

2026 Strategic Plan
Center for Sustainability Education

Preface

Dickinson College launched a college-wide initiative in 2008 to make sustainability a defining characteristic of the college. The initiative, which continues, encompasses Dickinson's academic program, campus operations, campus culture, student life, college governance and civic engagement. It builds on Dickinson's educational mission of providing a useful, innovative and interdisciplinary education in the liberal arts and sciences to prepare students to lead rich and fulfilling lives of engaged global citizenship working for the common good, a history of strong environmental and global education programs, campus operations that have long embraced and practiced environmental stewardship, and engagement of students and the college with Carlisle and other communities in action for the common good. Through the efforts of numerous offices, faculty, staff and students, Dickinson has firmly established itself as a national leader in education for sustainability.

The Center for Sustainability Education (CSE) has played a pivotal role leading student learning dimensions of the initiative and supporting college-wide sustainability goals that extend beyond the student learning experience. Pursuing and achieving goals that were set in the 2010 report *Charting the Path for a Sustainable Dickinson* and the *2021 CSE Strategic Plan*, CSE has been a leader in making sustainability a pillar of a Dickinson education, one that equips Dickinson graduates for civic action to create a more just, inclusive and sustainable society and that assists Dickinson in attracting and retaining high quality students, faculty and staff.

The COVID-19 pandemic, Black Lives Matter movement, budget and staff cuts and other events made 2020 and 2021 a tumultuous time for Dickinson and CSE. CSE responded in the short term by revising programs to be delivered remotely, elevating antiracism in its work and adjusting its activities to budget cuts and the loss of a staff position. Looking to the future, we anticipate a safe return to in-person programming while learning from and adapting virtual technologies used during the pandemic that can add value to our programs.

The reduced levels of budget and staffing for CSE are expected to continue and will strain the Center's ability to support all its current programs and activities. Meanwhile, new needs and opportunities are emerging. To address these tensions, priorities were reviewed and revised in summer 2021 as part of the strategic planning process and the new priorities were used to make decisions about CSE programs and activities to continue, scale back, reorient and discontinue. The new CSE strategic plan for the period 2022 through 2026 seeks to center antiracism in the Center's work, take a more intersectional approach to sustainability and rebalance the Center's work to align with revised strategic priorities and reduced staff and financial resources.

We adopt this strategic plan for the Center at a time when Dickinson is working on a new college-wide strategic plan. We hope that the new CSE plan will help to inform that process. When the college completes its strategic planning effort, we will revisit the Center's strategic goals and consider whether and how we might align our plan with Dickinson's new strategic plan.

Vision and Mission

The 2021 CSE Strategic Plan presented new vision and mission statements for the Center. We affirm and restate them here.

Vision: Every Dickinsonian will develop the knowledge, skills and passions for helping create an inclusive and just world that is socially, economically and ecologically sustainable.

Mission: Engage Dickinsonians in learning about, innovating for and practicing sustainability in the classroom, on campus and in communities near and far.

Sustainability at Dickinson explores a fundamental question: How do we improve the human condition equitably in this and future generations while conserving environmental systems necessary to support healthy and vibrant societies? Answers are complicated by continuing racism, deepening inequality, globalizing social and economic institutions, urbanizing populations, changing technologies and a growing human footprint that is rapidly changing the Earth's atmosphere, climate, oceans and ecological systems. These dynamic forces interact in complex ways with aspirations for, progress toward and challenges of human and economic development, food and energy security, health, justice, access to clean air and clean water, environmental protection and biodiversity conservation. A healthy environment is necessary but not sufficient for creating a sustainable society. A sustainable society is also, necessarily, just, equitable, inclusive and without racism.

