



COLORADO COLLEGE - OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

STATE OF SUSTAINABILITY 2021 REPORT

MAY 2021 // PREPARED BY IAN JOHNSON, SARA DIXON'22,
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The uncertainties that ended the 2019-20 academic year due to COVID-19 have continued throughout the 2020-21 academic year as well. Sustainability operations, like the majority of other operations at CC and beyond, went remote, while budgets for operational sustainability projects were largely eliminated. Despite the many difficulties that this year has posed, sustainability efforts at CC have continued. The Office of Sustainability internship program adjusted to remote work and has largely carried on. This report, as one example, is the culmination of the State of Sustainability team's work collecting and reporting sustainability performance indicators and compiling that information into this year-end report.

At the same time, changes in leadership at CC have changed the way we've continued other work. One specific example was the Climate Change Task Force, requested by the Board of Trustees after the milestone of carbon neutrality was reached, to help answer the question, "What comes next?" Provost Townsend assembled that task force in the 2019-20 academic year, but as he continued his career at another university and COVID-19 continued its disruption, the Campus Sustainability Council's Steering Committee took on that question and planning, producing a report for President Richardson to consider when she arrives in July and inherits that same question.

The good news is that sustainability work is – by its very nature - a line of work rife with challenges and that requires constant adjustment. So, although this year has been exceptionally difficult, our teams already had many of the tools and the mindset needed to deal with much of the adversity we've faced. Which is to say: Sustainability work and progress continues at CC and our successes are many:

We continue to align with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals through our messaging, through our measurement, and – perhaps most importantly – in our communication and education to connect our work and progress with global efforts. All of our employees and the majority of our students are served by formal or peer-peer sustainability programs. Our community engaged work has increased by over 10%. We've formed a working partnership with Sodexo, our custodial and environmental services provider, to improve waste diversion, policies and procedures, chemical use, and education across campus. We continue to locate the lowest-hanging fruit within our operations to find ways to significantly impact campus energy and water usage. The replacement of the commercial dishwasher this year is an excellent example: energy and water use reductions will save the college over \$40,000 a year, paying back the entire cost of the project in only 3 years. We've renewed our Bicycle Friendly University status and continue to offer alternative transportation and micro-mobility options for our students, including universal access to Mountain Metro Transit and reduced cost memberships to PikeRide. Our team has worked with athletic teams to build the Green Team Certification, complimenting the new Green Home Certification for off-campus residents and the revamped Green Room and Green Office Certifications. We've continued our professional development program through Excel@CC, earning a new cohort of employees a training certificate. In short, this year has been at least as busy as ever and we have a lot to show for it.

This report highlights much of that work and celebrates the continued dedicated work of the Campus Sustainability Council, Facilities Services, individual academic departments, offices and divisions across campus, student efforts and persistence, support from the administration and the Board of Trustees, The CC Office of Sustainability, and countless individuals who are dedicated to making Colorado College a model for sustainability at all levels.

CONNECTIONS TO U.N. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPEMENT GOALS

In 2015, the United Nations published Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, a "plan of action for people, planet and prosperity." The publication outlines 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as well as 169 targets and associated indicators, forming a 15-year agenda intended to balance "the three dimensions of sustainable development: the economic, social and environmental."



A college or university may use STARS to measure and report on its contributions towards the SDGs. Because the two frameworks share a similar intent and scope, at a very high level an institution's STARS score or rating can be used to demonstrate progress towards helping deliver the SDGs.

The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals encompass a wide range of environmental, social, and economic goals. We decided to include Sustainable Development Goals in this report because we want to show how expansive sustainability is in the context of higher education. Colorado College continues to keep sustainability in mind when making important decisions throughout the college's operations.

ACADEMICS

CC aims to educate students about sustainability through formal education programs, courses, and research.



Environmental Studies Program

The Environmental Program aims to prepare its majors and minors to understand their connection to the environment, acquire the skills to explore scientific and human interrelationships in the global ecosystem, and pursue interdisciplinary approaches to problem solving.

