new-student-experience-seminars>).
- Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, Western had a robust Sustainability Student Representatives (SReps) program in its first-year residence halls. In this program, students received credit and funding to lead activities with and communicate sustainability best practices to other first-year students. This program has been discontinued due to lack of funding. However, multiple contributors noted the importance of this program in establishing sustainability as a priority early on in students' time at Western and supported bringing this program back. 🗳️

2.3: Improve interpretation of Western-owned grounds to enhance understanding and appreciation of the unique cultural and environmental history of the area.

Intended start date: 2020

- Facilities Development and Operations (FDO) is evaluating a tree identification and mapping program to better share the various species on campus with the public. (FDO)
- Western has made headway on the development of the traditional Coastal Salish Long House, the House of Healing, on campus. (FDO)
- The Sehome Arboretum Board of Governors is updating the arboretum website to better share the history of the Sehome Arboretum. (FDO)

2.4: Establish sustainability-related interactive experiences, cooperatively designed, and supported by WWU and community partners, to help build relationships among members of Western, and with the broader community.

Intended start date: 2019

- The Viking Supported Agriculture program, a community supported agriculture program serving the campus community, expanded operations to both summer and fall/winter farm subscriptions in 2023. (SEI)
- An SEJF-funded grant project, Furniture Fest, established a program aimed at reducing waste in Bellingham by redistributing quality furniture to students in need; this project team partnered with local community partners, such as SSC and Re-Store,

developing and strengthening relationships in efforts to collaborate on common goals (SEI).

- CCL began initiating and co-hosting a series called Connect & Learn Downtown, which was a monthly forum series in collaboration with Spring Church, Reconciliation Anglican Church, and First Baptist Church. CCL began this series in response to the numerous challenges and rapid changes occurring in downtown Bellingham. (CCL)
- SEI, CCL, and Explorations Academy hosted a Learning Together Through Climate Upheaval monthly forum series. The group hosted six forums, each focusing on work being done locally and opportunities for involvement related to one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (CCL and SEI)
- Community Engagement Fellows, a longstanding program that connects educators and community partners across organizational boundaries, returned to in-person cohorts after a 2.5-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. CCL supported five cohorts (three in downtown Bellingham, one at the Deming Library, one at Northwest Indian College), including over 75 Fellows. (CCL)
- CCL hired a program coordinator focusing on community-based food justice and food systems education. CCL began managing both the York Community Farm and City Sprouts Farm in the Birchwood neighborhood. Several students are part of the urban farm team during the summer and academic year. The urban farm team's accomplishments include:
 - Initiating a seed-saving project.
 - Conducting a York neighborhood survey about the farm in collaboration with Power, Privilege, and Environment course.
 - Providing produce to SeaMar Community Health Center's free farm stand.
 - Helping Western SEJF grant recipients with native plant restoration at York Farm.
 - Supporting Birchwood Harvest Celebration Days.
 - Improving York Farm infrastructure, including new compost bays and picnic tables, and removing an old greenhouse. (CCL)
- BPRI has undertaken a series of research projects in partnership with the University of Victoria that focus on the British Columbia-Washington cross-border region. The themes span multiple aspects of cross-border collaboration, including:
 - Transboundary Flood Emergency Management Networks in the Salish Sea: this project seeks to understand how emergencies, crises, and disasters are managed in the Salish Sea transboundary environment at the prevention, response, and recovery stages, using the Nooksack River flood events as a focus.
 - A forthcoming book chapter for *Companion to North American Trade and Integration on Cross-Border Regionalism along the Canada-US Border* will explore multi-level partnerships and collaborations, which include subnational governments (cities, counties, and states/provinces), and private sector initiatives. The chapter highlights the strengths and vivacity of regional actors in pursuing cross-border governance and collaboration from the ground up.

- Stories from the Canada – U.S. border during COVID-19: this project is an online mapping project that collects personal stories of people who live in the borderlands and how their daily lives were impacted by the border restrictions. (BPRI)
- BPRI is working with partners at the Future Borders Coalition and Pacific NorthWest Economic Region (PNWER) regarding research to support the upcoming FIFA World Cup, to be hosted by Seattle and Vancouver, including analyzing how to streamline border processes and collaboration to facilitate increased flows and bi-national tourism during this major sporting event hosted on both sides of the border. (BPRI)
- BPRI participates in the [Cascadia Innovation Corridor](#) (CIC) initiative, which has expanded over the last several years and shifted away from a focus on the tech sector to developing the ‘world’s most sustainable cross-border mega-region.’ This is a very broad goal, but the relevance for this discussion was the momentum and high-level interest in more cross-border integration between Western Washington and British Columbia. BPRI participated in two events in 2022 supporting this initiative, a celebration at Peace Arch Park, which highlighted the region's longstanding cross-border collaboration, and a roundtable with Washington’s Lieutenant Governor, Denny Heck, which brought together key stakeholders to discuss goals and the values of strengthening collaboration and integration between Washington and British Columbia. (BPRI)
- BPRI participated in a fireside chat with the Deputy Minister of Transport Canada in 2022, in which BPRI facilitated a discussion about many cross-border issues related to cross-border trade recovery post-COVID, supply chain recovery, environmental issues like flooding, forest fires, and climate change and their impacts on transportation, and how Transport Canada is working with stakeholders and U.S. Government partners to respond to these issues.



Students hosting an end-of-summer event to redistribute furniture to incoming WWU students. (Photo source: SEI)

2.5: Create a system for continually learning about (listening and dialoguing) evolving local to global sustainability opportunities and challenges.

Intended completion date: 2020

- Western's Outreach and Continuing Education unit offers numerous sustainability-related courses and experiential learning opportunities for community members, including adults and youth. These included [place-based community learning classes](#), [sustainability-related courses and programs for professionals](#).
- CCL offered Engaging Places Tours, which provided meaningful, place-based learning opportunities for members of the public and Western students, faculty, and staff. In 2023, the program grew to include work parties. CCL partnered with the following community groups in FY2023 to host these tours: Whatcom Museum, ReSources, Common Threads Farm, Kulshan Community Land Trust, and City Sprouts Farm. (CCL)
- CCL also hosted monthly Place Matters gatherings for community members interested in place-based learning. (CCL)
- College of the Environment continues to host the Environmental Speaker Series, and the Institute for Energy Studies hosts the Energy Speaker Series.

2.6: Support the efforts of regional campuses to enhance their sustainability activities.

- SEI meets regularly with other universities in the region to discuss sustainability initiatives, share resources, and learn from one another.

- Western participates in two university reporting systems, Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS), a campus sustainability scoring program, and SIMAP, a university campus focused carbon and nitrogen-accounting platform, both of which Western reported on in 2023. SEI actively participates in forums through the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), and WOHESC. SEI is hosting the WOHESC conference in 2024. (SEI)

Goal 3: Western's sustainability resources are easily accessed by the public.

3.1: Enhance web materials that enable the public to access sustainability resources.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- SEI continues to have a student employee dedicated to updating sustainability resources online. SEI also has a staff who supports the sharing of campus sustainability resources on social media and through email newsletters. (SEI)
- FDO maintains [campus energy dashboards](#), and is looking to upgrade these dashboards. (FDO) Western publishes publicly available research and data on sustainability-related issues. (SEI)

3.2: Increase use of vibrant, visible, and accessible venues across the Salish Sea Region for community sustainability events

Intended start date: fall 2018

- In 2023, Western committed to and began planning for hosting the WOHESC conference, taking place March 4-6, 2024. (SEI, College of the Environment)
- CCL hosted the Community Engagement Fellows workshop in May, which focused on teaching system convening methods and modeling the social learning practices of Community Engagement Fellows. Participants came from universities in Australia, California, Oregon, and Washington. The workshop included an evening event with over 75 local people and our workshop participants. CCL explored possibilities for decolonization and cultural healing at the mouth of Xwotquem (Whatcom Creek). (CCL)
- CCL manages two community farms, further described in objective 2.2, that act as vibrant, visible, and accessible venues in Bellingham. (CCL)
- The [Outback Farm](#) continues to act as a venue for social gatherings for the campus and the greater Bellingham community.

Goal 4: Western engages respectfully with Coast Salish Peoples in recognition that the university occupies traditional Coast Salish lands.

4.1: Create a university-wide tribal advisory committee to advise the President and University community on issues such as curriculum, campus life and gathering spaces, interactive facilities and operations, and engagement opportunities.

Intended start date: 2018



- no known progress.

4.2: Establish a permanent tribal liaison position to build relationships between Western and the Coast Salish communities.

Intended completion date: 2018

- Complete. Laural Ballew, Western's Tribal Liaison, works to ensure that Western engages respectfully with Coast Salish peoples in recognition that the university occupies traditional Coast Salish lands.

