

# ACTING AS IF THE FUTURE MATTERED – CLIMATE CHANGE, SUSTAINABILITY AND THE UNIVERSITY OF DENVER

Federico Cheever

Professor of Law, Co-Director of the  
Environmental and Natural Resource  
Law Program, Chair DU Sustainability  
Council. October 6 2016

The Obama Era

PART 1  
The Regulator in Chief

• PART 2  
The Threat to the Planet

PART 3  
The “Good War”

PART 4  
The Health Care Revolution

PART 5  
Breaking the Racial Barrier

PART 6  
A Changed Man

# Obama on Climate Change: The Trends Are ‘Terrifying’

By JULIE HIRSCHFELD DAVIS, MARK LANDLER and CORAL DAVENPORT | SEPT. 8, 2016



671



In an exclusive interview on his legacy, President Obama speaks to The Times’s Mark Landler and Coral Davenport on climate change while visiting Marine Corps Base Hawaii. By A.J. CHAVAR, BEN LAFFIN, MARK LANDLER and CORAL DAVENPORT on September 8, 2016. Photo by A.J. Chavar/The New York Times. [Watch in Times Video »](#)



 \_Embed

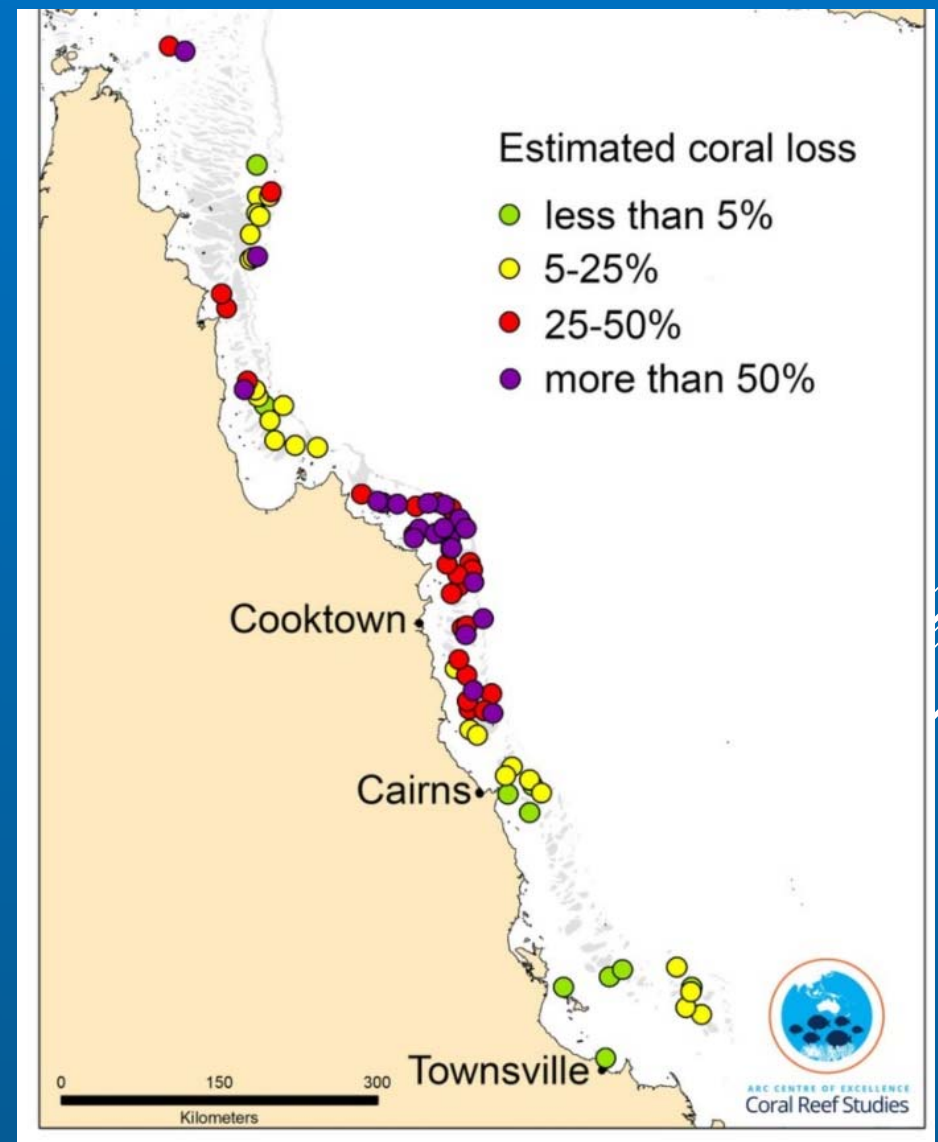
Mass bleaching has killed on average 35% of corals on the northern and central Great Barrier Reef, according to the latest estimates.