97 sustainability-related courses meet at least one sustainability learning objectives

73 sustainability-focused courses meet three or more sustainability learning objectives

28 academic departments offer sustainability-related or sustainability-focused courses

Over 80% of CC students study off-campus at least once for academic credit during their time at CC.



Teaching and Research in Environmental Education (TREE) Semester

The TREE Semester is a 16-week, residential semester program where undergraduate students live and learn in an intentional community at the spectacular Catamount Center in the montane forest outside Woodland Park, Colorado. This program is for students of all academic interests, but is specifically designed for those interested in exploring both environmental and educational fields. These scholars will cultivate their own and their K-12 students' conceptions of environmental stewardship and respect for the natural world.





36

out of 160 professors conduct research focused on aspects of sustainability

50%

of the academic departments have at least one employee conducting sustainability research

Open Access Repository

The current repository collects and preserves student theses, faculty works, and digitized collections from Tutt Library's Special Collections Department that reflect the history of the college.

Sustainability Research Incentives

Director of Faculty Research Support Tess Powers has developed a resource guide to help faculty fund interdisciplinary sustainability research.

Library Support

The library spends \$1.6 million on library materials and has access to EBSCO's Environment Complete database, to Docuseek film database, and many electronic journals that touch on Sustainability.



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Explore ways to deliver climate change content to all students through an all-college general education requirement.
- Increase the number of courses that are sustainability-focused and sustainability-related by 40%.
- Reinstate and administer the Letical Ecological Stewardship Assessment (LESA) or another sustainability literacy assessment to a representative set of the student body. A sustainability literacy assessment has not been administered in the past 3 years.
- Reinstate or determine new incentives such as the Faculty Sustainability Scholars Program. In the past, there has been a financial incentive given to professors to develop sustainability-focused courses. Faculty members have received \$500 for participating in the Sustainability Across Curriculum workshop and an additional \$500 upon the approval of a course redesign that includes sustainability learning outcomes within twelve months of the workshop.
- Work with academic departments to identify faculty and staff that are doing sustainability research.

ENGAGEMENT

CC aims to educate students about sustainability through formal education programs, courses, and research.



Colorado College's vibrant campus offers a variety of sustainability-focused activities that involve and educates the students, faculty, and staff through intentional community engagement. Engaging in sustainability issues through co-curricular activities allow students to deepen and apply their understandings of sustainability principles.

100% of new employees are offered orientation, outreach, and/or guidance materials that highlight pertinent sustainability topics

77% of students are served by one or multiple peer-to-peer sustainability initiatives

72% of students participated in community engagement during the 19-20 school year

62,376

hours of community service were contributed during the 2019-2020 academic year by students

250+

students participated in Collaborative for Community Engagement Student Programs



State of the Rockies Project

The State of the Rockies Project is an annual student-faculty research project that studies the environmental and economic issues in the Rocky Mountain West. The goals of the State of the Rockies are to disseminate research through academic publications and presentations, share research and the Conservation in the West poll findings with community stakeholders and political leaders, and increase campus-wide understanding of the socio-environmental issues facing the region.



FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Conduct an assessment of campus sustainability culture to gauge the community's sustainability values, behaviors and beliefs, and awareness of sustainability initiatives.
- Join the Workers Rights Consortium and Fair Labor Association.
- Increase the number of students served by peer-to-peer sustainability outreach and education programs to the entire student body.
- Work to make the Staff Professional Development program related to sustainability more accessible for staff members to attend, and/or incorporate the program into a mandatory staff event to increase the amount of participants.
- Increase the number of regular non-academic staff that participate in annual sustainability professional development and training.