Responding to these challenges, Dickinson chose to make sustainability a part of every student's education. CSE supports this educational mission by creating, enhancing and connecting opportunities for learning about, innovating for and practicing sustainability in and beyond the classroom. The Center works with faculty members in all academic departments to infuse sustainability across Dickinson's liberal arts curriculum. We provide resources to assist faculty in integrating sustainability questions, principles and approaches in their teaching, scholarship and research in the sciences, social sciences, arts and humanities and interdisciplinary fields. Collaborating with a variety of partners, CSE supports curricular and co-curricular activities that engage students and other members of the Dickinson community in exploring complex problems and creating, testing and evaluating sustainable solutions on campus, in Carlisle and in other communities. We work with a variety of partners to bring speakers to campus, serve as an information hub for all facets of Dickinson's sustainability efforts and mentor student interns, researchers and volunteers to be agents of change working to create sustainable communities.

Strategic Goals

CSE will pursue strategic goals for emerging new cross-cutting priorities and performance of its ongoing functions over the period 2022 through 2026.

Goals for Emerging New Cross-Cutting Priorities:

1. Revise CSE programs and activities to align with educational priorities, reduced staff and reduced financial resources.
2. Make antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion integral to the understanding and practice of sustainability at Dickinson.
3. Enhance opportunities for students to connect sustainability, global interdependence, equity and civic action in their academic studies and co-curricular activities.

Goals for CSE Ongoing Functions:

4. Enrich opportunities for students to explore sustainability across Dickinson's liberal arts curriculum and off-campus study programs.
5. Enrich opportunities for students to develop and apply sustainability skills through co-curricular programs.
6. Support efforts to advance Dickinson as a sustainability leader in higher education.

Goal 1: Revise CSE programs and activities to align with educational priorities, reduced staff and reduced financial resources.

CSE programs and activities were reviewed in light of reduced staff and budget and new priorities that were set in summer 2021 and decisions were made about programs and activities to continue, scale back, reorient and discontinue. The decisions give priority to supporting faculty in offering sustainability courses across Dickinson's curriculum and supporting co-curricular programs that engage students in learning about and practicing sustainability. CSE co-curricular programs will be reoriented to reduce staff time commitments, emphasize student learning and action, empower students to take greater ownership of continuing programs and deemphasize provision of student services (e.g. access to bikes and biking infrastructure). CSE's role in sustainability communication and reporting, college-wide sustainability performance and civic action will be scaled back and other entities asked to take more responsibility in these areas.

Objectives:

- 1.1 Make and implement decisions about programs and activities to continue, reorient, scale back and discontinue.
- 1.2 Assist other entities to take responsibility for functions that CSE will no longer perform.

Goal 2: Make antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion integral to the understanding and practice of sustainability at Dickinson.

Social justice, equity and inclusion principles have long been embraced by the sustainability movement and have been part of Dickinson's sustainability initiative from its beginning. Yet sustainability is often perceived and too often practiced with a primary focus on narrowly defined environmental goals. Events of 2020 and 2021 demonstrated, yet again, that the lives of Black people, Indigenous people and people of color are at particular risk from pandemics and other health risks, violence, food and housing insecurity, natural hazards and environmental degradation. The reasons are multiple. But systemic racism is undeniably an important contributor. To continue to be relevant to the concerns of our students and our society, we must enhance our focus on issues of social justice, equity and inclusion in our sustainability work and explicitly embrace antiracism as integral to the sustainability movement. CSE will work with other campus stakeholders to advance this important work.

Objectives:

- 2.1. Integrate antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion into CSE curriculum development, faculty development and intern programs.
- 2.2. Cosponsor co-curricular programs with other stakeholders that engage students with diverse people and voices to examine and act on issues of antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion.
- 2.3. Prioritize diversity and inclusion in recruiting and supporting CSE student volunteers, student interns and professional staff.
- 2.4. Update sustainability webpages and other communications to highlight antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion as priorities in CSE programming.

Goal 3: Enhance opportunities for students to connect sustainability, global interdependence, equity and civic action in their academic studies and co-curricular activities.