Scientists based their estimate on surveys on the World Heritage listed area over the last few months, says the ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies.

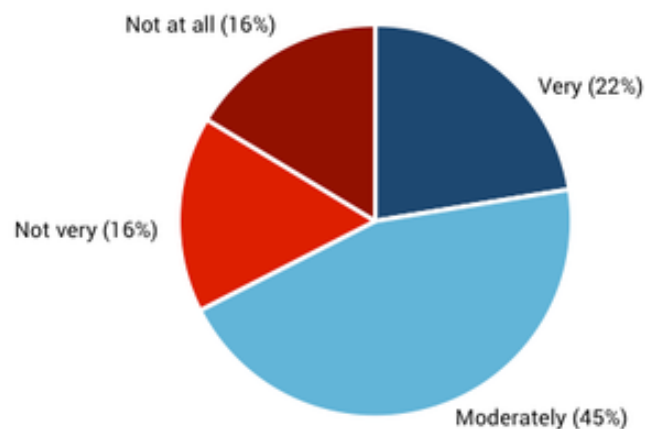
“This year is the third time in 18 years that the Great Barrier Reef has experienced mass bleaching due to global warming, and the current event is much more extreme than we’ve measured before,” says professor Terry Hughes at James Cook University.

May 2016

Business Insider, Australia



## Two in Three Americans Are Moderately or Very Interested in Global Warming



[Interested]. How strongly do you feel each of the following emotions when you think about the issue of global warming?

Base: Americans 18+ (n=1,204). March, 2016

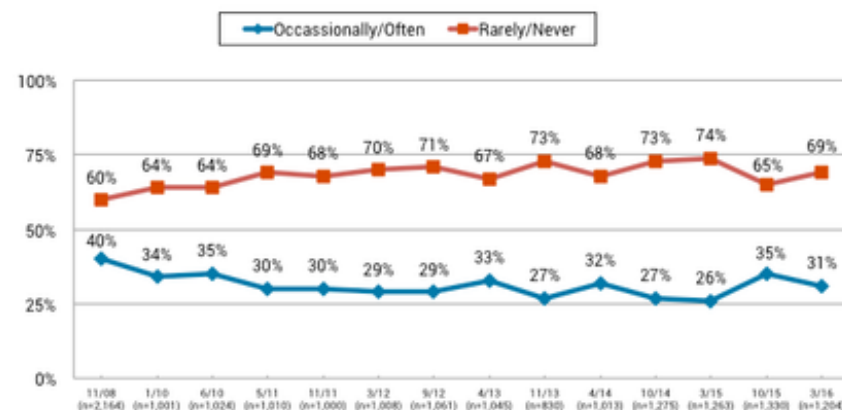


YALE PROGRAM ON  
Climate Change  
Communication



GEORGE MASON UNIVERSITY  
CENTER for CLIMATE CHANGE  
COMMUNICATION

## Seven in Ten Americans Rarely or Never Discuss Global Warming With Family and Friends



How often do you discuss global warming with your family and friends?

Base: Americans 18+.



YALE PROGRAM ON  
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COMMUNICATION

<http://dotearth.blogs.nytimes.com/2016/09/30/>

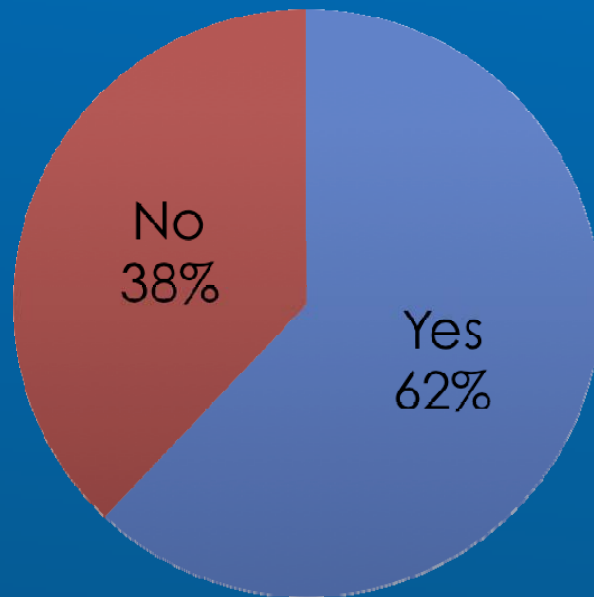
“Our findings suggest that there is a climate change ‘spiral of silence,’ in which even people who care about the issue, shy away from discussing it because they so infrequently hear other people talking about it – reinforcing the spiral. ”

