

## Postsecondary Sustainability Award Nominee Presentation Form

### ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATIONS

#### College or University Certifications

The signature of college or university President (or equivalent) on the next page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the institution's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of their knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university is providing the U.S. Department of Education Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a compliance review.
3. OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the college or university concluding that the nominated college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan to remedy the violation.
4. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the college or university has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution's equal protection clause.
5. There are no findings by Federal Student Aid of violations in respect to the administration of Title IV student aid funds.
6. The college or university is in good standing with its regional or national accreditor.
7. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.
8. The college or university has in place is willing to provide a link to or copy of a non-discrimination policy. The U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a nomination and/or rescind an award if unlawful discrimination is later discovered.

### U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon Schools Postsecondary Sustainability Award

Name of President/Chancellor: *Andrew J. Leavitt*

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official College or University Name: *University of Wisconsin Oshkosh*

(As it should appear on an award)

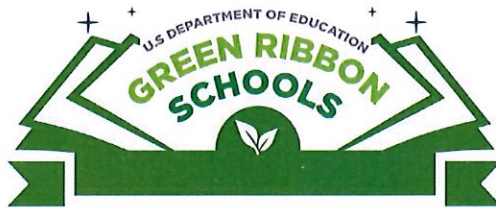
I have reviewed the information in this application and certify that to the best of my knowledge all information is accurate.

*Andrew J. Leavitt* Digitally signed by Andrew J. Leavitt  
Date: 2022.02.09 12:05:21 -06'00'

Date: *02/09/2022*

(President's/Chancellor's Signature)





## Nominating Authority's Certifications

The signature by the Nominating Authority on this page certifies that each of the statements below concerning the college or university's eligibility and compliance with the following requirements is true and correct to the best of the Authority's knowledge.

1. The college or university has been evaluated and selected from among institutions within the Nominating Authority's jurisdiction, based on high achievement in the three ED-GRS Pillars: 1) reduced environmental impact and costs; 2) improved health and wellness; and 3) effective environmental and sustainability education.
2. The college or university meets all applicable federal, state, local and tribal health, environmental and safety requirements in law, regulations and policy and is willing to undergo EPA on-site verification.

Name of Nominating Agency: *University of Wisconsin System*

Name of Nominating Authority: *President Tommy G. Thompson*

(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application and certify to the best of my knowledge that the school meets the provisions above.

*Tommy G. Thompson* Digitally signed by Tommy G. Thompson  
Date: 2022.02.10 10:18:44 -06'00' Date: *February 10, 2022*  
(Nominating Authority's Signature)

## SUBMISSION

The nomination package, including the signed certifications, narrative summary, documentation of evaluation in the three Pillars, and photos should be submitted online according to the instructions in the Nominee Submission Procedure.

OMB Control Number: 1860-0509  
Expiration Date: December 31, 2023

### Public Burden Statement

According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, no persons are required to respond to a collection of information unless such collection displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 1860-0509. Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 37 hours per response, including time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. The obligation to respond to this collection is required to obtain or retain benefit P.L. 107-110, Sec. 501, Innovative Programs and Parental Choice Provisions. Send comments regarding the burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to the U.S. Department of Education, 400 Maryland Ave., SW, Washington, DC 20202-4536 or email [ICDocketMgr@ed.gov](mailto:ICDocketMgr@ed.gov) and reference the OMB Control Number 1860-0509. Note: Please do not return the completed ED-Green Ribbon Schools application to this address.



## Wisconsin Post-Secondary Institution Application

### Questions and Narrative

#### Nominee Information

College/University Name: University of Wisconsin Oshkosh

Address: 800 Algoma Boulevard City: Oshkosh State: Wisconsin Zip: 54901

Website: [www.uwosh.edu](http://www.uwosh.edu)

Chancellor Name: Andrew Leavitt Email: [leavitt@uwosh.edu](mailto:leavitt@uwosh.edu) Phone: 920-424-0200

Lead Applicant: Mr. Bradley Spanbauer Role: Campus Sustainability Director

Email: [spanbauerb@uwosh.edu](mailto:spanbauerb@uwosh.edu) Phone: 920-424-1191

#### Check all that apply:

Public X

Four-Year X

Urban X

#### Provide the following:

% Of Undergraduates Receiving Pell Grants: 21%

Graduation Rate: 55.4%

Undergraduate Enrollment: 9,226

Graduate Enrollment: 1,247

Minority Serving institution: n/a

Basic Carnegie Classification: Doctoral/Professional Universities

1. Is your college or university participating in a local, state, or national program which asks you to benchmark progress in some fashion in any or all of the Pillars?

(X) Yes Programs and levels achieved:

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS)  
Second Nature Presidents' Climate Leadership Commitment, Carbon Commitment

2. Has your college or university received any awards for facilities, health, or environment?

(X) Yes Awards and Years:

Campus Race to Zero Waste (2021)

Tree Campus USA (2020)

Sierra Cool Schools (2020)



## **Pillar I: Reduced Environmental Impact and Costs**

UW Oshkosh's Strategic Plan identifies its commitment to sustainability and reducing its environmental impact through facilities improvements and renewable energy installations, resulting in lower greenhouse gas emissions production. UWO has had a positive impact on its community waterways through low-impact development practices, conservation efforts, and community outreach and education programs. UWO has made significant strides toward best practices in the areas of waste management, building and energy efficiency, and improving transportation.

### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions & Energy**

#### **Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

UW Oshkosh uses the Sustainability Indicator Management and Analysis Platform (SIMAP) to track and inventory its greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions. The university has reduced its emissions from 60,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e- in 2006 to 45,000 MT CO<sub>2</sub>e- in 2020. During this same period the university's footprint grew from 2,753,951 square feet to 3,259,189 square feet. Still, the university recognizes its contribution to climate change and continues working to address all three scopes of its emissions. UW Oshkosh signed Second Nature's Carbon Commitment in 2006 and launched its first Climate Action Plan in 2009. In 2021, the university codified its ad hoc Campus Sustainability Council into a university-approved committee, the Climate Action Committee (CAC). The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is dedicated to becoming climate neutral by 2030, following student and faculty resolutions passed through shared governance. This goal will be met by producing a new Climate Action and Resiliency Plan. The CAC has begun work to draft a plan informed by a community resiliency assessment, a stipulation of the Climate Commitment from Second Nature, as well as measurable goals for decarbonizing energy systems and buildings on the three campuses.

In 2020, UWO ended its use of coal after fifty years. Prior to 2020, UWO burned 2000 tons of coal per year, in addition to a small amount of refuse-derived fuel pellets, and some natural gas and fuel oil. The university is now using 100% natural gas as a heating fuel, with low-sulfur fuel oil as a backup fuel. This switch from coal to natural gas will reduce the Scope 1 emissions of the institution and will improve air quality because of the avoided combustion of coal, which produces ash, mercury, and other environmental contaminants. This switch also yields savings in the form of emissions and electricity from coal equipment that is no longer running and was removed from the Heating Plant, as well as reduced emissions from transporting three truckloads of ash to the landfill per week.

#### **Energy Efficiency**

Over the last decade UWO has made a concerted effort to make significant facilities improvements yielding energy efficiency as the campuses square footage and footprint expanded. Additionally, the university remains committed to its goals of LEED Gold certification for new construction projects and LEED Silver certification for renovation projects. Most recently Reeve Memorial Union and Fletcher Hall were renovated and certified at the LEED Silver level. The university also is home to four LEED Gold buildings: Sage Hall (2011), Communication Arts Center, Fox Cities campus (2011), Horizon Village (2015), and The Culver Family Welcome Center (2015). In addition to Reeve Union and Fletcher Hall, the



University's LEED Silver buildings include: Clow Social Science Center, the Student Success Center, and the Student Recreation and Wellness Center.

### Renewable Energy

Several other buildings include facets of LEED, or are often referred to as LEED-inspired, such as Taylor Hall, which has solar thermal panels for providing hot water to residents as well as updated temperature control systems in individual rooms for reduced energy usage. Solar thermal panels can be found in four other locations on the Oshkosh Campus: on Blackhawk Commons for providing hot water for dishwashing, at the Campus Heating Plant for pre-heating water for the steam system, on Albee Hall for helping heat the pool, and on Sage Hall for providing hot water and radiant heating. All these installations reduce UWO's need for additional energy. In addition, the Oshkosh campus houses several photovoltaic arrays to include 188 fixed mounted panels on the roof Sage Hall, as well as three tracking arrays, all combined rated at 47.1 kW. 84 photovoltaic panels on the roof of the Student Success Center generate approximately 23,900 kWh of electricity annually. Finally, there is a pole-mounted tracker system near the Oshkosh campus tennis courts rated at 2.88 kW. Renewable sources of energy for heating on the Oshkosh campus include two geothermal systems - a 56-well system which heats the Student Services Center, and a 58-well system that heats Horizon Village, the LEED Gold residence hall.

### Biogas

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is home to two [anaerobic digestion systems](#). The larger on-campus system (hereafter, [BD1](#)), built in 2011 is unique – it was the first commercial-scale dry fermentation anaerobic biogas system in the Americas. The renewable energy facility produces approximately 8 percent of the University's electrical needs and converts 10,000 tons of yard and food waste per year to produce up to 3,300 Megawatts of electrical energy per year. Biogas is collected into a bag on-site and used to run a combined heat and power (CHP) unit to generate electricity and heat. Most recently the University earned a \$500,000 grant from the Public Service Commission's Energy Innovation Grant Program to connect BD1 to the immediately adjacent Campus Services Center which houses Facilities, Surplus, and Document Services. This project will reduce the University's Scope 1 emissions by reducing consumption of natural gas and other fossil fuels for heating and will yield an average of \$23,248.72 in savings per year. The second, smaller anaerobic digestion facility ([BD3](#)) is located on a family farm with fewer than 250 head of dairy cattle, about 12 miles northwest of the Oshkosh campus. The purpose of the project is to better understand, refine and optimize the process of producing electricity from methane derived from manure. The acquired knowledge will be shared to make this technology available to small rural farmers. The lasting effects will be to improve management of solid waste in environmentally-sound ways, create jobs, produce renewable energy, reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels, and mitigate climate change by reducing fossil carbon emissions. Most recently BD3 has been the site of research to produce biofuels such as jet fuel from animal waste.

### **Water Quality, Efficiency & Conservation**

UW Oshkosh's 184-acre main campus is located along Wisconsin's Fox River and just blocks away from Lake Winnebago, the largest inland body of water in the state. UWO is committed to reducing water



and pollution associated with storm water runoff.

UWO fresh water and storm water initiatives include campus audits, surveys of water use, education, implementation of stringent erosion control standards, and low-impact development practices and site design. Additionally, the on-campus [Environmental Research and Innovation Center](#) is a state-of-the-art facility approved for well-water testing and leads Wisconsin in Great Lakes beach water quality monitoring.

Between 2000 and 2014, UWO reduced its water usage by 41% by:

- Replacing natural turf at Titan Stadium with artificial turf has resulted in water savings of 850,000 gallons per year for irrigation, saving campus a little over \$4,500 annually.
- UW Oshkosh has reduced water consumption by 24,483,298 gallons per year by: replacing 1,006 toilets (3.24 – 4.50 gallon-per-flush removed and replaced with 1.6 gpf), installing Sloan 1.6 flushometer valves and installing 1,181 low-flow restrictors & adaptors onto faucets.