4.3: Expand and enhance institutional partnerships and collaborations with tribal institutions.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- Co-facilitating the NXT Gen cohort of CE Fellows with indigenous-led Whiteswan Environmental (WE)--focused on indigenous-settler relationship-building and healing--was especially challenging and rewarding. The cohort was quite large (~20-25 in-person) and hybrid (~5-8 online members) with several WE facilitators online. We included 3 field experiences to local indigenous sites. In August, we're co-hosting a multi-day transboundary workshop in the San Juan Islands with WE. (CCL)
- Western is in the development process of the [House of Healing](#), a traditional Coast Salish Long House, on campus.
- During FY2023, Sustainability Pathways convened a Sustainability & Sovereignty community of practice for high school Career and Technical Education teachers and administrators interested in integrating sustainability and tribal sovereignty education into their programs. The community of practice became a collaboration with the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Office of Native Education, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Youth Development Program, North Central Educational Services District, and Methow Valley School District, with 9 school districts and 6 community education/youth services organizations participating. (Sustainability Pathways)

Other progress: food insecurity



Food security is a major sustainability issue that the Western community and the regional community is currently facing but is not included in Western's 20-year Sustainability Action Plan. Many groups on campus are making significant strides to address food insecurity within the campus community.

- A Food Insecurity working group has been developed, which includes members from Leadership & Community Engagement, Student Life, the Food Insecurity Network student group, and SEI.
- There are seven food pantries on campus that are heavily used by students, particularly since the COVID-19 pandemic began. More information on the food pantries can be found [here](#).
- Viking Supported Agriculture has expanded to provide both summer and fall/winter farm subscriptions. (SEI)
- CCL's new community farms and the Outback Farm help to provide students with space to learn about agriculture and food insecurity.

- Members of the Students for Climate Action club focused efforts to address food insecurity on campus in FY2023.

Despite all of the progress being made on this topic, food insecurity is a significant, long-term issue that requires additional leadership support and long-term funding.



Members of the Students for Climate Action club at their free produce pop-up stand during Earth Week in April 2023. (Photo source: SEI)

Built Environment

Goal 1: Carbon Neutrality: Reduce the carbon intensity of university energy supply sources and achieve 100% net university carbon reduction.

1.1: In the short term, identify and implement financially viable carbon reduction projects to reduce carbon emissions by 15%, per state requirements.

Intended completion date: 2020

- This objective has been met. Western's next state mandated goal is a 45% Greenhouse Gas (GHG) reduction by 2030. In 2023, we reported on emissions through SIMAP GHG reporting, State Agency GHG reporting, and the Clean Buildings Act. (FDO)

1.2: In the mid-term, where reduction is not yet technologically feasible, seek and commit to credible carbon offsets for all continuing direct hydrocarbon.

Intended completion date: 2030

- Western purchases 95% of its electricity from renewable sources through Puget Sound Energy's Green Direct program. FDO is continuing to develop a community solar project at the Administrative Services Building, and is analyzing purchasing additional green power to cover 100% of Western's electricity usage. (FDO)



The Skookumchuck Wind project, a renewable energy project that is part of Puget Sound Energy's Green Direct Program, which Western purchases 95% of its electricity from.⁶

⁶ <https://www.pse.com/en/green-options/Renewable-Energy-Programs/green-direct>

1.3: In the long term, achieve carbon neutrality, first through reduction and secondly through offset.

Intended completion date: 2035

- Exterior LED lighting retrofits were completed at Fairhaven Complex and Ridgeway Complex, replacing 177 lamps on exterior wall packs with LEDs. Dark Sky Compliant LED retrofits were completed on 45 light poles in many parking lots on campus. (FDO)
- The residence halls continue to participate in the Go for the Green competition, an annual competition to promote energy conservation and sustainability.
- The annual Go for the Green competition reduced energy consumption across 7 residential communities by a total of 13,259 kWh in electrical usage and 1,301.1 MMBTU in steam usage during a one-month (February 2023) duration compared to the average usage between February 2018, February 2019, and February 2020.
 - Note: Buchanan Towers residence halls were discounted in the evaluation due to renovation and Birnam Wood Apartments were also excluded due to a lack of full metering capabilities.
 - Metering for Go for the Green was captured in collaboration with FDO staff and translated to digestible metrics for competition purposes.
 - With an 11% overall reduction in energy for February and 10% of the residents pledging to adopt sustainability practices, Mathes Hall won the 2023 Go for the Green competition. (University Residences)
- American Society of Heating, Refrigerating, and Air-Conditioning Engineers (ASHRAE) Level 2 Energy Audits were completed on 12 of the largest buildings on campus and FDO is evaluating the recommended energy efficiency measures from these audits. (FDO)



Help us to

GO FOR THE GREEN!

all February long!

WHAT IS GO FOR THE GREEN?
Go for the Green is a month-long energy-saving competition between on-campus residential communities. The community that conserves the most energy compared to previous years wins an all-you-can-eat dessert and hot drink bar during dead week!

WHY SHOULD I PARTICIPATE?
To help your hall get free desserts, of course! Also, if you pledge to help reduce energy in your community, you receive a free poster and sticker pack for the event.

HOW DO I PLEDGE?
You can pledge by accessing the GFTG web page through the QR code below! All pledges will receive weekly updates during February on how their community is doing compared to other communities.

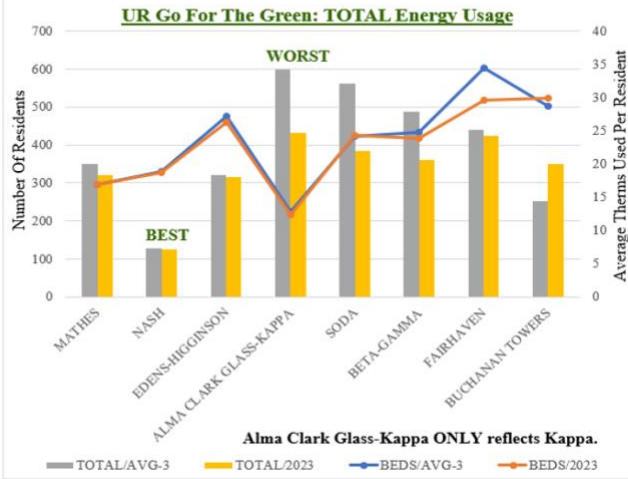
Help win an all-you-can-eat dessert bar for your community by conserving energy this February!

WWU Housing Sustainability | UNIVERSITY RESIDENCES | WESTERN UNIVERSITY MAKE WAVES.



Go For The Green! Total Blended Usage Results

NOTE: AVG-3 reflects the 3-year average calculated for the months February 2018, February 2019 & February 2020.

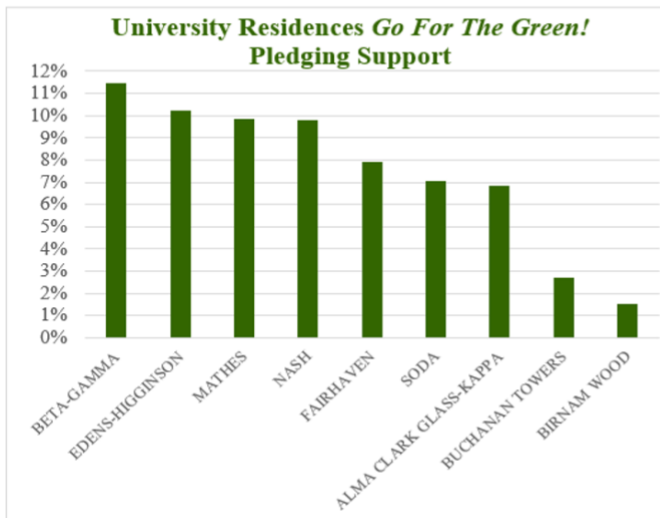


COMMENTS

- 2023 GFTG Winner is **NASH**.
- Buchanan Towers usage increased in 2023 when compared to past 2018 thru 2019 average (AVG-3).
- Data collected through February 24, 2023.

RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY	BEDS/ AVG-3	BEDS/ 2023	TOTAL/ AVG-3	TOTAL/ 2023
MATHES	295	295	20.1	18.3
NASH	331	326	7.4	7.1
EDENS-HIGGINSON	476	460	18.3	18.1
ALMA CLARK GLASS-KAPPA	225	216	34.1	24.6
SODA	421	424	32.0	21.9
BETA-GAMMA	433	418	27.8	20.6
FAIRHAVEN	601	519	25.1	24.2
BUCHANAN TOWERS	503	522	14.4	20.0
BIRNAM WOOD	483	463	TBD	TBD
	3,768	3,643		

Go For The Green! Pledging Support Results



COMMENTS

- Biggest pledging support provided for **BETA-GAMMA**.
- We look forward to an even greater competition next year.
- We appreciate your efforts in saving energy this month and encourage you to do remain focused on this effort.