Anthony Leiserowitz, Yale University

A series of several thin, white, parallel diagonal lines extending from the bottom right corner towards the center of the slide.

# STUDENT RECRUITMENT

*Was your decision affected by the University's commitment to the environment?*



- 23% said this would "strongly" or "very much" contribute to school choice.

The Princeton Review's 2013 College Hopes & Worries Survey

# DIVEST DU



READ THE DIVEST DU 2015-16 ANNUAL REPORT HERE!



"The eyes of the future are looking back at us and they are praying for us to see beyond our own time."

-Terry Tempest Williams

1,700 students, faculty, and community members are demanding that DU divest from fossil fuels. Will you join us?

Search ...

## RECENT POSTS

[Divest DU 2015-16 Annual Report](#)

[BOT Task Force Update #1: Transparency](#)

[DU Faculty Senate Votes YES to Endorse Divestment](#)

[BOT To Create Divestment Task Force, Vote on Divestment in January 2017](#)

[Why Climate Justice is a Racial Justice Panel Discussion](#)



Be the first of your friends to like this



**Divest DU**

2 hrs

Check out this video that shows the solidarity event for Standing Rock last Thursday right here in Denver!

All members of the [Faculty Senate divestment] committee agree divestment is only one of a number of responses to the global climate crisis, and we believe the University should proceed aggressively to confront that crisis. In addition to divestment, there is much we can do. Should the University decide to divest, divestment alone would be an incomplete response to the climate crisis.

Faculty Senate Resolution, May 16 2016

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## United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

Home CDM JI CC:Net TT:Clear

Your location: Home > Paris Agreement

**NEWSROOM**  
Get News  
on the Latest  
Climate Action

**Marrakech  
Conference  
Information  
Hub**

### KEY STEPS

The Convention  
Kyoto Protocol  
Paris Agreement

### NEGOTIATIONS

Meetings  
Documents & Decisions  
Bodies

### FOCUS

NDC Registry  
INDC Portal

## The Paris Agreement

The Paris Agreement shall enter into force on the 30th day after the date on which at least 55 Parties to the Convention accounting in total for at least an estimated 55% of the total global greenhouse gas emissions have deposited their instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession with the Depositary. The first of these thresholds was achieved on 22 September 2016.



Authoritative information on the status of the Paris Agreement, including information on its signatories, ratification and entry into force, is provided through the [United Nations Treaty Collection website](#).

### Latest news on entry into force of the Paris Agreement

Statement by Patricia Espinosa, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) [here](#) (163 kB) .

Further information on entry into force of the Paris Agreement can be found [here](#) (292 kB) .

At COP 21 in Paris, Parties to the UNFCCC reached a landmark agreement to combat climate change and to accelerate and intensify the actions and investments needed for a sustainable low carbon future.

the WHITE HOUSE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA

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## Briefing Room

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Speeches & Remarks

Press Briefings

**Statements & Releases**

White House Schedule

Presidential Actions

Executive Orders

Presidential Memoranda

Proclamations

Legislation

Pending Legislation

Signed Legislation

Vetoed Legislation

Nominations &  
Appointments

Disclosures

The White House  
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

June 29, 2016

## North American Climate, Clean Energy, and Environment Partnership Action Plan

The North American Climate, Energy, and Environment Partnership was announced by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, President Barack Obama, and President Enrique Peña Nieto on June 29, 2016, at the North American Leaders Summit in Ottawa, Canada. This Action Plan identifies the deliverables to be achieved and activities to be pursued by the three countries as part of this enduring Partnership.