Recently, UWO earned a [\\$418,000 grant from the EPA](#) to purchase a trash skimmer boat to target several key waterways that drain into Green Bay and Lake Michigan, keeping litter and trash out of these bodies of water. EPA provided the Trash-Free Waters Grant under the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative, or GLRI. UWO also collaborates with regional organizations like the [Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance](#) to do research, citizen science, and community education events promoting water quality.

### Green Practices

UW Oshkosh manages much of its water usage and impact on storm water through Grounds operations and through the [MS4 permit by the DNR the SWMP through NEWSC](#). Maintenance of grounds has taken a sustainable turn, with the use of four 1000-gallon rain barrel systems which collect rainwater for use in watering around campus, ultimately reducing draw from the city's potable water and reducing costs. These rain barrels were paid for by the Student Green Fund. In addition, the Green Fund recently purchased a chemical-free weed treatment sprayer system for spot treatment of beds around campus.

Over the past decade the university has made a concerted effort to transform the grounds of the Oshkosh campus away from turf grass and towards more native plantings, prairie areas, and permanent plantings. Two spring ephemeral beds were established in areas that were difficult to mow near the science buildings. These beds mimic Wisconsin woodland forest floor habitat. Several areas have been planted with native prairie plants, which offer habitat to pollinators and other wildlife, as well as reducing the need to mow these spaces, thus reducing harmful emissions, and improving air quality. These areas also serve the teaching mission of the institution as a space for classes to learn about plants, animals, and soils.

UW Oshkosh also hosts three green roofs on the campuses, two on the [Oshkosh campus](#) and one on the [Fox Cities campus](#). These green roofs slow down and reduce the volume of runoff while filtering rainwater which improves water quality. These portions of the roof also add insulation in the winter and provide natural cooling through evaporative cooling in the summer.





## Resource Management

With a student body of 15,000 on three campuses and 1500 employees, UWO works diligently to manage its resources, [recycle](#), and reduce its waste.

- UWO's surplus program allows for perfectly good items to be avoid entering the landfill and keeps usable desks, chairs, filing cabinets, bookshelves, and other pieces of furniture in the asset rotation on the Oshkosh campuses. For furniture requests, surplus items are always offered first, keeping sustainability and cost in mind. Any items that are not re-homed within an appropriate amount of time are auctioned via the State resale process.
- A great program at UWO is the Office Supply Exchange which is a Google list for UWO employees to share and exchange office supplies which can be used throughout the year but are especially active during times when offices are doing some spring cleaning. This allows employees to post and share office items for pickup and use within and among departments and allows offices to save costs by reusing resources across the university, instead of buying new office supplies.
- All the [UWO campuses employ single-stream recycling](#) to collect every-day items like plastics, paper, aluminum, and glass. In addition, UWO has strong recycling programs to collect special streams such as plastic film, electronics, and hazardous waste.
- UWO runs a food waste collection program that is partnered with the biodigesters. 100% of food waste from Blackhawk Commons, the main dining hall on the Oshkosh campus, as well as all pre-consumer food waste from Reeve Union, are diverted from the landfill to BD1, to be converted into renewable energy and ultimately, compost.
- UWO has participated in [Campus Race to Zero Waste](#) (formerly Recyclemania) for several years, and in spring of 2021 UW Oshkosh placed at No. 6 per capita and No. 7 in total weight of electronics recycling of 25 schools competing in the category. UWO placed No. 20 of 103 schools for the food waste diversion, best of the UW System schools in this category. UWO placed No. 18 of 131 schools in the overall per capita classic competition (based on recycling numbers).
- Every spring, UWO hosts an electronic waste amnesty day, where individuals can recycle their personal electronic waste on campus. These items are then recycled along with accumulated University electronics.

## Transportation

UW Oshkosh offers a variety of alternative, sustainable transportation options for commuting to the campuses. UW Oshkosh is bike friendly, with 88 bike racks distributed throughout the main campus, and at least one next to every building. UW Oshkosh supports biking through:

- Bike rental and repair services offered at the Student Recreation and Wellness Center
- Two bike fixit stations on campus, which makes basic tools and an air pump available to students for free, paid for by the Student Green Fund
- Indoor bike storage in Horizon Village residence hall, as well as covered bike storage near several of the other dorms.



Other alternative transportation efforts include [bussing and other rideshare services](#):

- UW Oshkosh has a service agreement and partnership with the City of Oshkosh to provide free bus rides to students and staff on all GO Transit buses.
- In an effort to ensure a safe ride option is always available, UW Oshkosh offers [UWO Go](#). This service functions much like Uber and Lyft but is free to all UW Oshkosh students. The drivers are Community Service Officers who are students of UW Oshkosh.
- UW Oshkosh also has multiple locations where individuals can [charge their electric vehicles](#), and these will be expanded in the next year.

## **Pillar 2: Improve the health and wellness of students, faculty, and staff**

UW Oshkosh supports health and wellness for all campus community members through an all-encompassing approach that includes physical health, mental health resources, classroom and workplace health and safety measures, and more. UW Oshkosh promotes positive health and wellbeing through key programs and policies related to physical health, mental health, recreation, nutrition, and environmental health and safety, campus planning. This section also covers the university's response to COVID-19.

### **Physical Health**

UW Oshkosh provides a wide array of medical services to enrolled students on the Oshkosh, Fox Cities and Fond du Lac campuses.