RESIDENTIAL COMMUNITY DATA		PLEDGING SUPPORT		
NAME	BUILDING CODES	PLEDGES	TOTAL	RATE
1A. MATHES	MA	29	295	9.83%
1B. NASH	NA	32	326	9.82%
1C. EDENS-HIGGINSON	EH, EN, HG	47	460	10.22%
2A. ALMA CLARK GLASS-KAPPA	CG, RK	41	399	6.84%
2B. SODA	RS, RO, RD, RA	30	425	7.06%
2C. BETA-GAMMA	RB, RG	48	418	11.48%
3A. FAIRHAVEN	FX01 - FX12	41	518	7.92%
3B. BUCHANAN TOWERS	BT, BQ	14	520	2.69%
3C. BIRNAM WOOD	BW01 - BW07, BC, BL	7	463	1.51%
		289	4,024	7.18%

Goal 2: Maximize cost-effective energy efficiency investments in university buildings, while steadily improving building performance and occupant comfort and health.

2.1: Continue to reduce the need for new construction by prioritizing the use of current facilities.

- No known progress in FY2023.

2.2: Develop energy performance targets and sustainable design standards.

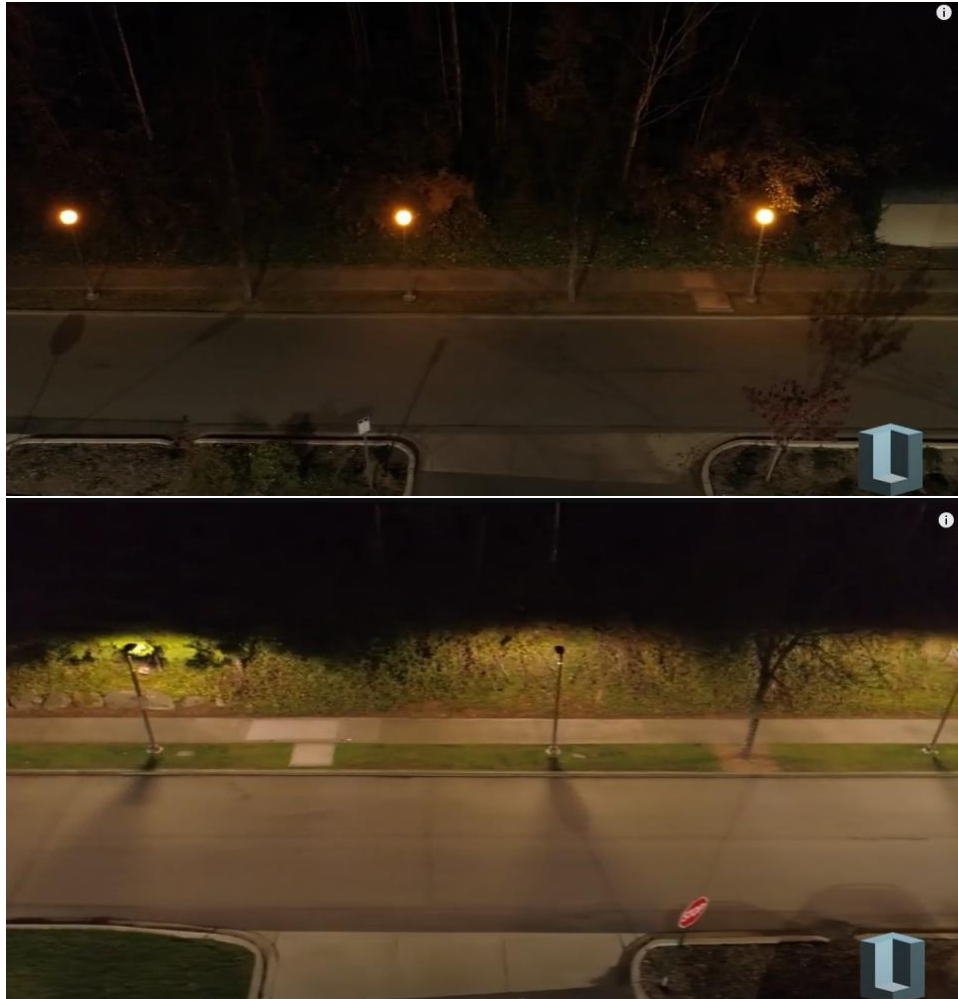
Intended completion date: 2018

- No known progress in FY2023.

2.3: Minimize light pollution while maximizing energy efficiency in exterior lighting.

Intended completion date: 2025

- As reported in objective 1.3, exterior LED lighting retrofits were completed at Fairhaven Complex and Ridgeway Complex, replacing 177 lamps on exterior wall packs with LEDs, Dark Sky Compliant LED retrofits were completed on 45 light poles in many parking lots on campus, ASHRAE Level 2 Energy Audits were completed on 12 of the largest buildings on campus and recommended energy efficiency measures are being further evaluated. (FDO)



Before and after photos of LED lighting retrofits described in objective 1.3 and 2.3. (Photo source: FDO)

2.4: Adopt policies or guidelines designed to minimize energy use and emissions from non-fixed assets such as refrigerators, freezers, custodial, and other mobile equipment.

Intended completion date: 2025

- As part of FDO's compliance with the Washington Clean Buildings Performance Standard, FDO will be developing operation and maintenance plans for non-fixed assets in FY2024. (FDO)

2.5: Employ clean, renewable energy sources on- or off-campus to offset existing and new demands.

Intended completion date: 2030

- Western offsets 95% of electricity usage through a Green Direct contract with PSE, as explained in objective 1.2. In 2023, this was met through wind power but will increasingly include solar energy. A community solar project is in development on the Administrative Services building. Kaiser Bosari Hall will have a large solar array designed to offset 100% of its energy usage when it is built. (FDO)

2.6: Design a university plan to support deep, holistic renovations and energy efficiency investments.

Intended completion date: 2035



- A feasibility study was conducted to transform the district heating system from natural gas boilers and steam distribution to a low carbon source using hot water distribution. A request for proposal (RFP) process is underway to hire an owner's representative to assist in the design and planning process. (FDO)

2.7: Design, construct, renovate, and operate buildings using a closed-loop process involving minimal to no waste in all processes.

Intended completion date: 2035

- No known progress in FY2023.

Goal 3: Green Building Certification: Acquire third party certification of the environmental performance of new and existing university buildings through the USGBC's LEED certification or equivalent process.

3.1: Complete the USGBC's LEED Gold certification or equivalent for all new and fully renovated university buildings.

Intended start date: 2018

- No known progress in FY2023.

Goal 4: Utilize accepted Low Impact Development (LID) practices as standard to reduce rainwater/storm-water volume, improve outgoing water quality, and make on-campus use of collected rainwater.

4.1: Apply LID to all new construction, major renovation and other projects that increase paved surface area or otherwise significantly change university grounds.

Intended completion date: 2035

- No known progress in FY2023.

Goal 5: Build and maintain publicly accessible databases of energy use, water consumption, and carbon emissions for all university buildings.

5.1: Build and maintain a publicly accessible database of available information for ongoing energy consumption and emissions for all university buildings.

Intended completion date: 2018

- Complete. FDO is currently seeking a new energy management platform with more robust dashboard features. (FDO)

5.2: Build and maintain a publicly accessible database of available information for ongoing water consumption for all university buildings.

Intended completion date: 2018

- Complete. FDO is currently seeking a new energy management platform with more robust dashboard features. (FDO)

5.3: Build and maintain a publicly accessible database of available information for ongoing carbon emissions for all university buildings.

Intended completion date: 2018

- Complete. FDO is currently seeking a new energy management platform with more robust dashboard features. (FDO)

Goal 6: Develop an active learning, living laboratory within Western's built environment.

6.1: Expand support for courses and co-curricular programs for students that teach about local and regional stewardship solutions through skill development and campus and community engagement.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- An SEJF funded grant project, "Project ZeNETH Construction Phase," funded the construction of a net-zero, energy efficient mobile tiny house on campus, which will serve as a tangible design project and test bed for students in courses related to design, urban planning, business and sustainability, biology, electrical engineering, and more. (SEI)
- Multiple Institute for Energy Studies (IES) courses offer opportunities for students to develop skills about local and regional stewardship solutions since the Institute's founding in 2012. New additions in 2023 include an Energy Assessment Program (EAP), led by IES Professor Nipun Goel, in which students conducted no-cost energy efficiency assessments for local facilities (such as schools and small- and medium-sized industries). Students gained hands-on experience and help address local and regional climate and energy goals. Professor Froylan Sifuentes also joined the Puget Sound Energy Resource Planning and Advisory Group, which enabled him to bring timely, real-world experience with local utility resource planning into his teaching. (Institute for Energy Studies)



A design of what the Project ZeNETH net-zero tiny house will look like when construction is completed. (Photo source: SEI)

Student Life

Goal 1: Students have a solid foundation for understanding cultural and global interdependence.

1.1: Increase participation in programs that connect students to sustainability in the local, regional, and global community beginning fall 2017.