### Advancing Clean and Secure Energy

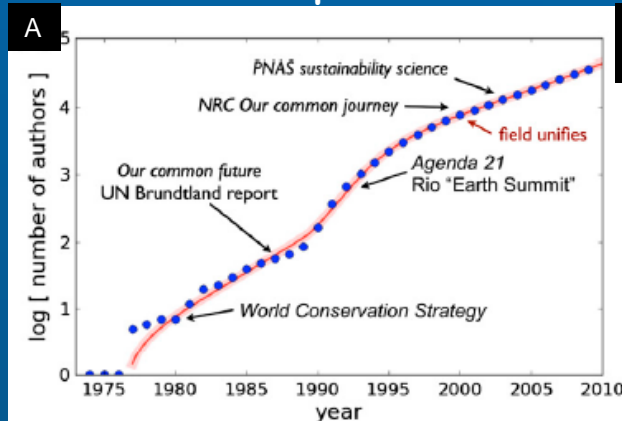
*Advance clean energy and integration of energy resources, including renewables:*

- Strive to achieve a goal for North America of 50% clean power generation by 2025, including renewable, nuclear, and carbon capture and storage technologies, as well as demand reduction through energy efficiency, with actions undertaken by each country individually to achieve this regional goal being in accordance with their own conditions, specific legal frameworks and clean energy national goals.

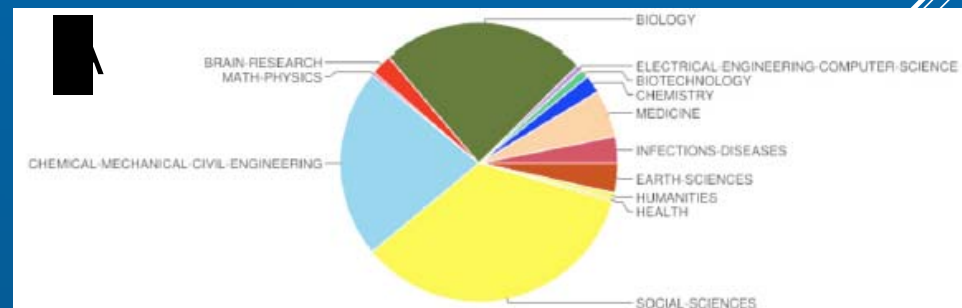
# A GROWING PRIORITY FOR FUNDING AGENCIES

- ▶ Federal research agencies have identified Sustainability as a *defining issue of the 21<sup>st</sup> C.*
- ▶ Explosive growth of **sustainability science** as research field since 1980s

A. Number unique authors vs. time



B. Percent distribution by discipline



Bettencourt & Kaur, 2011, *Proceedings of the National Academies of Sciences*



Pictured: Diana Wall, professor of biology,  
namesake of Wall Valley, Antarctica.

## **Global. Pioneering. Green.**

To change the world you need to see the big picture. At Colorado State University, we understand that you sometimes have to go to the ends of the earth to solve challenges that affect us right here at home.

**Colorado  
State**  
University



"We are looking at putting [the President's Climate Commitment's] core value of sustainability and carbon neutrality in as an objective for as many millions of students as we possibly can. We are trying to catch up to act, behave, teach, and create new knowledge in ways more representative of the way they think the world should be than the way the world has ended up."

— Michael Crow, President, Arizona State University



## AMERICAN COLLEGE & UNIVERSITY PRESIDENTS CLIMATE COMMITMENT

Over 650 schools have joined the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). This breakthrough program is reshaping institutions and communities while training the future political, business, and scientific leaders who will help solve climate change.

ACUPCC signatories commit to measure and report their greenhouse gas emissions, take immediate actions to reduce them, and develop and implement a plan to go climate neutral.

**Dates:** Launched May 2007, ongoing

**Audience:** 17 million+ college Presidents, students faculty, staff, and communities

**Strategy:** Presidential leadership appeal to mission, prosperity, quality of life and competitive advantage

**Impact:** 665 schools have signed the commitment. 465 schools have submitted climate action plans pledging neutrality as soon as possible – 30% of signatories have set a target climate neutrality date within 20 years. In the first five years, ACUPCC institutions reduced gross greenhouse gas emissions by 10.2 MtCo<sub>2</sub>e (metric tons of carbon dioxide).

**Website:** [PresidentsClimateCommitment.org](https://PresidentsClimateCommitment.org)

**Partners:**



**Honeywell**



We believe colleges and universities must exercise leadership in their communities and throughout society by **providing the knowledge, research, practice, and informed graduates to create a positive and sustainable future.** Along with other aspects of sustainability, campuses that address the climate challenge by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and by integrating resilience into their curriculum, research, and campus operations will better serve their students and meet their social mandate to help create a vital, ethical, and prosperous civil society.