- On average we provide prevention and illness care to approximately 25% of our student population.
- We promote wellness by encouraging yearly influenza vaccination by coordinating vaccine clinics on campus for students along with the ability to obtain the vaccine in the office. We partner with health promotion to provide education (through posters, campus vision slides, website) on actions people can take to prevent infection.
- When the COVID-19 pandemic hit, we became a vaccinators site holding three COVID-19 vaccination clinics at the Student Health Center for students, staff, and faculty. We successfully fully vaccinated over 400 individuals at our site before transitioning this service to the Culver Welcome Center due to space constraints.
- At each office visit we inquire about and promote exercise, healthy eating, and mental health services as needed to help improve the overall wellness of students.

We complete the [National College Health Assessment](#) every three years to measure trends in health and wellness issues among students.

- University-wide events and programs
- Health education, prevention, and awareness campaigns
- Guest speaker presentations for classes and student organizations
- Residence Life programs and monthly health communication materials
- [The Titan Well](#)
- Peer Education Programs





- [Peer Health Advocate Program](#) (serving residence life)
- [Peer Wellness Educator Program](#) (campus-wide)
- Between these two peer education programs, we typically have between 2000-2500 encounters each year among students seeking health and wellness supplies and/or referrals to other campus or community resources
- Individual health education consultations upon request

#### Objectives of Health Promotion at UWO:

- To promote campus wellness, encourage healthy lifestyles, and enhance students' capacity to reach academic and personal goals.
- To expand protective factors and campus strengths, and reduce personal, campus, and community health risk factors.
- To create and maintain conditions for wellness in the learning environment guided by cultural inclusion, respect, equality, and equity.

#### Healthy Titans

The UW Oshkosh [Healthy Titans Program](#) offers faculty, staff and their significant others as well as retirees, fitness and wellness opportunities on campus as well as virtually. Offerings include health education through 1:1 contact with our members, fitness center access, group fitness and personal training. Members and non-members can also take advantage of body composition measurement using the Bod Pod. Prior to the pandemic, Healthy Titans saw an average of 120 members per year in Fall 2019, falling to about 65 members per year as of Fall 2021.

This program is unique in that most services are provided by Kinesiology students under the supervision of Kinesiology faculty members. The Healthy Titans director, Kate Harrell, is a registered dietitian, sports dietitian, and fitness professional. As Healthy Titans Director and instructor for the coursework, Harrell teaches students up-to-date and sound wellness information which they then apply in the field through the Healthy Titans program.

#### Community Involvement

Healthy Titans has partnered with community programs in the past, to include offering Bod Pod testing days to YMCA members and staff. Harrell has also offered presentations for the Women's Retreat as well as the Step-It-Up Program.

#### **Mental Health**

##### Wellness

##### *Targeted and Open Workshops on Eco-Anxiety*

A partnership between the Student Counseling Center, SIRT, and the Environmental Studies Program has developed a series of workshops on Eco-Anxiety that are typically offered in the Spring Semester, during Earth Week. Trained professionals from the counseling center have led 90-minute sessions on how to cope with the feelings of anxiety and grief that often accompany learning about sustainability-related



crises such as climate change, biodiversity loss, and environmental injustice. These workshops have been offered in conjunction with courses in Environmental Studies but are also open to the larger community. Approximately 15-20 students attended sessions in 2020 and 2021.

### Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

[Diversity Resources](#) and statement:

Diversity drives innovation, creativity, and progress. At the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh, the culture, identities, life experiences, unique abilities, and talents of every individual contribute to the foundation of our success. Creating and maintaining an inclusive and equitable environment is of paramount importance to us. This pursuit prepares all of us to be global citizens who will contribute to the betterment of the world. We are committed to a university culture that provides everyone with the opportunity to thrive.

Strategic priorities and goals: UWO abides by the following action items to help promote continuous improvement in diversity and inclusion in our workplace: accountability, assessment, collaboration, cultural competence, intentionality in human resources, policy, and wellbeing.

- The Division of Academic Support of Inclusive Excellence ([ASIE](#)) is dedicated to the academic growth and personal development of UW Oshkosh students including structurally excluded groups comprising first-generation, low-income, students of color, women, and LGBTQ+ students. ASIE aims to empower and inform students, faculty, staff, and the broader community to create an equitable, diverse, and inclusive campus climate through outreach initiatives, educational programming, leadership opportunities and multicultural events.
- The Beyond Equity Action Collective (BEAC) is a working group composed of staff committed to diversity, equity, inclusion from the Academic Support of Inclusive Excellence and Division of Student Affairs. This fall, the group focused on three main areas: sharing equity in action examples, professional development, and reviewing of policies & procedures. In the spring, BEAC plans to expand by collaborating with or amplifying the work of other individuals or groups on campus with the same goals of identifying, addressing, and ending areas of inequity on campus.
- The [Workplace DEI Advisory Council](#) brings together members of the campus community to have open and honest conversations on how to build a more diverse and inclusive workplace. The Workplace DEI Advisory Council will guide the campus to create a respectful and inclusive working community in which individuals appreciate their uniqueness, understand their differences, and find common purpose. As an employer, we are committed to providing equal opportunity for employment and advancement in all our divisions, departments, and programs. Creating and maintaining an inclusive environment that thrives on individual differences is of paramount importance to us. For that reason, our mission as the Workplace Diversity, Equity & Inclusion Advisory Council is to foster measurable progress toward achieving equity in our University's programs, policies, procedures, and other good-faith efforts.