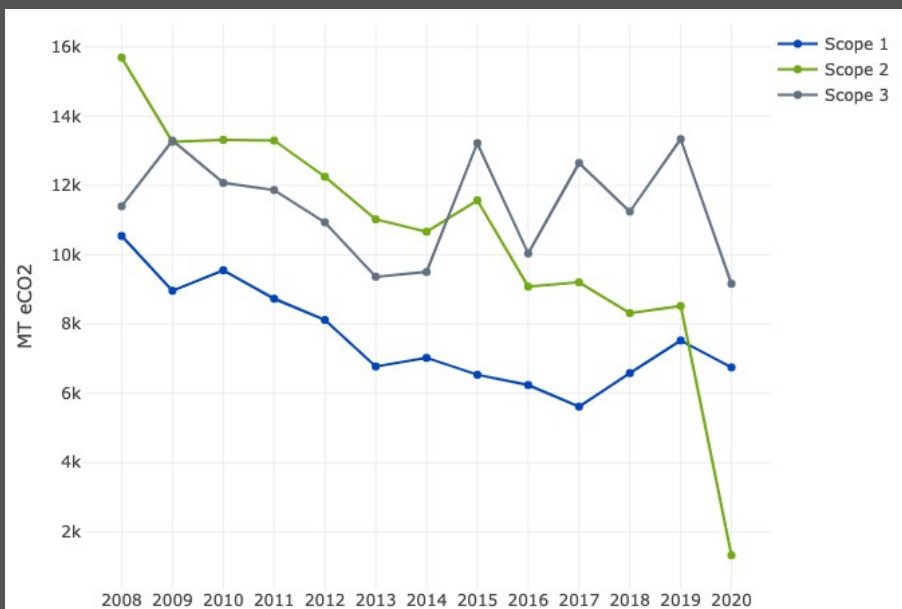
OPERATIONS

CC is making sustainable changes in its purchasing, energy and resource usage, and disposal of materials.



AIR, CLIMATE, AND ENERGY

Carbon Emissions by Scope from 2008 to 2020 from SIMAP

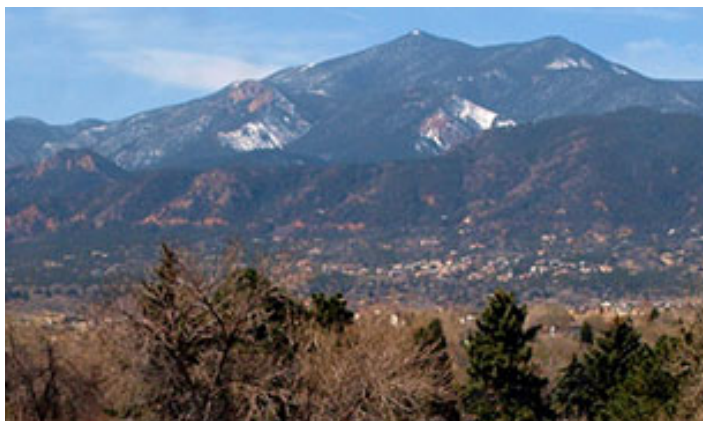


Gross Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions:

- 2019
17,631.67 metric tons of CO2 equivalent
- 2020
8073.93 metric tons of CO2 equivalent

This year's net carbon sinks:

- 8,038.71 metric tons of CO2 equivalent



889,337 kwh are from on-site, clean and renewable energy sources



Carbon Neutrality

Colorado College achieved carbon neutrality on January 1st, 2020. We are the eighth institution in North America, and the first in the Rocky Mountain region, to achieve this goal. This goal was achieved through a variety of initiatives, including efficiency upgrades, building renovations, campus engagement, on-site renewable energy and local renewable energy purchases, and reducing its carbon footprint.

75%

reduction in on-campus emissions since the college's baseline year (2008)

BUILDINGS, GROUNDS, AND TRANSPORTATION

Ed Robson Arena

The Robson Ice Arena construction on campus is expected to be completed by October, 2021. The arena was designed as a high-performance building per the Colorado College Design Guidelines Manual. The energy model for the arena projects a very low energy use intensity (EUI) of 84 kBtu/SF/yr compared to the campus recreational Honnen Ice Arena EUI of 348 kBtu/SF/y.