<http://secondnature.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/Climate-Commitment-Second-Nature.pdf>

http://reporting.secondnature.org/search/?institution\_name=&commitment\_type=%3F%3F&carnegie\_class=%3F%3F&state\_or\_province=CO

Institution Name	Commitment	Implementation Profile	GHG Reports	Climate Action Plans	Progress Reports	Next Report Due
Adams State University	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2013, 2011, 2008</a>	<a href="#">2012</a>	<a href="#">2013, 2015</a>	1/15/16 GHG Report
Colorado College	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006</a>	<a href="#">2013</a>		1/15/17* Annual Progress Evaluation
Colorado Mountain College	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2011</a>	<a href="#">2012</a>	<a href="#">2014</a>	5/15/16* Progress Report
Colorado State University	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2015, 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009, 2008, 2007, 2006</a>	<a href="#">2010, 2013, 2015</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
Community College of Denver	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2008</a>	<a href="#">2010</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014, 2016</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
Fort Lewis College	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2015, 2013, 2011, 2009, 2007</a>	<a href="#">2010</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014, 2015</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
Metropolitan State University of Denver	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2008</a>	<a href="#">2010</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014, 2016</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
Naropa University	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2010, 2009, 2008</a>	<a href="#">2014, 2010</a>		1/15/17* Annual Progress Evaluation
University of Colorado at Boulder	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2013, 2011, 2009, 2007, 2005</a>	<a href="#">2009</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014, 2016</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
University of Colorado at Colorado Springs	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2015, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2007</a>	<a href="#">2010</a>	<a href="#">2013, 2015</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
University of Colorado Denver	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2014, 2013, 2012, 2010, 2007</a>	<a href="#">2010</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2014, 2016</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
University of Denver	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2014, 2012, 2009, 2007</a>	<a href="#">2009</a>	<a href="#">2012</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation
Western State Colorado University	Carbon	<a href="#">Received</a>	<a href="#">2012, 2010, 2006</a>	<a href="#">2009</a>	<a href="#">2012</a>	1/15/17 Annual Progress Evaluation

## STARS Overview

The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™ (STARS®) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. STARS is intended to engage and recognize the full spectrum of colleges and universities—from community colleges to research universities, and from institutions just starting their sustainability programs to long-time campus sustainability leaders. STARS encompasses long-term sustainability goals for already high-achieving institutions as well as entry points of recognition for institutions that are taking first steps toward sustainability.

"STARS is a tremendous opportunity for FSU to grow its sustainability initiative in a more focused, informed way, with analysis and feedback in place to direct our efforts. It will help our university better determine how we're doing with sustainability, and pinpoint areas where we can improve."

- Jonathan Gibraltar, president, Frostburg State University

STARS is designed to:

- Provide a framework for [understanding sustainability](#) in all sectors of higher education.
- Enable meaningful comparisons over time and across institutions using a common set of measurements developed with broad participation from the international campus sustainability community.
- Create incentives for continual improvement toward sustainability.
- Facilitate information sharing about higher education sustainability practices and performance.
- Build a stronger, more diverse campus sustainability community.

[Download a one page STARS flyer](#) to share basic information about the program with campus stakeholders.

## Public Recognition

STARS is composed up of credits that span the breadth of higher education sustainability and include performance indicators and criteria organized into four categories: Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Planning & Administration (see the [STARS Technical Manual](#) for details). An institution may pursue credits that are applicable to its particular context and earn points toward a STARS Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum rating or to earn recognition as a STARS Reporter.



STARS only provides positive recognition - each level of recognition represents significant sustainability leadership. Participating in STARS, which includes gathering extensive data and sharing it publicly, represents a commitment to sustainability that should be applauded.

## How to Participate

Any college or university in the world can register to begin tracking, managing and sharing information about its sustainability efforts using the [online STARS Reporting Tool](#). There are two levels of access available:



The **Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System™** (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.

[Reporting Tool](#)[Register](#)[About](#)[Participate](#)[Reports](#)[Support](#)[Home](#) / [STARS Institutions](#) / [Participants & Reports](#)

## STARS Participants & Reports

**778 institutions** have registered to use the STARS Reporting Tool. Of these institutions **546 are AASHE members** <sup>(m)</sup>, **229 are STARS Charter Participants** <sup>(c)</sup>, and **53 participated in the original STARS pilot** <sup>(p)</sup>. Each institution's most recent report is listed below. Click on an institution's name to view all STARS reports.