- The [Gender Equity Council](#) advocates for the needs of all genders. In consultation with the Chancellor and in collaboration with other campus groups, the Council will identify, address, and end all forms of gender inequity at UW Oshkosh.
- The College of Letters and Science Equity, Diversity, and Inclusive Climate ([EDIC](#)) [Committee](#) was formed in response to the results of the Campus Climate Survey and the Equity Scorecard. The EDIC Committee brings together faculty, academic staff, students, and classified staff who have demonstrated previous involvement and continued commitment to equity, diversity, and creation of an inclusive climate.
- [American Disabilities Act Advisory Committee](#): To evaluate existing programs, investigate unmet needs, and make recommendations to the Coordinator of Services to Students with Disabilities and the administration of the University in accordance with Board of Regents 'policy 96-6 (non-discrimination on basis of disability). The committee will have specific responsibility for hearing disability related student grievances.
- The [LGBTQ+ Education and Advocacy Council](#) provides visionary leadership, education, and advocacy necessary to cultivate an equitable, inclusive, and supportive climate for the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh community members of all sexual identities. More specifically, the Council will meet four community needs: Educate the University community members about challenges and issues faced by LGBTQ faculty, staff, and students; affirm the lives, experiences, and presence of LGBTQ faculty, staff, and students at the University; advocate to ensure an environment of safety, equity, and respect for individuals of all sexual and gender identities; and evaluate the UW Oshkosh members' efforts toward these ends including an assessment of the effectiveness, impact, and outcomes of the LGBTQ Education and Advocacy Council.
- UW Oshkosh campuses are home to more than a dozen identity-based [student organizations](#) that create safe, inclusive spaces for members to talk about related topics, current issues, provide educational programming and events, and social gatherings to build meaningful relationships.

## **Food and Nutrition**

### Nutrition

University Dining and Aladdin are committed to the nutritional well-being of students and staff of UW Oshkosh. Food choices and diet habits are an important part of our daily lives and are crucial for the health and well-being of all individuals. Through the [BeWell initiative](#), UWO provides nutritionally balanced food choices, along with accurate information and resources so that each individual can make the best dietary decisions for themselves on a daily basis.

### Access

[The Cabinet](#) is the on-campus student food pantry that is free for all currently enrolled UWO students on the Oshkosh Campus. The service was the Oshkosh Student Association's initiative to assist in providing food insecurity relief to their fellow students, which student leaders saw and still see as a major issue impacting student communities. The pantry is supported in many ways by the university and surrounding community, via numerous food drives, community and organizational partnerships, and



individual donations. The pantry offers a wide variety of donated food items to meet students' needs, including hygiene products, frozen meals, and more. Students can utilize this service either in person or by placing an online order via the pantry's website. For those students who can't afford a meal or just need something to cover their weekend, The Cabinet is a place to help those in need, so no student has to choose between a meal and an education.

In July 2019, UWO opened [the Harvest Room](#) in Reeve Union. This space was funded initially by the Student Green Fund. The Harvest Room was recently upgraded with funds from the University's dining contractor, Aladdin, and Midwest Foods, growing to a total of 12 towers and a more efficient self-sustaining watering system. Each machine grows on average 20 lbs. of lettuce every 22 days. The Harvest Room produces approximately 33% of the lettuce used in Dining operations as well as growing some herbs. The Harvest room also employs two students each semester. This program is also in collaboration with Fork Farms in Neenah, WI where the towers are made. In 2019, one of these units was sponsored by Jericho Road Ministries and was on display in Polk Library to demonstrate hydroponics and sustainability efforts of the campus. The lettuce from this unit was donated to a local food pantry. A Chemistry student researcher also used this unit to study why after a few harvests, lettuce was not growing as well. The student found that plants were lacking a key nutrient, while others were still present and suggested a solution for better dosing of nutrients into the water system. This kind of research ties together the sustainable campus operations and the idea of campus as a living lab where students can conduct hands-on experiments right on campus.

## **Green Space & Recreation**

### Recreation

Student Recreation is committed to helping the university community make positive, lasting changes in their lives through healthy, balanced recreational pursuits and offers state-of-the-art gym equipment, rock climbing, programs, and services to help students achieve their fitness goals.

- The [Outdoor Adventure Center](#) offers student-led outdoor activities and trips that combine recreation, sustainability and education, all while enjoying everything that outdoor Wisconsin and the upper Midwest have to offer.
- Titan Camp and Titan Adventure Retreats. This program started in 2017 with week-long camping trips designed to get incoming freshmen in small groups to get to know their cohort, while being active, and learning about the natural world in their own backyard. To date, the program has run 2017-2021 (canceled in 2020). Over the course of that time 79 students have participated in multi-day camping trips or multiple single-day excursions. This program was started because of research that shows that students that feel included in a community coming to a university are more likely to perform well academically, and [improves retention of those students, between 65-90%](#).
- [Inclusive outdoor education](#): UW Oshkosh purchased an Action Trackchair for use by individuals on campus. An Action Trackchair is an all-terrain wheelchair that provides individuals who require or benefit from mobility assistance the opportunity to join in on outdoor adventures and





events that go off a paved path! The UWO Action Trackchair can be checked out from the Outdoor Adventure Center at Student Recreation & Wellness Center.

### Green Space

UW Oshkosh uses its green spaces on the campuses for both recreation and teaching. Meeting outdoors can provide mental and physical health benefits while meeting course content goals. It also reduces the risk of COVID-19 transmission while encouraging students to engage with their environment.

- UW Oshkosh has a great Outdoor Classroom, paid for by the Student Green Fund, which was established in Shapiro Park, located just at the edge of the Oshkosh campus near Sage Hall and the Environmental Research and Innovation Center. Shapiro Park is dedicated to UW Oshkosh Biology professor Jacob Shapiro and four of his students, all of whom lost their lives in a tragic accident in 1970, just before the inaugural Earth Day celebrations. The park and outdoor classroom serve as a reminder of UW Oshkosh's connection to Earth Day and sustainability.
- The Fond du Lac campus sits next to the [Gottfried Prairie and Arboretum](#), which features 42 acres of preserved native plant communities. Students can learn and enjoy this natural haven through classes, hikes, and snowshoeing events.
- Each of the three campuses has earned a Tree Campus Higher Education recognition from the Arbor Day Foundation. This recognition is just one of the ways UW Oshkosh carries out its commitment to maintaining excellent green space: by planting trees. [The Oshkosh campus has earned this recognition for the last 11 consecutive years](#), and each of the campuses hold events and volunteer opportunities each year in spring to observe Arbor Day and its importance to sustainability on the campuses.