- The SEJF grant program funded a project, "LEAD Reforestation Demonstration Project," which brought the Western community together through the planting of a native climax mini forest on campus. This project was led by LEAD, and allowed students and volunteers to better understand global environmental interdependence and be empowered to engage in local actions that contribute to global solutions. (SEI)
- CCL hosted "Cultivating Communities of Practice" workshop in July 2022 in collaboration with Beverly and Etienne Wenger-Trayner – world leaders in social learning theory and practice. CCL is currently the only host for their workshops in North America and will be co-hosting and co-facilitating another workshop in July 2023. Travis Tennesen became the first "honorary member" of the Wenger-Trayner's Social Learning Lab because of the CCL's innovative social learning work. The "design clinic" process that the CCL has refined was featured as a recommended social learning practice in Wenger-Trayner et. al's newly published *Communities of Practice within and across Organizations: A Guidebook (2023)*.
- CCL hosted Dominic Savio, from Uganda, in November for two days in Bellingham. Dominic is our co-convenor of the Community Engagement Fellows: Africa program, which CCL facilitated in fall and spring for African community leaders from 10+ countries. CCL introduced him to a variety of colleagues in the CE Fellows network and discussed ways to advance our partnership. In 2023-2024, CCL will explore ways to create joint learning opportunities for Western students, faculty, and staff and our CEF: Africa network. (CCL)

- CCL further formalized and restructured the Students in Community program, which involved 11 students this year. These work-study student employees serve at a CCL community partner organization, contribute to CCL-hosted events, and provide community learning opportunities for each other and the campus. This program provides students with a strong sense of belonging, an opportunity for authentic community and challenging work. This program holds great promise for student retention, mental health, career discernment, and community impact. (CCL)



Students and community members planting seedlings during a work party as part of the LEAD Reforestation Demonstration project, funded by the SEJF grant program. (Photo source: SEI)

1.2: All first-year Western students, including transfers, will engage in co-curricular programs around social, economic, and environmental (SEE) justice as part of their first year of experience at Western.

Intended start date: fall 2020

- First year interest group programs (FIGs) include a number of sustainability related streams, including Environmental Justice, the Salish Sea, Diverse Voices/Distinct Voices, Global Citizenship, Leading for a Sustainable Future, Climate Change Cognition, Marketing for Social Change, and Clean Energy Transitions (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/first-year-interest-group-courses>)

- First year students are also able to participate in several Viking Launch courses that focus on sustainability, including Introduction to the Science of Sustainable Energy, Digging into Bellingham, and Mount Baker Geology (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/viking-launch-courses>)
- New Student Experience Seminars are designed to support new students, including first generation new students, in establishing their place and direction at WWU. These seminars aim to develop students' social and financial wellbeing on campus (<https://firstyear.wvu.edu/new-student-experience-seminars>).
- Western is developing first year programming specifically for first generation students. This program will have multiple tracts, including a sustainability track. This program will be offered in 2024.
- First-year residents are invited to engage in a [9-month sustainability co-curriculum](#) in the residence halls, with three quarterly themes: solid waste reduction, energy consumption, and water resources, as described below. (University Residences)
 - Solid waste reduction:
 - See objective 1.3 in Waste Objectives as it relates to the Residence Hall Reuse Program, integrating residents into the sustainable practice of reusing in a cyclical borrowing program, diverting dorm-specific living essentials from the landfill during on-campus move-in.
 - The Residence Hall Reuse Program prioritizes reservations to students that fall into the categories of PEL Grant-eligible, First-Generation, out-of-state, and international. Reservations for the program are opened to the general audience once priority groups have secured access to in-demand items, prioritizing the affordability and accessibility goals of the program. In-store checkout was made available after the AS Info Fair for reserved items that had unsuccessful checkouts (no-show pick up appointments) and residents who did not take advantage of reservations before arriving on campus.
 - Students regularly engage in education on proper waste sorting with digestible material:
 - Fliers were distributed to all residents upon moving in, located in their welcome bags detailing participation opportunities and
 - Students engaged with effective compost sorting at the annual AS Info Fair, learning what is and is not compostable.
 - Increased signage at drop-off depots and digital maps of drop-off locations supported the proper disposal of compost in the residence halls.
 - Sorting guides and Compost 101 infographics were placed in residents' rooms to share the importance and effective strategies for composting in such spaces.
 - During Fall 2022, the Sustainability Extravaganza event was hosted to instill confidence in proper sorting on campus, with the collaboration of the AS Recycle Center and Zero Waste Western, through interactively simulating waste sorting. Additionally, the event promoted other campus partners' work with sustainable practices.

- During Fall 2022, Housing Sustainability hosted an event in collaboration with the WWU Makerspace to teach residents how to sew their own reusable utensil pouch, providing the materials and second-hand utensils to reduce single-use utensil use while eating on and off campus.
 - During Fall 2022, Housing Sustainability hosted sustainable pumpkin carving in collaboration with University Residences and New Student Services and Family Outreach as a part of Fall Family Weekend. The event encompassed:
 - An educational zine (micro magazine) that included facts regarding the waste of jack-o-lanterns, ways to repurpose pumpkin scraps, and how to sustainably carve a jack-o-lantern during the event hosted by Residence Life.
 - Composting resources provided during the event to divert food scraps from the landfill.
 - Following the event, Zero Waste Western provided an interactive “Pumpkin Smash” to encourage students to compost their jack-o-lantern after the holiday, diverting food waste from the landfill.
 - See objective 2.5 of Waste Objectives regarding the efforts of the Residence Hall Reuse Program as part of the 9-month sustainability curriculum.
- Energy consumption:
 - The annual Go for the Green competition encouraged residents to reduce energy consumption with small behavior changes. 289 residents pledged during tabling engagements to: wash laundry on cold, turn off the lights when leaving a room, bundle up before turning up the heat, take shorter and colder showers, and unplug electronics when not in use.
 - These high-impact practices were identified in collaboration with FDO.
 - The Go for the Green website and posters distributed in residence communities detailed the importance of reducing energy consumption and how it will support them after they no longer live on campus.
 - Residents who reduced their consumption the most compared to previous years’ baseline data won an all-you-can-eat dessert bar, incentivizing action, and participation.
- Water resources:
 - During Spring 2023 Earth Fair, Housing Sustainability hosted a table repurposing water bottles from the AS Lost and Found to promote the reduction of single-use water bottles purchased on campus and the use of water bottle refill stations with the distribution of location maps.
 - With a focus on resource-intense consumerism, Housing Sustainability hosted a Spring Clothing Swap, diverting unwanted items from the landfill, encouraging the exchange of used goods, and reducing the need for resources in the production of new items.

- Additionally, the event asked residents to donate non-perishable food and hygiene products to be redirected through the WHOLE pantry.
- Housing Sustainability supported the efforts of the Dining Dollars Project, a student-founded program intended to allow students to redirect unused dining funds to purchase non-perishable items from on-campus eateries for peers, increasing food security.



Go for the Green flyer, tabling, and final event. (Photo credit University Residences)

1.3: Begin and/or enhance collaborations with other local education institutions in developing and supporting SEE justice co-curriculum: local schools, Whatcom Community College (WCC), Northwest Indian College (NWIC), and Bellingham Technical College (BTC).

Intended start date: 2020

- During FY2023, Sustainability Pathways convened a Sustainability & Sovereignty community of practice for high school Career and Technical Education teachers and administrators interested in integrating sustainability and tribal sovereignty education into their programs. The community of practice became a collaboration with the Washington State Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction Office of Native Education, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation Youth Development Program, North Central Educational Services District, and Methow Valley School District, with 9 school districts and 6 community education/youth services organizations participating. (Sustainability Pathways)

Goal 2: Through structured community and campus-based co-curricular learning experiences, students gain knowledge and insight of sustainability in practice.

2.1: Enhance and increase co-curricular opportunities for student participation in campus-based sustainable practices.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- SEI, CCL, and Explorations Academy hosted a Learning Together Through Climate Upheaval monthly forum series. The group hosted six forums, each focusing on work

being done locally and opportunities for involvement related to one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. (CCL and SEI)

- Residence Hall staff received training and continued education regarding the 9-month sustainability co-curriculum during regular engagements with Housing Sustainability, educating and empowering hall staff to engage in conversation regarding participation in sustainable practices. (University Residences)
 - These engagements were also followed up with emails detailing information that could be used in sessions with their residents to educate and advertise engagement opportunities.
- Engaging residents in co-curricular opportunities with campus-based sustainable practices is bolstered by Housing Sustainability's 12-month consistent collaboration with FDO, the SEI, and the Associated Students (AS) Recycle Center. (University Residences)
 - Education opportunities with campus-based sustainability practices included the SEI's Earth Fair for Earth Day, cross-promotion of events with the Zero Waste Western, AS Recycle Center's Recovery Drive, the opportunity for engagement with cross-campus partners at the Sustainability Extravaganza, and promotion of the quarterly Swipe Out Hunger, Dining Dollars Project, and sustainable dining practices.
 - Additional partnerships with various campus and student groups are integrated as needed. These partnerships, such as being included into the efforts of the Campus Sustainability Planning Studio course save Western University Residences money and increase promotion of University Residences programmatic value.