Institution	Country	Version	Rating	Submission Date
<a href="#">University of Massachusetts Lowell</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.1	Gold	Aug 10, 2016
<a href="#">University of Alabama at Birmingham</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.1	Silver	July 29, 2016
<a href="#">Fleming College</a> <sup>m</sup>	Canada	2.1	Silver	July 19, 2016
<a href="#">Lehigh University</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	July 13, 2016
<a href="#">Indiana State University</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 30, 2016
<a href="#">Portland State University</a> <sup>m p c</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Gold	June 30, 2016
<a href="#">Stanford University</a> <sup>m c</sup>	United States of America	2.1	Gold	June 29, 2016
<a href="#">Sonoma State University</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Reporter	June 27, 2016
<a href="#">Mills College</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 20, 2016
<a href="#">University of Connecticut</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Gold	June 20, 2016
<a href="#">Muhlenberg College</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 16, 2016
<a href="#">University of Texas at Dallas</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Bronze	June 13, 2016
<a href="#">Frostburg State University</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 12, 2016
<a href="#">State University of New York College of Environmental Science and Forestry</a> <sup>m p c</sup>	United States of America	2.1	Gold	June 7, 2016
<a href="#">California State University, Los Angeles</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 6, 2016
<a href="#">Champlain College</a> <sup>m</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 6, 2016
<a href="#">University of Minnesota, Duluth</a> <sup>m c</sup>	United States of America	2.0	Silver	June 2, 2016



# STARS SCOPE

- Academics
    - Curriculum
    - Research
  - Engagement
    - Campus Engagement
    - Public Engagement
  - Operations
    - Air & Climate
    - Buildings
    - Dining Services
    - Energy
    - Grounds
    - Purchasing
    - Transportation
  - Waste
    - Water
  - Planning and Administration
    - Coordination, Planning, & Governance
    - Diversity & Affordability
    - Health, Wellbeing & Work
    - Investment
  - Innovation
- 

Category	Subcategories/ Descriptions	Points earned out of total (% points, FY14)	Potential Improvement FY16	Additional points FY16
<b>Academics</b>	Curriculum and research	41.11/58 (71%)	More thorough participation, adoption of learning outcomes, sustainability literacy assessment	2-4
<b>Engagement</b>	Campus and Public	20.38/41 (50%)	Inclusion of student educators program, student orientation, employee educators program, staff professional development, join Fair Labor Association	7-10
<b>Operations</b>	Air & Climate, Buildings, Dining, Energy, Grounds, Purchasing, Transportation, Waste, Water	28.22/69 (41%)	No idling policy, building operations and management, improved food purchasing, organic grounds maintenance (or IPM), cleaning products purchasing, add electric vehicles to fleet, improve waste diversion rate	7
<b>Planning &amp; Admin</b>	Coordination, Planning & Governance; Diversity & Affordability; Health, Wellbeing & Work; Investment	15.9/32 (50%)	Employee compensation study, increasing investment in sustainable fund, committee on investment responsibility	1
<b>Innovation</b>	New, extraordinary, or uncommon outcomes, policies, and practices that greatly exceed the criterion of an existing STARS credit	0/4 (0%)		4
<b>Total Points</b>		105.61/204		Points:128-

			133/204
	<b>Score</b>	Score 52.81	Score: 63-66
	<b>Rating</b>	Silver (45-65)	Gold (65-85)

## Campus Engagement +

8.75 / 20.00

Credit	Status	Points
Student Educators Program	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 4.00
Student Orientation	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 2.00
Student Life	✓ Complete	1.75 / 2.00
Outreach Materials and Publications	✓ Complete	2.00 / 2.00
Outreach Campaign	✓ Complete	4.00 / 4.00
Employee Educators Program	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 3.00
Employee Orientation	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Staff Professional Development	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 2.00

## Planning & Administration

Coordination, Planning & Governance + 7.90 / 8.00

Diversity & Affordability + 6.00 / 10.00

Health, Wellbeing & Work + 2.00 / 7.00

Investment + 0.00 / 7.00

Credit	Status	Points
Committee on Investor Responsibility	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 2.00
Sustainable Investment	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 4.00
Investment Disclosure	✗ Not Pursuing	0.00 / 1.00

## Innovation

Innovation + 0.00



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www.colostate.edu

March 23, 2015

AASHE  
1536 Wynkoop St. B500  
Denver, CO 80202

Re: Colorado State University STARS 2.0 report submission

To whom it may concern:

Colorado State University proudly submits this Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System report to the Association for Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. Colorado State University's STARS 2.0 rating is 85.29, a platinum designation. We are pleased that, to our knowledge, this is the highest submitted STARS score to date and the first-ever submission to reach the platinum threshold.