### **Workplace Health & Safety**

The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh Risk and Safety office is dedicated to preserving human, physical and financial assets of UW Oshkosh and supporting the teaching, research, learning and sustainability missions of our campus community. The Risk and Safety Office provides resources and guidance in various areas to reduce risk to the University and improve campus welfare.

- The University of Wisconsin Oshkosh is committed to protecting the health and safety of its faculty, staff, students, visitors and the environment by adequately managing [laboratory safety](#). The University sets standards for Biological and Chemical Safety as well as Other Lab, Shop, and Studio Safety Topics. The University maintains a [Document Library](#) which contains resources—from lab manuals to incident reporting, and guides to signage—that are integral to maintaining a safe lab on campus.
- The University of Wisconsin – Oshkosh provides ample resources related to [occupational safety](#), covering a broad range of topics including: safety and health policy for students, ergonomics, personal protective equipment, as well as other facilities related safety information and best practices.
- In addition, the Risk and Safety Office provides guidance on proper [waste disposal](#), not only to comply with state and federal guidelines, but in accordance with University policy as well. This includes the proper disposal of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.



### **Campus Planning and Maintenance**

The Facilities Management organization is dedicated to providing an attractive, clean, accessible, safe, and well-planned educational environment to facilitate campus activities, and support the mission and goals of the University. In addition to upholding standards set by the Dept. of Administration by the State of Wisconsin, UWO is also committed to building and maintaining comfortable, efficient facilities with improved indoor air quality and cleaning facilities with environmentally friendly products and practices. The University's Integrated Pest Management program was updated in 2019 to reflect improved sustainability practices in grounds management and in alignment with standards in AASHE reporting.

### **COVID-19**

Maintaining a primary focus on student and employee health, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh has been highly praised for its COVID-19 response and has been the site of [CDC research](#) for a robust antigen-testing regimen paired with PCR methods to widely monitor COVID in the campus population in the fall of 2020. The University's [Titans Return](#) page continues to offer good guidance on masking policy, testing and vaccination sites, and other resources for members of the campus community during the pandemic.

### **Pillar 3: Effective Environmental and Sustainability Education**

UW Oshkosh has a demonstrated commitment to infusing sustainability into academics. UWO provides students with a broad range of opportunities for engagement with environmental issues and sustainability at all stages of their college career, from general education to their major, from research opportunities to student organizations and on-campus events.

### **Academics**

#### **Sustainability as a General Education Requirement**

- [Essential Learning Outcome](#) in Sustainability: Essential Learning Outcomes (ELOs) are essential knowledge, skills, and perspectives that should characterize all students who receive a degree from UW Oshkosh. In 2009, "Knowledge of sustainability and its outcomes" became one of the ELOs for UW Oshkosh students, in the area of "Responsibilities, as Individuals and Members of Communities."
- The [University Studies Program](#), UW Oshkosh's innovative general education program, was launched in 2013. The USP is designed to provide students with a liberal arts education oriented towards addressing the challenges of the 21st century. Students in the USP take a series of three Quest courses (Quest I, II, and III) in their first three semesters at UW Oshkosh, which are organized around three [Signature Questions](#) drawn from the responsibilities area of the Essential Learning Outcomes: **Civic Learning** (How do people understand and engage in community life?); **Intercultural Knowledge** (How do people understand and bridge cultural



differences?); and **Sustainability**: How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?

Quest sustainability courses must cover relevant content for 25-30% of the course (see [Sustainability Signature Question Syllabus Checklist](#)). Instructors receive training and support to integrate sustainability into their courses, and Quest courses in Sustainability are taught in disciplines including Chemistry, Geology, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Anthropology, English, Foreign Languages, and more. [Quest III courses](#) include a community engagement requirement, and students spend ~20 hours/semester applying course concepts by volunteering with a community partner (which include area nonprofits, community organizations, municipalities, and others. Examples of Quest III courses with a sustainability theme include Anthropology 220Q3: Culture and Health, Art 236Q3: Experience Mapping, Biology 104Q3: Ecosphere in Crisis Business 275Q3: Sustainability: The 21st Century Business Strategy, and Geography 250Q3: Sustainability in Theory and Practice.

- [Assessment of Student Sustainability Knowledge in the USP](#): Assessments of student learning in Quest courses reveal that these courses appear to be increasing student knowledge about sustainability. A Fall 2018 assessment found that 44.8% of Quest students achieved “high proficiency” and 32.8% achieved “proficiency” in the signature question, “How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?” (N= 8 classes, 116 students). In Fall 2015 and Fall 2016, a more detailed pre- and post- test of student learning of sustainability delivered to all students in Quest sustainability courses demonstrated ~1-17% improvement of overall knowledge of sustainability, ~26-32% improvement in skills for analyzing and addressing sustainability issues and problems, and a ~10-33% improvement in knowledge about key sustainability topics.

#### Interdisciplinary Learning: Institutes, Majors, Certificates, Programs, and Courses

- The [Environmental Studies](#) (major and minor) program gives students a broad interdisciplinary liberal arts education in environmental issues. The program stresses applying learning via the capstone course where students research and propose projects to Oshkosh’s Sustainability Advisory Board and Planning Services Division.
- The [Environmental Engineering Technology](#) (major and minor) responds to NE Wisconsin workforce needs and Bureau of Labor Statistics estimate of a 14% increase in environmental engineering tech positions. Graduates are prepared to work in industries such as wastewater management, agribusiness, and environmental consulting.
- The [Environmental Health](#) major positions students for jobs related to community health, environmental testing and quality control. The program’s learning objectives are aligned to the Association of Environmental Health Academic Programs (AEHAP) guidelines.
- The [Social Justice Minor](#) helps students to critically examine the values that constitute social justice in theory and practice, understand the principles of effective social activism, and formulate and evaluate policies that seek to address sustainability issues.