Staff of CSE, the Center for Global Study and Engagement (CGSE), the Center for Civic Learning and Action (CCLA), the Center for Advising, Internships & Lifelong Career Development (CAILCD), and the Office of Equity & Inclusivity (OEI) have identified common interest in creating opportunities for students to recognize and

explore intersections among sustainability, global interdependence, equity, antiracism and civic action, both in and beyond the classroom. In spring 2021, CSE and the other partners acted on their shared interest by collaborating to deliver workshops on these intersections to support the Globally Integrated Semester. Dialogue is continuing among the current partners to consider goals, approaches, frameworks and resource needs for collaborative cross-divisional work to advance college-wide priorities by providing programs or pathways for students to explore the intersections in meaningful ways and support students in developing skills to work on these issues in their future careers, civic lives and graduate studies. Programs would emphasize experiential, place-based and values-based learning. Elements could include, for example, new incarnations of the Carlisle Mosaic, mini-Mosaics that examine and compare thematic topics in U.S. and non-U.S. contexts, globally integrated courses with short-term travel, campus projects and campaigns, internships and other work experiences, community-based research and other service-learning activities.

Objectives:

- 3.1. Working with CGSE, CCLA, CAILCD, OEI and relevant faculty, develop, pilot and assess outcomes of a small number of selected activities to provide opportunities for students to explore intersections among sustainability, global interdependence, equity, antiracism and civic action.
- 3.2. Learn from the pilot activities, develop a plan for a coherent program with curricular and co-curricular elements, gain approval of the plan from relevant all-college committees and secure resources for implementation.

Goal 4: Enrich opportunities for students to explore sustainability across Dickinson’s liberal arts curriculum.

CSE will continue to support faculty in teaching sustainability across the Dickinson curriculum, seeking to enrich intersections of sustainability with global education, civic learning and action, equity and inclusion, antiracism and Future Ready skills development. Support will include the annual Valley & Ridge faculty study group, which introduces faculty to sustainability education; occasional faculty study groups to explore selected special topics in more depth; Sustainability Education Fund grants for curriculum development, faculty development and student-faculty research projects; consultations with faculty, assistance for their course projects and visits to their classes; review and approval of courses for the sustainability graduation requirement; coordination of the EcoLeague consortium’s student exchange program; and assessment of sustainability learning. In addition, CSE staff will continue to teach and co-teach sustainability courses.

Objectives:

- 4.1. Engage multiple and diverse faculty from all academic divisions in faculty development for sustainability teaching, scholarship and student-faculty research.
- 4.2. Increase and diversify sustainability course offerings and the programs offering sustainability courses.
- 4.3. Support faculty in including experiential learning projects and other high impact pedagogies in their sustainability courses.

Goal 5: Enrich opportunities for students to develop and apply sustainability skills through co-curricular programs.

CSE will continue to support a variety of co-curricular learning programs while revising some programs to reduce CSE staff time commitments and discontinuing other programs. These will include internships that provide deep dives into experiential sustainability learning and leadership supported by professional development activities, peer-to-peer education, volunteer work, new student orientation programs, engagement in civic action to advance sustainability in Carlisle and other communities and CSE sponsored and co-sponsored events. All CSE co-curricular programs will be reoriented to emphasize campus education and

action and exploration of intersections of sustainability with antiracism, equity, global interdependence and civic action. The CSE intern and Eco-Reps programs will be continued at their current scales while The Handlebar, Green Bikes, The Hive and Free xChange programs will be scaled back and students and student organizations will be encouraged to take on greater responsibilities for these programs.

CSE will continue but scale back efforts to engage Dickinsonians in civic action for sustainability, playing a supporting role to assist the Center for Civic Learning and Action (CCLA). In the near term, current work to support climate action planning by Carlisle Borough and Cumberland County will continue. Longer term, CSE will explore with CCLA and other stakeholders the potential needs and opportunities for public sustainability education programs.