Bicycle Friendly University

Colorado College named a Bronze Bicycle Friendly University by the League of American Bicyclists. The League of American Bicyclists is a grassroots advocacy organization encouraging better bicycling and protecting the rights of people who bike. CC is committed to providing our community with transportation options that are safe, healthy, and accessible.



Off-Campus Composting Program

Office of Sustainability Interns Westly Joseph '21 and Avery Bell '21 and their volunteer teams launched CC's first ever Off-Campus Compost Pilot Program for students living off campus in the Colorado Springs area. The pilot program took place throughout Spring 2021 and includes 30 off-campus households. Ensuring the success and continuation of this program, Joseph and Bell created materials, training, and education on how to properly compost that were given to each participating household. Combined with the Green Homes Certification (launched Spring 2021) this program works to support sustainable living off campus for all CC students.

PURCHASING AND FOOD



89%

of expenditures on electronics are EPEAT Bronze registered and/or third party certified at the minimum level under a multi-attribute sustainability standard or above

Sustainable Dining

The team at Bon Appetit works hard every day to train and monitor food production in the college's kitchens every day. It conducts daily meetings with its staff to discuss food, safety and upcoming events. This program has shown great rewards in that Bon Appetit see very little unusable produce scrap being sent to compost.



WASTE AND WATER

Waste Contamination

Green For Life allows up to a 15% contamination rate, making Colorado College's average contamination rate <15%. If it exceeds 15% then the college is alerted and steps are taken to directly address the contamination

44%

reduction in annual waste generated since the baseline year in 2009



Water Usage

51%

decrease in the college's total water usage since 2008

48%

of the total water withdrawal is potable water

FUTURE RECOMMENDATIONS

- Collaborate with the GHG Inventory team to design and implement a data collection system that provides data on more air pollutants.
- Work with Bon Appetit to develop a way to track how much the school is spending on plant based and sustainably or ethically produced products.
- Maintain the partnership between the Office of Sustainability, Sodexo, and Facilities Services to continue educating the campus on proper waste disposal.
- Work with the transportation division in Facilities Services to investigate ways that Colorado College can increase their number of alternative fuel vehicles.
- Increase the amount of materials recycled, composted, donated, or resold and begin tracking the materials and items that are donated or resold.
- Decrease coal and natural gas consumption on campus and increase the use of clean and renewable resources in campus buildings.
- Encourage college employees to use sustainable commuting options to get to work including but not limited to: zero emissions vehicles, non-motorized vehicles, carpooling, telecommuting, or public transportation.
- Work to increase the purchasing of office paper with 50% or higher post-consumer recycled, agricultural residue, or FSC certified content.



PLANNING AND ADMINISTRATION

CC prioritizes sustainability by dedicating resources to sustainability coordination, developing plans to move toward sustainability, and engaging stakeholders in governance.



Colorado College prioritizes sustainability by dedicating resources to help offices and stakeholders organize and implement sustainable initiatives throughout all of the departments on campus. Staff and other resources help CC organize, implement, and publicize sustainability initiatives. CC's people define its character and capacity to perform; and so, its achievements can only be as strong as its community.

DIVERSITY & AFFORDABILITY



Antiracism Initiative

Colorado College's antiracism initiative is a collegewide effort to actively examine and oppose the ways that racism exists and persists at CC. With antiracism central to CC's mission, faculty, staff, and students will experience greater equity and inclusion, their teaching will be more impactful, and the students will be better prepared to make positive change in the world.

88% graduation rate for low-income students

100% of students are awarded need-based aid

Work & Well-being



85%

of employees receive a living wage at \$22.68/hour for a family of four

Colorado College offers an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) for employees and their families. EAP provides free counselling for a variety of things, including anxiety and depression, parenting, and stress. CC also offers annual biometric health screenings and health assessments.

INCLUSIVE GOVERNANCE

Student Government

Colorado College Student Government Association (CCSGA) is comprised of members democratically elected by the Colorado College student body. CCSGA gives students a critical voice in development and changes within Colorado College.