- The [Sustainable Management \(Collaborative\) Master's Degree](#) prepares students to make the connection between business and organizations, environmental science, and social systems for successful sustainable outcomes, and is an ideal choice for adult students who need the flexibility an online program offers.
- [Certificate in Elementary and Middle School Environmental Studies Teaching](#): The College of Education and Human Services and the College of Letters & Science collaborate on a certificate aimed at K-8 teachers in environmental education.
- [Courses across the curriculum](#): As of 2021, there were 68 sustainability-oriented undergraduate courses and 29 graduate. 5.4% of overall courses offered at UW-Oshkosh campuses are sustainability-focused or -inclusive. 54% of academic departments have at least one sustainability course offering.

#### Faculty and Academic Staff Development for Teaching Sustainability

For almost 15 years UW Oshkosh has supported faculty and academic staff in integrating sustainability into their teaching through workshops, teaching resources, and more.

- [Workshops and faculty colleges](#): From 2008-2011, faculty developed and ran the Winnebago Project Faculty College, based on a national model, which supported 45 faculty from a broad range of disciplines in bringing sustainability into their courses. This model was adapted to train instructors teaching sustainability-themed Quest courses in the USP. These trainings are offered at least yearly by SIRT staff.
- [SIRT Teaching Resources](#): SIRT maintains a range of resources to support the teaching of sustainability in the USP and beyond. These include:
  - [Sustainability Teaching Modules](#): Resources and plans for instructors to bring sustainability into their classes (modules include Introduction to Sustainability, Climate Change, Environmental Justice, Wilderness, and more).
  - [Introductory readings](#): Curated set of introductory readings and materials on sustainability provide instructors with a jumping-off point.
  - [Teaching sustainability in the time of COVID](#): Teaching materials to help instructors make links between COVID, racial justice, and sustainability.

#### **Research**

A major focus of SIRT is facilitating interdisciplinary sustainability research that addresses issues on our campuses and in our community and involves students in meaningful ways.

- [SIRT Affiliates](#) SIRT maintains a searchable directory of faculty and staff with sustainability expertise to facilitate collaboration across campus and community.
- [SIRT research](#) is an open, accessible online hub with sustainability publications by UWO faculty, research projects, and grant opportunities for faculty and staff.
- [Sustainability Challenge Grants](#) provide funding (up to \$20,000/project in 2022) to faculty and academic staff for interdisciplinary, community-engaged sustainability projects. Past examples include the [Bird-Window Collision Project](#) (a collaboration between five UW Oshkosh faculty and staff and one community member); Developing Artful Leadership to Foster Sustainability at UW





Oshkosh and Beyond (collaboration between a UW Oshkosh art professor and the [Paine Art Center and Gardens](#)), and [Earth WELLNESS Training](#) (professional development for PK-12 educators in the region).

- [Student Sustainability Grants](#): SIRT and the UWO Office for Student Research and Creative Activity partnered in 2021 to support six students from five different disciplines in directed research on campus sustainability, including a campus tree inventory and map; compostability of single-use campus dining items; student use of single-use plastic water bottles; and indigenous history of the area. A 2022 round of grants is planned.
- [Winnebago Lakes Harmful Algal Blooms \(HABs\) project](#): This project partners an interdisciplinary group of faculty and students with the regional nonprofit [Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance](#) and aims to understand how the public perceives and responds to harmful algal blooms (HABs) in Lake Winnebago and associated waterways, with the goal of providing information to improve outreach, education and policy. The team received a \$50,000 WiSys Ignite grant and has applied for a \$1.6 million NSF grant that would support the involvement of over 40 student researchers over four years.
- [Other professional development support](#): SIRT sends faculty and staff to conferences and online workshops, and sponsors seminars, guest speakers, book clubs, and other events that support engagement with interdisciplinary sustainability research.

## **Student Engagement**

### Student Organizations

- [Green Fund](#) is a student-run committee funded through student segregated fees. Approximately \$60,000 is available each year for student projects that promote sustainability on campus. Proposals can be written by any student or student groups and funded projects include the installation of an outdoor classroom, beehives, duck boxes and bird houses, and a harvest room that supplies fresh produce for dining operations.
- [Student Environmental Action Coalition](#) (SEAC) works towards social and environmental justice through passive and active education to the campus and community.
- [Wildlife Conservation Club](#)'s mission is to promote and educate members and the campus community on wildlife management and conservation through collaborations with area experts and hands-on activities.
- [Sustainable Beekeeping Club](#) helped install two honeybee hives on campus and generates student interest in beekeeping and the value of pollinators in the ecosystem.
- [Sustainable Solutions for Tomorrow](#)'s purpose is to do various hands-on projects to promote the sustainability of the Oshkosh campus and community- including a community apple orchard on campus.

### Experiential Learning

UWO offers students high-impact experiential learning and opportunities to use the campus as a living learning laboratory through many research opportunities and internships.