CSE will continue to sponsor and co-sponsor sustainability speakers, events, workshops, new student orientation programs, special projects and campaigns but will offer fewer of these programs than in the past. Emphasis will be given to collaborative co-curricular programming in partnership with on-campus and off-campus partners.

5. Objectives:

- 5.1. Engage numerous and diverse students in learning sustainability concepts, values, practices and skills through co-curricular programs sponsored by CSE and other partners.
- 5.2. Support students in developing sustainability leadership skills through the CSE internship and Baird Sustainability Fellows programs.

Goal 6: Support efforts to advance Dickinson as a sustainability leader in higher education.

Since its founding, CSE has played an important role in advancing Dickinson as a sustainability leader in higher education by catalyzing, advocating, supporting, communicating and reporting college-wide sustainability efforts that have included the academic program, co-curricular programs, student life, campus operations and civic action. CSE will continue to help support these college-wide efforts, but its now diminished staff and budget require us to focus our attention on academic and co-curricular aspects of Dickinson's sustainability work and scale back our efforts in other dimensions of sustainability.

CSE will work with campus partners to shift responsibilities from CSE to other entities for coordinating Dickinson's AASHE STARS report and other reporting functions, applying for sustainability-related certifications that pertain to non-academic programs, and leading the President's Commission on Environmental Sustainability (PCES). CSE will continue to collect and report information for the STARS report for metrics that are related to Academic Affairs but will no longer lead the STARS reporting effort. CSE will also no longer coordinate applications for Bicycle Friendly University and Bee Campus USA certifications. Responsibility for Dickinson's greenhouse gas inventory report, which has been shared between CSE and the office of Sustainability and Facilities Planning, will be fully transferred to the latter. The CSE director, who has chaired PCES since it was founded, will step down as chair.

CSE will continue to serve as an information hub for sustainability learning opportunities, activities and accomplishments by continuing to maintain Dickinson's sustainability webpages, publish the digital bi-weekly Sustainability Newsletter, promote sustainability stories to Dickinson's Office of Marketing and Communications, and serve as sources for external media publications. The Sustainability Dashboard and the biennial Sustainability Report will be discontinued.

CSE will help to maintain Dickinson's visibility as a sustainability leader by continuing to serve as a liaison between Dickinson and external sustainability-related partners, including the Association for Advancement of

Sustainability in Higher Education, the Global Council for Science and the Environment, Second Nature and others.

Objectives:

- 6.1. Assist in the orderly transfer of responsibility for the AASHE STARS and greenhouse gas inventory reports to others at Dickinson.
- 6.2. Communicate sustainability opportunities, happenings and accomplishments to on- and off-campus audiences using a variety of media.
- 6.3. Assist other offices, as time and resources permit, to advance sustainability performance and goals in areas beyond the academic program and CSE-led co-curricular programs.
- 6.4. Collaborate with CCLA to engage Dickinson students, faculty and staff in civic actions to advance sustainability-related goals in Carlisle and other communities.
- 6.5. Maintain Dickinson’s visibility as a sustainability leader by engaging with higher education sustainability-related consortia and other colleges and universities.

Resources

CSE staffing and budget resources are summarized below. Current staffing and budget are not sufficient for CSE to continue all of its current programs and activities. In this plan, we set strategic goals for the period 2022 – 2026 that are ambitious yet attainable with the available resources and identify the programs and activities that we will continue, scale back and discontinue to provide high-quality opportunities for student sustainability learning.

Staffing for FY 2022:

- Director
- Assistant Director
- Administrative Assistant
- EcoLeague Coordinator (part-time; externally funded)

CSE operating budgets for FY 2017 through 2022:

	FY 2017 Budget	FY 2018 Budget	FY 2019 Budget	FY 2020 Budget	FY 2021 Budget	FY 2022 Proposed Budget
Operating	\$66,020	\$43,520	\$43,520	\$39,168	\$35,168	\$30,500
Student employment	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$30,500	\$23,500	\$27,500
Total	\$96,520	\$74,020	\$74,020	\$69,668	\$58,668	\$58,000

In addition to its operating and student employment budgets, CSE receives an average of \$18,000 in income from quasi-endowment funds and \$10,000 in restricted gifts each year. These resources are used to support the Sustainability Education Fund, which makes small grants to faculty for participation in the Valley & Ridge Sustainability Across the Curriculum study group and a variety of other faculty projects.