University Residences participating in the Earth Day Fair (photo credit University Residences)

2.2: Increase student participation in service learning and civic engagement that connects to SEE sustainability.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- Ten students serve (in both voting and non-voting capacities) on the SEJF committee, developing skills in civic engagement while voting to approve funding for grant projects, updating rules of operation, and adapting to the ever-changing sustainability needs on campus (SEI)
- Two students sit on Western's [President's Sustainability Council](#).
- The [Climate Leadership Certificate](#) program, started in 2021, includes an independent study or senior project component that allows those students to pursue sustainability research and leadership of their choosing (4-8 credits/student).

- The [Morse Leadership Institute](#) offers classes and student research opportunities that focus on interdisciplinary sustainability topics.
- College of Business and Economics (CBE) started the [Entrepreneur-Innovator-Changemaker's Story Projects \(ESP\)](#), a 10-year voyage of discovery to seek out, explore, collect and share lesser-known human-centered, experiential stories of entrepreneurs, innovators and changemakers as they individually and collectively self-discover, understand, grow, change and impact themselves and the world around them based in the U.S.'s Sustainable Development Goals. (CBE)

2.3: Improve sustainability literacy throughout co-curricular learning.

Intended start date: 2018

- No progress in FY2023. Western used to assess sustainability literacy of its student body through the [Western Educational Longitudinal Study \(WELS\) survey](#). However, sustainability literacy questions were recently removed from this survey, and, as a result, Western no longer has a way to measure improvements in sustainability literacy.

2.4: Increase the number and quality of opportunities for undergraduate and graduate students to engage in co-curricular SEE sustainability focused projects, research, and grants.

Intended start date: 2020

- In FY2023, 17 grant projects were funded through SEJF; more than half of these proposals were led by students. All of these grants add up to over \$338,000 in funding awarded for projects aimed at positively impacting students on campus. (SEI)
- The Climate Leadership Certificate program offers students opportunities to complete summer practicums with organizations in the Bellingham area and in the Methow Valley. Students can focus their final projects on co-curricular, community-based topics. In 2023, Climate Leadership Certificate students completed final projects on mapping wetland restoration in Bellingham, zero waste events in Bellingham, and addressing food insecurity and adapting local food systems in Bellingham. (SEI)
- CCL further formalized and restructured the Students in Community program, which included 11 students in FY2023. These work-study student employees serve at a CCL community partner organization, contribute to CCL-hosted events, and provide community learning opportunities for each other and the campus. This program provides students with a strong sense of belonging, an opportunity for authentic community and challenging work, and holds great promise for student retention, mental health, career discernment, and community impact. (CCL)

2.5: Increase and further develop co-curricular education and outreach programs targeting sustainable living practices.

Intended start date: 2018

- The SEJF project, Furniture Fest, a student-led initiative housed within the Office of Off-Campus Living, helps students develop sustainable living practices by recycling and reusing furniture that would otherwise end up in landfills. (SEI)

Goal 3: Social, Economic, and Ecological (SEE) sustainability principles are integrated in student career and lifelong practices.

3.1: Cultivate student capacity and efficacy in creating positive change in SEE sustainability.

Intended start date: 2025

- The sustainability-related majors and minors, Sustainability Pathways program, and the Climate Leadership Certificate program, described in detail in the Curriculum and Research section, all aim to build students' capacity and efficacy to create positive change in their careers and in lifelong practices.
- Western also hosts an environmental and sustainability jobs career fair every year in February.

3.2: Increase the number of pathways into SEE sustainability-based careers available to Western students.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- SEJF funded three projects in FY2023 that allowed students to attend regional and/or national conferences, including the American Planning Association's national conference pictured below. Students had an opportunity to network with like-minded professionals, expand their perspectives, and build professional opportunities.
- As mentioned in objective 3.2, Western also hosts an environmental and sustainability jobs career fair once per year.

3.3: Graduating students have a demonstrated commitment to lifelong SEE sustainability.

Intended start date: 2035

- SEI runs a sustainability pledges program that can be accessed [here](#).



American Planning Association's National Conference in Philadelphia, in April 2023. (Photo source: SEI)

Dining Services

In Fall 2023, Western switched dining vendors from Aramark to Chartwells. Because of this transition, we were not able to collect any information on FY2023 progress in Dining services. Chartwells and the Western Dining Services teams are prepared to report on progress in the following areas for fiscal year 2024. There is limited known progress in any of the Dining Services goals or objectives. The goals and objectives are explained below.

Goal 1: Research and explore new and emerging technologies, practices, and policies to increase sustainable performance in existing and new dining facilities.

1.1: Create a more efficient model to deliver food service to campus.

Intended completion date: 2019

1.2: Achieve sustainable maintenance and renovation practices, and equipment purchasing.

Intended completion date: 2035

1.3: Reduce resource consumption (such as water, energy) by 10% of current baseline.

Intended completion date: 2035

Goal 2: Increase environmental best practices for dining service providers and vendors.

2.1: Ensure 100% packaging of goods that University Dining Services produces is compostable/recyclable.

Intended completion date: 2020

2.2: Increase local/regional food purchasing; WA, OR, ID, BC to 25%.

Intended completion date: 2020

2.3: increase REAL food purchases to 25% by 2020. o Rationale: The University formally signed the Real Food Challenge in April 2016. We will continue working with student groups to meet our objective.

2.4: Implement a vendor environmental practices survey

Intended completion date: 2020

Goal 3: Provide resources and opportunities for the campus and community to increase understanding and engage in sustainable food practices.

3.1: Continue educating campus and surrounding community about healthy and sustainable consumption practices.

- Food insecurity has been a significant focus on the campus community in FY2023 and into 2024. Additional information on food insecurity can be found in the Campus and Community Engagement section.

3.2: Develop a mutually-enhancing relationship between Outback and University Dining Services.

Intended start date: 2017

3.3: Explore funding options for offsetting increased costs to students as UDS works to meet Real Food Challenge and other local, regional food commitments.

Intended start date: 2017

3.4: Continue to engage with the local and regional community to develop a sustainable food system model that links local producers with larger consumer entities.

Goal 4: Become zero-waste in all campus dining locations.

4.1: Develop a recycling and compost program for all retail (dining) locations and their offices that results in zero waste.

Intended completion date: 2020

4.2: Develop a recycling and compost program for all residential dining halls and their offices that results in zero waste

Intended completion date: 2020

4.3: Develop a recycling and compost program for all catering sites and their offices that results in zero waste.

Intended completion date: 2020

4.4: Establish a monitoring system to identify base-line waste metrics.

Intended completion date: 2025

Grounds

Goal 1: Reduce the consumption of natural resources in grounds maintenance.

1.1: Develop and implement the use of a preferred plant species list to reduce water consumption for each landscape type—formal, semi-formal, and native.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- This specific objective has been met. Additional work on this topic includes two separate SEJF grant projects - "LEAD Reforestation Demonstration Project" and "Native Landscapes Phase II: Art Annex". Both of these focused on planting native species on campus in efforts to reduce water consumption for both plots of land. (FDO)

1.2: Develop a dashboard of irrigation water consumption per irrigated area.

Intended completion date: fall 2017

- This objective is complete. However, FDO is exploring replacement software systems. (FDO)

1.3: Evaluate the viability of rain and soil moisture sensors to reduce excess water consumption.

Intended start date: fall 2017

- Complete. (FDO)

1.4: Increase and enhance the use of compost and yard debris used on campus for moisture retention and weed suppression.

Intended start date: 2018

- FDO composts Western leaf debris starting in October and continually turns the pile through winter to help break down the organic material. By May, FDO usually has a good 30-40 yards of Leaf Compost. FDO will periodically start a new compost pile with spent annuals and perennial die back. This pile is also used but not as frequently as the leaf debris because the pile is often compromised by weed seeds that float about during the grow season. (FDO)

Goal 2: Reduce air and noise pollution using sustainable landscape equipment.

2.1: Evaluate all equipment requests to determine whether a viable electric alternative exists.

Intended start date: 2017

- This objective is implemented and ongoing. FDO has implemented an all-electric fleet of combi motors. These combi motors have attachments that are frequently used for weed trimmers, stick edging, hedge trimmers, brushes, and blades. FDO has also introduced four electric backpack blowers. FDO has four handheld electric blowers that are used for quick applications and clean ups. FDO tests electric walk-behind and riding lawn mowers but has found that these models are not quite at the level needed for Western's use. FDO is waiting for the technology to improve on these models

before replacing gas mowers. Once there are commercial grade electric mowers that can handle the workload like FDO's gas mowers, FDO will then push to replace the mower fleet with electric mowers (see objective 2.2 for more details). (FDO)

2.2: Reduce carbon impact of vehicles and equipment to the Outdoor Maintenance shop as budget allows.

- Four battery powered backpack blowers (described in objective 2.1) have been fully implemented with great success. Areas where battery powered push mowers could be used have been identified with plans to move toward these options in FY2024 and FY2025. FDO has purchased Battery Electric Vehicle (BEV) pickup truck and vans to support in outdoor maintenance work (described in the Transportation section). (FDO)

Goal 3: Reduce pesticide use through Integrated Pest Management.