- [Environmental Research and Innovation Center](#): ERIC hires >10 students each year to help with lab operations at UW Oshkosh and places >30 interns at remote lab locations each summer, including Vilas County, Door County and Manitowoc. These hands-on internships have students learning various sustainability-related STEM skills including water quality testing, aquatic invasive species monitoring, well testing, micro-plastics research, and lab operations. These paid internships can be taken for course credits.
- [SIRT Student Researchers](#): SIRT offers student research opportunities through existing research projects and through grants that support student-directed projects.
- [SIRT Internships](#): SIRT internships offer students paid, hands-on experience in different areas of sustainability. SIRT offers at least 6 student internships each year: two Social Media and Communication internships (responsible for social media, press releases, creating graphics for programming, and the SIRT newsletter); one SIRT Research & Operations Internship (responsible for helping to implement existing research programs and projects, for example [UW Oshkosh Biogas Program](#)); two Community Gardens internships (responsible for managing gardens and community-supported agriculture program); and one Fair Trade Internship (responsible for developing educational programs and retail relationships for Fair Trade).
- [Sustainability Jobs Panel and Networking Event](#): This biannual event brings together students and representatives of regional agencies and orgs to provide opportunity for learning about job opportunities and networking in sustainability-related fields.

## Events

[SIRT events](#) are focused on building culture and knowledge of sustainability at UWO and in the region. These events involve collaborations with student organizations, academic departments, and community groups to bring together all areas and intersections of sustainability.

- [Earth Charter Community Summit](#): The [Earth Charter](#) provides shared values for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society. Each year we celebrate our commitment to its values with a series of events that bring the campus and community together. Past speakers include Dolores Huerta, Vandaya Shiva, and others.
- [Earth Week/Month](#): Each year the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh celebrates Earth Week through a variety of events, activities, and speakers. Past speakers include J. Drew Lanham and Dina Gilio-Whitaker, and include hands-on events like bird watching, cleanups, tree plantings, and more.
- [SIRT Seminars and other events](#): SIRT offers seminars on key topics by sustainability scholars each semester, as well as book clubs, brown bags, and other events.
- Our [Sustainability Calendar](#) and [past events](#) can be viewed by all.

## Community Engagement

SIRT fosters sustainability in our larger community through grants, events, partnerships, and more, and provides educational opportunities to support K-12 and non-formal education.

- [Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance](#): SIRT partners with the FWWA on the [Winnebago Lakes HABs project](#) focused on addressing the problem of harmful algal blooms in our region. UW Oshkosh



is also an annual host site for the annual [Fox-Wolf Watershed Alliance Clean-up](#) where hundreds of volunteers visit one of 60+ sites coordinated throughout the watershed to remove garbage and debris.

- [Hands on Oshkosh](#): At UW Oshkosh, volunteerism broadly encompasses “bringing campus to life.” One way of doing so is through the semi-annual Hands on Oshkosh program, where students, faculty and staff come together to go out into the Oshkosh community, to volunteer and make a difference. Past projects have included: organizing classrooms to enhance the experience for the students, brightening the paint of an agency’s walls for a more welcoming area, taking on an agency’s yard work so their employees can continue to focus on their internal success, and much more.
- [Co-hosted community events](#): SIRT co-hosts outdoor activities and volunteer opportunities with community organizations, including Citizens Climate Lobby-Oshkosh chapter, Winnebago Audubon Society, Wisconsin Green Fire, Wisconsin Conservation Voters, and more. For example, our Salt Paddle on the Fox River event in Oct 2021, co-sponsored with FWWA, invited community members to learn about impacts of salt runoff in our watershed by kayaking to collect and test water samples for chloride.
- [Earth Wellness Training](#): This training, offered in Summer 2022, provides professional development to PK-12 and other environmental educators to teach about environmental issues. This training meets WI Standards for Environmental Literacy and Sustainability.
- [Introduction to Sustainability Training](#): SIRT and the Center for Community Development, Engagement and Training (CCDET) developed an [introductory training](#) to sustainability for staff at businesses, organizations, and agencies.
- [UW Oshkosh Free School](#): Organized by faculty, staff, and students, this annual April event consists of a weekend of free classes that are for community members of all ages. Taught by anyone with a skill or knowledge to share, classes are oriented towards sustainability, social justice, and community building.



### Executive Summary:

- Over the last two decades, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh has developed a reputation as a national leader in the campus sustainability movement. In 2002, the University of Wisconsin Oshkosh signed the Earth Charter, thereby pledging to pursue a course of sustainability. For UW Oshkosh, this pledge means infusing sustainability in every aspect of life and operations: from teaching to research, as well as student programming and services, maintenance of facilities and grounds, and initiatives in waste, water, and transportation. Building on this pledge, UW Oshkosh signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2006, which obligates campuses to strive for climate neutrality by mid-century or sooner. In 2016, UW Oshkosh was named the 3rd greenest school in the U.S. by Sierra Club.
- UW Oshkosh promotes positive health and wellbeing through key programs and policies related to health and wellness for all campus community members through an all-encompassing approach that includes physical health, mental health resources, classroom and workplace health and safety measures, and more.
- In 2017, UW Oshkosh formed the [Sustainability Institute for Regional Transformations \(SIRT\)](#), with the mission of “engaging stakeholders from Wisconsin and beyond to build healthy communities, inclusive economies, and ecologically sound environments through inquiry, education and action.” SIRT facilitates interdisciplinary sustainability research, supports sustainability education, hosts events, and works to enhance on-campus sustainability in energy, waste, grounds, and more. One of SIRT’s goals is to fulfill the model of campus as a living learning laboratory - using the campuses as a space for learning and research while also improving university operations. SIRT also emphasizes engagement with the larger community by collaborating with community partners on projects that address significant sustainability issues in our region. UW Oshkosh strives to prioritize sustainability projects that include students and faculty from multiple disciplines as well as other university staff to improve operations, reduce emissions, and offer financial savings.
- This application identifies the numerous ways in which UW Oshkosh embraces sustainability through reduced environmental impacts and costs, improving the health and wellness of students, faculty, and staff, and offering robust, effective environmental and sustainability education.