Key Performance Indicators

Goal	Objectives	Key Performance Indicators
Goal 1: Revise CSE programs and activities to align with educational priorities, reduced staff and reduced financial resources.		
	1.1 Make and implement decisions about programs and activities to continue, reorient, scale back and discontinue. 1.2 Assist other entities to take responsibility for functions that CSE will no longer perform.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Decisions are implemented and communicated to stakeholders to reorient, scale back and discontinue selected programs and activities.
Goal 2: Make antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion integral to the understanding and practice of sustainability at Dickinson.		
	2.1. Integrate antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion into CSE curriculum, faculty development and intern programs. 2.2. Cosponsor co-curricular programs with other stakeholders that engage students with diverse people and voices to examine and act on issues of antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion. 2.3. Prioritize diversity and inclusion in recruiting and supporting CSE student volunteers, student interns and professional staff. 2.4. Update sustainability webpages and other communications to highlight antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion as priorities in CSE programming.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Modules created for Valley & Ridge faculty development workshop that include content on antiracism, social justice, equity and inclusion. • Number of co-curricular programs co-sponsored by CSE that feature antiracism, social justice, equity and/or inclusion issues. • Demographics of CSE program participants, student volunteers, interns and professional staff.
Goal 3: Enhance opportunities for students to connect sustainability, global interdependence, equity and civic action in their academic studies and co-curricular activities.		
	3.3. Working with CGSE, CCLA, CAILCD, OEI and relevant faculty, develop, pilot and assess outcomes of a small number of selected activities to provide opportunities for students to explore intersections among sustainability, global interdependence, equity, antiracism and civic action. 3.4. Learn from the pilot activities, develop a plan for a coherent program, gain approval of the plan from relevant all-college committees and secure resources for implementation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intersectional activities are piloted and assessed. • A proposal for a coherent program is produced and approved.
Goal 4: Enrich opportunities for students to explore sustainability across Dickinson’s liberal arts curriculum and off-campus study programs.		
	4.4. Engage multiple and diverse faculty from all academic divisions in faculty development for sustainability teaching, scholarship and student-faculty research. 4.5. Increase and diversify sustainability course offerings and the programs offering sustainability courses. 4.6. Support faculty in including experiential sustainability learning projects in their courses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and percentage of faculty who participate in CSE faculty development programs, by division and total. • Number of Sustainability Investigations and Sustainability Connections courses offered each academic year. • Number and percentage of academic programs that offer at least one sustainability course each year.

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of off-campus study programs that offer rich opportunities to study sustainability.
Goal 5: Enrich opportunities for students to develop and apply sustainability skills through co-curricular programs.		
	5.3. Engage numerous and diverse students in learning sustainability concepts, values, practices and skills through co-curricular programs.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of CSE co-curricular programs offered. • Number of students who participate in CSE co-curricular programs.
Goal 6: Support efforts to advance Dickinson as a sustainability leader in higher education.		
	<p>6.6. Assist in the orderly transfer of responsibility for the AASHE STARS and greenhouse gas inventory reports to others at Dickinson.</p> <p>6.7. Communicate sustainability opportunities, happenings and accomplishments to on- and off-campus audiences using a variety of media.</p> <p>6.8. Assist other offices, as time and resources permit, to advance sustainability performance and goals in areas beyond the academic program and CSE-led co-curricular programs.</p> <p>6.9. Collaborate with CCLA to engage Dickinson students, faculty and staff in civic actions to advance sustainability-related goals in Carlisle and other communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of requests for assistance served.