3.1: Continuing education classes in Integrated Pest Management for all gardeners, annually.

- Pest management continues to be an important part of the grounds management operations and continuing education. Gardeners participate in education/recertification with Washington State University's Integrated Pest Management program at Whatcom Community College. (FDO)

3.2: Establish baseline of pesticide reduction.

Intended completion date: 2018

- All pesticides and fertilizers are tracked through AiM for reporting and management purposes. The use of herbicides has greatly decreased in the past years. There are certain applications where using an herbicide is absolutely paramount in controlling aggressive noxious weeds. Besides treating Japanese Knotweed and Lesser Celendine with Glyphosate (as recommended by the Whatcom Noxious Weed Board), FDO does as much as possible to reduce weeds using mulching, planting beneficial plants to out compete weeds, and using horticultural vinegar and mechanical controls. (FDO)

Goal 4: Enhance stormwater treatment and reduce pollutant runoff from impervious surfaces across campus.

4.1: Continue to protect water quality by complying with all DOE-required stormwater maintenance activities.

- Western is compliant in stormwater maintenance activities. Western owns its own street sweeper and completes regular street cleaning to reduce storm water pollutants from impervious surfaces. FDO is coming up with a plan to get the Happy Valley bioswales working so that FDO can regularly maintain them.

4.2: Establish regular street-sweeping contract to reduce potential pollution runoff to surface waters.

Intended completion date: 2020

- This objective is complete. FDO purchased a street sweeper and uses the street sweeper to reduce contaminated runoff. FDO also tested a battery powered street

sweeper for the new South College Drive area, and is evaluating the benefits and costs of that system. This battery powered unit is currently cost prohibitive. Continual research is being done to identify other options to fill the need for a compact sweeper in addition to FDO's full-size unit. (FDO)

Goal 5: Provide education on sustainable practices and utilize campus grounds to foster environmental stewardship.

5.1: Continue goal of employing at least six (6) seasonal student employees in the Outdoor Maintenance shop.

- FDO has been employing four seasonal student workers per quarter. They have been a crucial part of the outdoor maintenance team and strategy to maintain campus. (FDO)

5.2: Continue to improve the educational component of the student employee program.

- Every quarter, FDO works with students to educate them on our horticultural practices, plant identification, and general landscape maintenance and management. (FDO)

5.3: Make available educational opportunities on and around Western-owned grounds to enhance understanding and appreciation of the unique environmental setting of Western and its relationship to other global ecosystems.

- Two separate SEJF grant projects - "LEAD Reforestation Demonstration Project" and "Native Landscapes Phase II: Art Annex" - focused on planting native species on campus, all while providing educational opportunities to promote an understanding of restoration, stewardship, and the local environment. FDO works closely with SEJF grant proposals that focus on this topic. There is one SEJF project that was recently approved to replace unused lawn areas with native plantings. There will be a plaque installed with information on the plants and a QR code that the public can scan for more information. (FDO, SEI)



Students and community members planting seedlings during a work party as part of the LEAD Reforestation Demonstration project, funded by the Sustainability, Equity, and Justice Fund grant program. (Photo source: SEI)

Procurement

Goal 1: Encourage the use of sustainable businesses.

1.1: Develop “Sustainable Purchasing Guidelines” within Procurement processes, inclusive of lifecycle accountability, vendor information, embodied energy and emissions, and social equity practices.

- In partnership with the SEI, the Procurement Office has established a model list of products and services with their associated environmental and equity concerns, as well as a cross-reference to State of Washington Green Purchasing guidelines and State requirements associated with those products. This model list is to provide content and preparation for a Sustainable Purchasing Website. (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- Procurement has issued a request for proposal for a Supplier/Vendor Onboarding and Management System that incorporates required and preferred features to obtain data from university suppliers and vendors to complete reporting of supplier/vendor diversity classifications, company sustainability statements, and eco-certifications or ecolabels that apply to goods and services supplier/vendors provided to Western. There are systems that address higher education needs regarding sustainability by providing customization and flexible reporting tools, and/or additional partnerships to vet suppliers/vendors regarding sustainable business practices. (Procurement and Contract Administration)

1.2: Acknowledge the importance of purchases from local and regional business.

- Business Services has developed a Local Vendor Website in order for campus purchasers to search for local businesses that provide goods and services they require. (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- Business Services continue to partner with the Washington State Office of Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprises (OMWBE), including regular meetings and sharing bid opportunities. (Procurement and Contract Administration)

Goal 2: Increase the percentage of use of sustainable products and natural resources throughout our supply chain.

2.1: Increase the use of recycled and reclaimed products.

- Western’s Procurement and Contract Administration has been working on reducing the use of individual printers on campus, and replacing them with fewer large printers to be shared across a group of users. (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- Procurement and Facilities Procurement staff have been focusing on reducing packing materials in delivered goods. (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- An SEJF-funded project, "Furniture Fest," combatted furniture waste that accumulates on the streets whenever students move out of their housing, by collecting furniture, refurbishing it, and redistributing it to future students for free. (SEI)



Furniture available for students, free of charge, during Furniture Fest's end-of-summer distribution event. (Photo source: SEI)

Goal 3: Increase the number of sustainable materials and supplies available in the bookstore for students and greater campus.

3.1: Increase percentage of purchases from local and regional businesses by 10%.

Intended completion date: fiscal year 2018

- In addition to the OMWBE protocols developed in 2022, Business Services has developed a local vendor website for campus purchasers to look for local providers (as described in objective 1.2). (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- A team from Business Services reached out to local businesses to encourage them to register with OMWBE and to work with Western. (Procurement and Contract Administration)
- Western is working with the new Western dining provider (Chartwells) to establish contracts with local food vendors to offer more options to campus event organizers. (Procurement and Contract Administration)

3.2: Increase sustainable textbook options by 10%.

Intended completion date: fiscal year 2018

- No known progress in FY2023.

3.3: Develop key criteria to evaluate suppliers when we consider the introduction of new products and the replenishing of existing ones.

Intended completion date: fiscal year 2018

- Sustainability statements and questions have been incorporated into Procurement RFP processes.
- A Request for Proposals (RFP) for a Supplier/Vendor Onboarding and Management System included questions about system functionality to vet suppliers/vendors on their sustainability practices. The University hopes to have a System that provides vetting and/or allows customization of collection of supplier/vendor data regarding sustainability.

3.4: Continue to improve the visibility of the bookstore's sustainable offerings.

- No known progress in FY2023.

Goal 4: Prioritize methods of accessing library materials that have a smaller carbon footprint.

Library Services is currently restructuring their sustainability goals to better align with borrowing and acquisition practices that have the lowest carbon footprint and are the most ethical, therefore, the objectives below are on hold for FY2023.

4.1: Encourage faculty to request and use materials purchased in e-form rather than paper.

4.2: Encourage faculty to use resource sharing opportunities like document delivery and Inter-Library Loan (ILL), rather than ordering materials.

4.3: Encourage publishers to use more sustainable materials in their publications.

Goal 5: Designate the Facilities Management Fleet Services as the institutional office responsible for coordinating and supporting all university vehicle (specialized, departmental, and fleet) purchase and life-cycle decisions.

5.1: Consolidate the coordination of university vehicle purchases and life cycle management.

- FDO considers sustainable vehicle purchasing and fleet management, as described in the Transportation section and in the Grounds section.
- FDO has developed an electrification plan including infrastructure improvements needed for charging and full fleet conversion.

5.2: Develop a vehicle procurement guide as part of the greater university e-procurement process.

- No known progress in FY2023.

Transportation

Goal 1: Western recognizes its role as a member of the larger transportation community and engages in local, regional, and state transportation issues and solutions.

1.1: Develop an integrated University Transportation Plan, including all components of campus transportation.

Intended completion date: fall 2018.

- A Western transportation plan or transportation demand management (TDM) plan is scheduled to begin in 2025. (Transportation Services)

1.2: Pursue Western representation on the City of Bellingham Transportation Commission for sharing data, providing input on planning processes, and cooperation on shared goals.

Intended start date: 2017

- This objective was deemed to currently not be an appropriate objective by Transportation Services because the Transportation Commission is a mayor appointed position. Western and City of Bellingham Public Works staff met ad hoc to discuss cooperation, shared goals, and City of Bellingham Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan updates. These groups are working towards regular quarterly meetings. (Transportation Services)

1.3: Pursue an integrated relationship between Western and Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) executive and planning staff, and the WTA Board, establishing a framework for collaboration on current and future goals.

Intended completion date: 2017

- Quarterly meetings between WTA and Western occurred in FY2023. Shelby Zimmerman, Director of Transportation at Western, attended WTA's Rapid Transit work group meetings and met with WTA for monthly operational updates and several ad hoc meetings. (Transportation Services)

1.4: Include Western employee and student transportation options in community resilience and disaster preparedness planning, and in communication to the broader campus community.