Staff Council

The Colorado College Staff Council advises the President and administration of Colorado College. Their mission is to advocate for and promote the interests of staff, and aim to increase communication between staff and other groups on campus.



59

members who serve on Colorado College's Board of Trustees, its highest governing body

FUTURE RECOMENDATIONS

- Encourage the Board of Trustees to invest a larger proportion of CC's endowment in sustainable industries or businesses.
- Initiate either an external or internal reporting assurance process that provides independent affirmation that the STARS report is reported in accordance with credit criteria.
- Reinstate the Campus Climate survey which provides the college with important information on what the College is doing well and where improvements could be made.



INNOVATION & LEADERSHIP

STARS® Innovation Credits recognize institutions that have come up with innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and have demonstrated leadership that was not documented in STARS®.

Dining Services Certification

Colorado College is certified by the Food Recovery Network which is a national nonprofit that unites students at colleges and universities to fight food waste and hunger by recovering perishable food that would otherwise go to waste from their campus' dining halls and donating it to those facing food insecurity.

Food Bank

Colorado College provides students with dried goods, limited fresh produce, and snacks through a Campus Activities and CC Student Government Association funded, on-campus food pantry.

Green Athletics

Colorado College has a sustainable food and beverage purchasing program that includes athletic event vendors and concessions, a program to minimize the sustainability impacts of turf management, and a program to support more sustainable transportation options for athletic events.

Green Events Certification

Colorado College has a Green Events Certification Program that provides sustainable resources like transportation, catering, paper consumption, waste minimization and diversion, and signage.

Grounds Certification

Tree Campus USA (Arbor Day Foundation)- Colorado College has been honored by the Arbor Day Foundation with a 2018 Tree Campus USA recognition due to their commitment to effective urban forest management.

Natural Wastewater Systems

Colorado College employs Colorado Springs Utilities to ensure that natural wastewater systems are used to treat and manage 100% of the institution's wastewater.

Student Living Wage

All students who are employed by Colorado College are paid a wage of \$12.00 or more an hour, which is equal to the living wage for a single adult in the state.

Sustainability Projects Fund

Colorado College has a Sustainability Projects Fund called the Eco Fund, where students can get funding for sustainable projects on campus.



COLORADO COLLEGE THANK YOU

CONCLUSION

The 2020-21 academic year and the challenges presented by COVID-19 tested all of us at Colorado College. Often it seemed like we were stuck in time or struggling to keep the momentum we had gained in previous years. Reflection and celebrating our small successes are always important steps, but especially so this year; despite what often felt like an exceptionally traction-less year, the college has, in fact, continued to make strides, keep sustainability in focus, and expand how people understand and engage with the efforts that define our work. This report has afforded us the opportunity to reflect and that opportunity has been a welcome one to validate the work and vision we all continue to uphold. Sustainability continues to be a central focus in our Campus Master Plan and our Strategic Plan and is – according to most of the survey and anecdotal data we get from current and prospective students – one of the major considerations in choosing a college or university. Indeed, the connections across the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals highlight how sustainability issues will impact all of our students in many ways throughout their lives. This report brings an overview of the ways CC views and measures sustainability, our successes, and the ways in which we hope and plan to continue improving the way we – and our students – impact our campus, our community, and our world.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This year's report is brought to you by the Colorado College Office of Sustainability in close collaboration with the Campus Sustainability Council's Steering Committee and the Office of Sustainability Interns. This document has been co-authored by Ian Johnson, Sara Dixon '22, Galileo Defendi-Cho'24, and Gaby Jadotte'22. The STARS® data used in this report has been compiled by: Ian Johnson, STARS® Intern Sara Dixon '22, and the STARS® Volunteers Galileo Defendi-Cho'24 and Gaby Jadotte'22

THANK YOU TO ALL WHO PROVIDED US WITH DATA

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Investments Club

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