Colorado State University's achievements and innovations in sustainability are guided by its heritage as a land-grant institution. Since the creation of Colorado State as a land-grant university, it has been guided by its three-part mission: education, research and extension. Colorado State was founded as the Colorado Agricultural College in 1870. Since then, our University has been working to expand understanding of our environment and the impact we have upon it. Colorado State's leadership in environmental research has grown from early crop testing for performance in high-altitude environments. Today, Colorado State conducts extensive research to advance our collective understanding of key areas such as weather, climate, forestry, air quality, water quality, and natural sciences.

Colorado State's School of Global Environmental Sustainability (SoGES) is an umbrella organization that encompasses all environmental education and research at Colorado State University. The school positions CSU to address the multiple challenges to global sustainability through broad-based research, curricular programs, and outreach initiatives. The school's emphases include food security, environmental institutions and governance, sustainable communities, land and water resources, biodiversity, conservation and management, climate change and energy. The mission of SoGES incorporates a long history of environmental studies that have been part of the University curriculum for decades.



February 26, 2016

STARS® Steering Committee  
Association for the Advancement  
of Sustainability in Higher Education  
213 N. Limestone  
Lexington, KY 40407

RE: University of Denver STARS Report

Dear STARS Steering Committee,

The information provided to AASHE in the University of Denver February 26, 2016 STARS report is accurate to the best of our knowledge. It was prepared at my request by the University Sustainability Council, the Center for Sustainability, and the department of Institutional Research and Analysis.

Regards,

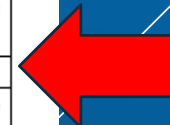
Rebecca Chopp

# AASHE STARS Peers Comparison

## 3/23/16

### Regional Peers

Category	<a href="#">DU</a>	<a href="#">Colorado College</a>	<a href="#">CSU</a>	<a href="#">UC Boulder</a>	<a href="#">UCCS</a>	<a href="#">Western State Colorado University</a>
<b>Academics</b>	41.11/58 (71%)	34.22/55 (89%)	54.92/58 (95%)	44.6/58 (76.9%)	47.98/58 (83%)	27.25/58 (47%)
<b>Engagement</b>	20.38/41 (50%)	27.8/36 (77%)	40.55/41 (99%)	39.22/41 (96%)	35.36/44 (80%)	17.89/42 (43%)
<b>Operations</b>	28.22/69 (41%)	34.64/70 (50%)	39.09/70 (56%)	31.43/71 (44%)	29.01/69 (42%)	19.14/63 (30%)
<b>Planning &amp; Admin</b>	15.9/32 (50%)	21.76/32 (68%)	28.83/32 (90%)	21.01/32 (66%)	23.68/32 (74%)	10.63/32 (34%)
<b>Innovation</b>	0/4 (0%)	4/4 (100%)	4/4 (100%)	4/4 (100%)	3/4 (75%)	0/4 (50%)
<b>Total Points</b>	105.61/204	122.42/197	167.39/205	140.26/206	139.03/204	74.91/199
<b>Score</b>	52.81	65.36	85.29	71.70	65.82	37.27
<b>Rating</b>	Silver	Gold	Platinum	Gold	Gold	Bronze







A Question of Resources? – Not Really




**MINES.EDU**  
COLORADO SCHOOL OF MINES

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	<b>Rating</b>	Silver (45-65)		Gold (65-85)



## **For Example – Proposed Transformational Sustainability Initiatives 2015**

1. Solar Partnerships and Energy Fund Revitalization – Revenue Positive (Demonstrated)
  2. Multimodal Transportation Hub – Revenue Positive (Long-Term)
  3. DU Partnership in Metropolitan Denver Greenspace Alliance – Minimal Cost
  4. DU Farm to Table Initiative – Minimal Cost
  5. Sustainability Masters Degree or Certificate – Revenue Positive
- 
- A series of white diagonal lines of varying lengths and thicknesses, located in the bottom right corner of the blue background.