Intended completion date: 2020.

- Transportation Services is working on completing this objective with Western's Director of Emergency Preparedness. (Transportation Services)

1.5: Identify and measure the current efficacy of transportation options for equitable access to local institutions of higher education, including Western's extension campuses.

Intended completion date: 2025

- An SEJF-funded grant project, "Campus Micromobility Counters," funded the installation of three micromobility counters on major bike routes on Western's main campus to collect data on micromobility ridership; the goal is to allow campus and regional planners, as well as decision makers, to have the data necessary to

understand current use patterns and determine how changes to programming and infrastructure can affect ridership. (SEI)

- A student travel survey will take place in February 2024. The most recent survey to identify and measure current efficacy was completed in 2018. (Transportation Services)



Future location of campus micromobility counters, which will be installed in Spring/Summer 2024. (Photo source: SEI)

1.6: Begin advocacy at the state level for regional connectivity that supports reduced student reliance on automobile travel.

Intended completion date: fall, 2017

- This objective was deemed to currently not be an appropriate objective by Transportation Services because this objective is the responsibility of both WTA and Skagit Transit. These entities are the transportation authorities for their respective counties. While Western Transportation Services coordinates with both agencies on this, it is the agencies' responsibility to advocate at the state level for regional transportation. (Transportation Services)

Goal 2: Improve safety for users of all transportation modes through education and infrastructure improvements, prioritizing by vulnerability.

2.1: Adopt Vision Zero for campus.

Intended completion date: fall, 2018

- This objective was deemed to currently not be an appropriate objective by Transportation Services because Vision Zero would need to be adopted by the City of Bellingham, and it currently utilizes "Complete Streets" methodology. (Transportation Services)

2.2: Identify and develop a list of pedestrian and bicycle access and safety improvements to campus infrastructure, including service roads.

Intended completion date: June 2018

- Transportation Services has received a Western SEJF grant to install 3 bike counters (2 south campus, 1 north campus). (Transportation Services, SEI)
- ADA upgrades to address curb cuts and stairs were completed in summer 2023. Rectangular rapid flashing beacons were installed on Bill McDonald Parkway near Buchanon Towers, and bike lanes on South College Drive were installed in FY 2023. (Transportation Services)

- Western’s Transportation Services has participated in City of Bellingham's Pedestrian and Bicycle Master Plan Update, which will identify improvements that will be made over the next 10 years. (Transportation Services)

Goal 3: Reduce climate impacts of employee and student Western-related ground travel.

3.1: Reduce employee drive alone commute rates by 10% annually over the next five years improving bus, bicycle, walking, and carpooling options.

- Employees have free bus passes on their Western Cards that can be used for all fixed routes in WTA and Skagit Transit buses and WTA paratransit trips. Western has priority carpool parking. Employees can purchase pay-by-day permits to encourage alternative transportation one or more days a week. Western employees in some units can work hybrid, remotely, or flexed schedules to reduce commutes (4-10 weeks or 9-80 weeks). Employees have the opportunity to participate in Smart Trips and Love to Ride programs, which encourage alternative transportation through incentives. Every new employee receives a personal email encouraging alternative transportation. In 2023, neighborhood guides were developed and published on Western’s Transportation Website on ways in which to get to Western by bike or bus. (Transportation Services)
- Measurement of progress on this objective is currently unknown. However, an employee survey will be conducted (per Washington state law) in spring 2024. (Transportation Services)

3.2: Reduce commuter student-driving rates by 10% annually for the next five years improving bus, bicycle, walking, rideshare and car-share, and carpooling options.

- Students taking one or more credits on campus are automatically charged the Active Transportation Fee and provided a WTA bus pass, Skagit Bus pass, and access to the Starlight Shuttle. All other students can opt-in to this fee and be granted access to these services. (Transportation Services)
- Western-supported bike events have encouraged biking to and from campus (Bike Month, Bike to Work and School Day, bike classes, and group rides). (Transportation Services)
- Measurement of progress on this objective is unknown. However, a student survey will be conducted in February 2024. The last student survey was completed in 2018 and, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, was not continued on its 3-year schedule. (Transportation Services)

3.3: Reduce impacts of regional university-related ground travel 10% annually over the next five years.

- In 2023, Travel Services adopted new travel budget restrictions and [requirements for supervisors who approve](#) travel that included a requirement to implement alternatives to travel, such as video and teleconferencing, and encourage carpooling and public transportation. (Travel Services)

Goal 4: Reduce climate impacts of Western-related air travel.

4.1: Collect and make publicly available data on all air travel.

Intended completion date: fall, 2018

- Western’s air travel data is collected and tracked through its SIMAP platform. Efforts are underway to make this information more publicly available. Air travel from 2013-2023 are included below:

Miles of Air Travel, 2013-2023 as tracked on SIMAP			
	Air travel for Faculty/Staff	Student Study Abroad Air Travel	Total
2023	6,748,281	not currently reported	N/A
2022	4,740,235	2,946,578	7,686,813
2021	246,415	not reported	N/A
2020	5,382,892	4,215,008	9,597,900
2019	6,116,205	7,755,498	13,871,703
2018	5,469,721	9,025,878	14,495,599
2017	2,697,748	7,373,046	10,070,794
2016	3,372,166	6,131,972	9,504,138
2015	2,465,844	5,521,168	7,987,012
2014	2,929,372	5,051,364	7,980,736
2013	3,969,671	5,415,982	9,385,653

4.2: Provide options to travelers for off-setting carbon.

Intended completion date: 2020

- No progress in FY 2023.

4.3: Pursue a carbon off-setting system that benefits the local community.

Intended start date: 2020

- No progress in FY 2023.

Goal 5: Annually decrease impacts of university fleet vehicles.

5.1: Reduce the GHG emissions of the university fleet [by 10%].

Intended completion date: fall, 2018

- In FY2023, FDO received its first battery electric vehicles (BEV) vans and the BEV pickup truck, which are now in use on campus. Western continues to optimize vehicle use while focusing on a central management process. Currently, FDO is reviewing grant opportunities that would allow additional charging stations to be installed at the Physical Plant as the battery electric fleet continues to grow. (FDO)



Two of Western's new battery electric vehicles. (Photo source: FDO)

5.2: All Western-owned vehicles continually meet WA State requirements for greenhouse gas emissions.

- Western-owned vehicles are continuing to meet Washington State requirements for greenhouse gas emissions. (FDO)

5.3: Collect information for all university fleet vehicle usage and energy consumption.

Intended completion date: 2018

- All information for Western fleet vehicle usage and energy consumption is tracked by FDO. (FDO)

5.4: Carbon neutrality for every university-owned vehicle.



Intended completion date: 2035

- As described in objective 5.1, two BEV Ford Transit vans have been delivered and are in use within the trades at FDO. One Ford BEV pickup has been delivered and is in use within FDO as a shared support vehicle. In FY2022, Four Nissan Leafs were purchased and are being used by FDO and as shared support vehicles. (FDO)

Waste

At the time this report was written, SEI had not received progress information from any waste management services. If progress is submitted, this report will be updated and posted to the Sustainability Action Plan webpage.

Goal 1: Create uniform waste collection receptacle standards across Western, providing compost, recycling, and landfill bins.

1.1: Provide portable recycling and composting receptacles with appropriate signage for all events hosted on Western property and by Western-affiliated groups.

Intended start date: fall, 2018

- No known progress for FY2023.

1.2: Eliminate paper towel waste.

Intended completion date: 2020

- No known progress for FY2023.

1.3: Expand and improve collection of non-traditional recyclable materials.

Intended start date: fall, 2020

- The annual Recovery Drive hosted in the residence halls, as a collaboration between the AS Recycle Center and Housing Sustainability, offered an opportunity to divert unwanted items during residential move out to various community resource hubs and the Residence Hall Reuse Program.
 - The Residence Hall Reuse Program collected items into a circular borrowing program, increasing the affordability and accessibility of higher education at WWU. During the 2022-23 academic year, the Residence Hall Reuse Program collection accrued a total of 600 items diverted from landfills, added over \$3,000 worth of inventory through collected donations totaling over \$20,000 worth of inventory: expanding the program from 379 available items to 411 and from 46% to 83% of inventory in use by residents.
 - Note: Not all items collected were circulated for borrowing, as the curated inventory accepts high-demand items. The remaining donations were distributed to community partners such as Wise-Buys, DVASAS, and the Tiny Home Village. (University Residences)
- During the 2022-23 academic year, Housing Sustainability collected abandoned bikes from on-campus residential communities to integrate into the circular borrowing program, increasing accessibility and affordability of higher education. (University Residences)



Residence Reuse Program inventory (photo credit University Residences)

Residence Reuse Program Inventory Use, 2022-2023 school year

2022-23			
SUB-CATEGORY	Checkouts	Inventory	% checked out of inventory
A1. APPLIANCES	26	31	84%
A1. MICROWAVES	73	79	92%
A1. MINI FRIDGES	97	98	99%
A3. OTHER	9	14	64%
A3. TUPPERWARE	10	11	91%
X. LIGHTING	25	26	96%
X. OTHER	22	26	85%
X. RUGS	6	7	86%
X. STORAGE SOLUTIONS	65	79	82%
X. TECHNOLOGY	18	22	82%
Y. TWIN XL MATTRESS PADS	3	5	60%
Grand Total	354	398	89%

1.4: Divert waste from the landfill by providing opportunities for campus to recycle and compost effectively and efficiently.

Intended completion date: 2025

- Data from bi-weekly waste audits assessed the capacity and contamination of compost totes; analysis to be used in rightsizing the frequency of collection and improving the efficacy of composting to avoid contamination hindering the possibility of composted food scraps being repurposed. These efforts are directly applicable to a reduction in financial expenditure for waste collection services.

- Data identified around 37% contamination and common contaminants such as misplaced trash bags, single-use food packaging, metal/plastic-lined paper cartons, etc. (University Residences)

- Residence halls increased waste signage at waste depots and paper towel composting locations (kitchenettes, restrooms, etc.) and have improved the composting efforts in on-campus residential communities. (University Residences)
- The opt-out residential composting program was complemented with in-room education for more effective waste sorting. (University Residences)

1.5: Identify funding sources to expand Big Belly recycling program.

Intended completion date: 2017-2019 biennium

- No known progress for FY2023.

Goal 2: Institutionalize management practices and policies for waste collection.

2.1: Create mechanisms to connect the different departments that manage waste.

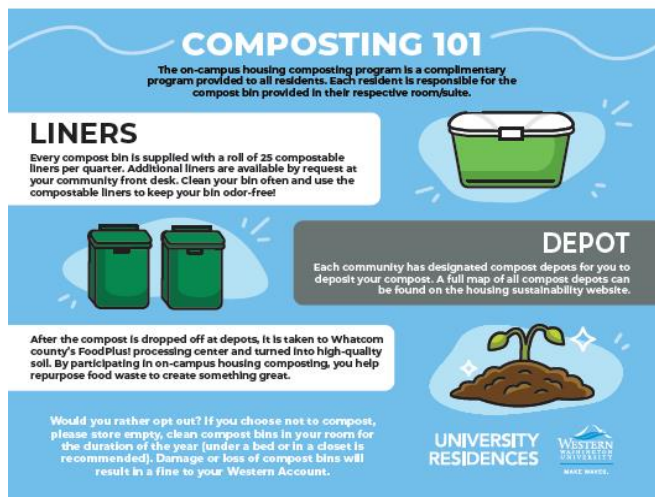
Intended completion date: fall, 2020

- No known progress for FY2023.

2.2: Institute quarterly waste management meetings across stakeholders to address issues and propose improvements to waste reduction systems.

Intended start date: fall 2017.

- No known progress for FY2023.



Residence Hall Compost Program infographic and tabling event. (photo credit: Residence Halls)

2.3: Formalize, with Facility Design and Capital Budget staff, Big Belly recycling stations as a university standard for outdoor bins.

Intended start date: 2018

- No known progress for FY2023.

2.4: Formalize Western's Ban on Single-Use water bottle sales.

Intended start date: fall, 2017

- No known progress for FY2023.

2.5: Create an engaged citizenry, consistent expectations, and student buy-in to waste reduction.

Intended start date: fall, 2020

- As part of the Residence Hall Reuse Program, participating residents gain an understanding of how circular borrowing can impact their consumption habits and diversion of unwanted items from alternative waste streams. With 225 participating residents and capturing the demand of 660 residents, the consistent growth of the Residence Hall Reuse Program exemplifies the value of such a program and encourages the institutionalization of like programs. See the additional verbiage in Objective 1.3 of Waste Objectives as it relates to the Residence Hall Reuse Program. (University Residences)
- The Residence Compost Program in-room materials and new installation of supplemental educational resources (Compost 101 and Sorting Guide) in the living spaces provide a consistent expectation as an opt-out program, where residences are equipped with the materials and knowledge to integrate sustainable practices for diverting food waste from the landfill. (University Residences)

2.6: Manage waste wisely at all events hosted on Western property and by Western-affiliated groups by fall 2020.

- No known progress for FY2023.

2.7: Initiate systematic waste data-collection.

Intended start date: winter, 2019

- No known progress for FY2023.

2.8: Implement a Zero Waste Certification program.

Intended start date: winter, 2020

- No known progress for FY2023.

Goal 3: Provide opportunities for waste reduction education to Western faculty, staff, students, and visitors on accepted waste reduction practices.

3.1: Continue to create and improve opportunities for students to be directly involved with Zero Waste Western.

- Climate Leadership Certificate students researched the prospect of bringing an anaerobic digestion system to Western, and researched waste management challenges in Western's on-campus housing. (SEI)

3.2: Provide waste reduction training to all staff and faculty.

Intended start date: 2020

- Students, in partnership with On-Campus Housing, have been working on designing and implementing a waste training course that eventually everyone at Western will be required to take; the first iteration of the course will be taken by staff members of certain offices around campus, to test for efficacy.

Goal 4: Reduce electronic and hazardous waste.

4.1: Develop a framework for a university-wide centralized chemical purchasing system.

Intended completion date: 2022

- No known progress for FY2023.

4.2: Reduce quantity of hazardous academic lab waste per student.

Intended completion date: 2030

- No known progress for FY2023.

4.3: Improve university-wide usage and replacement of computers, especially in general use computer labs.

Intended completion date: 2022

- No known progress for FY2023.

Investments

Goal 1: Increase awareness and adoption of environmental, social, and governance (ESG) criteria in the selection of WWU investments.

1.1: Give due consideration to ESG criteria exercised by the companies and/or funds in which University investments are made.

- No known progress in FY 2023.

1.2: Make investment holdings information publicly available, including but not limited to fund performance against ESG metrics (as available).

- No known progress in FY 2023.

Goal 2: Through its decision-making and communication processes, the university will ask the Foundation Board to consider including additional investment criteria, including ESG, in its selection of investments or investment managers, and communicate those decisions to the university community.

2.1: Support the Foundation in publicizing its Climate Aware Investment option to prospective donors.

Intended start date: end of 2018

- No known progress in FY 2023.

2.2: Ask the Foundation Board to consider setting a goal to have a meaningful amount of endowment holdings invested in the Climate Aware Fund.

Intended start date: June 30, 2021

- In 2019, The Foundation committed over half of the endowment portfolio to a Sustainable Multi-Asset Growth Fund (SMAG), managed by Russell Investments, based out of Seattle. Western is proud to have been the inaugural client for this fund. The development of this fund has led to over \$400 million in investment from various institutions. As of June 30, 2023, the Foundation continues to maintain over half the portfolio (56.4% or \$70.0 million) in SMAG. (The Foundation for WWU and Alumni)

2.3: Ask the Foundation Board to consider requiring investment advisors to include ESG criteria as part of their due diligence process when hiring investment managers that may manage Foundation funds, either directly or indirectly.

Intended completion date: end of 2018

- This objective was met during the 2018 RFP process and again in the 2023 RFI process. The Foundation intends to include ESG criteria as part of future RFP processes, which are scheduled to occur every five years. (The Foundation for WWU and Alumni)

2.4: Ask the Foundation Board to consider mandating that any investment advisor responding to a Request for Proposals (RFP) be a signatory to the United Nations Principles for Responsible Investment (UNPRI).

Intended completion date: end of 2018

- This objective has been met. Russell Investments has been a signatory to the UNPRI since 2009. Additionally, Russell Investments is a signatory to the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP), Climate Action 100+, and is a supporter of the Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures. (The Foundation for WWU and Alumni)

2.5: Ask the Foundation Board to consider inclusion in any agreement with an investment advisor that if the advisor ceases to be a signatory to UNPRI or follow those principles, the Foundation may terminate the agreement.

Intended completion date: end of 2018

- No known progress in FY2023.

2.6: Ask the Foundation Board to consider, at such time as the Foundation makes investments itself, becoming a signatory to UNPRI.

- The Foundation does not (and likely will not) make investments itself. (The Foundation for WWU and Alumni)

Goal 3: Students understand both Western’s and the Foundation’s investment processes.

3.1: Advance educational opportunities for greater student learning in the management and oversight of endowments and sustainable investing.

- No known progress in FY2023.

3.2: Provide learning opportunities for students to evaluate the critical difference(s) between various types of sustainable investing and traditional investments.

- In May 2023, Foundation staff secured a transformational gift to fund the Paul Merriman Financial Literacy program at Wester. The program will empower all students and community members to confidently navigate their finances in a way that supports overall well-being, equip students with the knowledge and skills they need to make informed financial decisions, set them on a path to financial security, and foster responsible financial behaviors. The program is expected to formally launch in 2024.⁷ (The Foundation for WWU and Alumni)

⁷ At the time of this report’s publication, the College of Business and Economics is at work on curricula for the program; final content for the program has yet to be determined. (SEI)