



Connecticut State University System NEWS RELEASE

University Presidents at Central, Eastern, Southern, & Western Sign Climate Commitment

Signaling a commitment to strengthen their institutions' environmental efforts through improved energy efficiency, conservation and sustainability, Presidents Jack Miller, Elsa Nuñez, Cheryl Norton and James Schmotter of Central, Eastern, Southern and Western Connecticut State Universities are among charter signatories of the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment.

The document calls on higher education institutions across the United States to take tangible steps that, over time, will lead to eliminating greenhouse gas emissions at the four campuses.



Across the nation, only about half-a-dozen university systems have had all member institutions sign on. Joining the Connecticut State University System in the initiative,

launched in 2007, are the University of California, the University of Massachusetts, the University of South Carolina and Washington State University.

The number of university and college presidents signing the agreement is now approaching 500. Signatories to the Climate Commitment commit their institutions to:

- Develop a plan within two years to attain climate neutrality as soon as practical. The plan would include an inventory of emissions, target dates, specific actions and tracking mechanisms.
- Complete two or more specific actions from a list of steps to reduce greenhouse gases.
- Make the plans, greenhouse gas inventory and periodic progress reports publically available.

Universities, as do other businesses and industries, produce greenhouse gases by heating building, running vehicles, and consuming electricity. Climate neutrality is achieved by conservation, use of renewable energy and carbon offset purchases to fund the production of clean energy.

Each of the universities of the Connecticut State University System has established a solid track-record of developing environmentally friendly standards, making the decision to sign the Presidents Commitment an appropriate step in formalizing and enhancing university policies.

At Western, for example, the three most recent buildings constructed were built to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design, or LEED standards, including the Westside

Campus Center, Science Building and a residence hall on the Westside campus. Western has also launched a campus-wide recycling and energy conservation program that has already resulted in significant savings.

“Managing the effects of human economic activity on our planet’s climate will be one of the greatest challenges our students will face during their lives and careers,” said President Schmotter. “It is only appropriate that we demonstrate a proactive engagement with this issue.”

At Eastern Connecticut State University, a new Science Building, scheduled to open in fall 2008, also is being constructed according to LEED certification guidelines. In addition, endowed chair and professor Fred Loxsom is leading the development of a major in sustainable energy studies. This past spring, CL&P President Ray Necci presented Eastern with a check for \$270,000 to assist the University in creating a unique, campus-wide Energy Management System that uses electric sub-metering and computer monitors in each building to track and display energy consumption. Students can actually see the results of their conservation efforts in dormitories and classrooms.

Eastern also has received several EPA regional and national awards for its work in environmental sustainability, as well as a number of awards from the Connecticut Quality Improvement Award Partnership.

“Our early support of the Climate Commitment is a reflection of Eastern’s long-term efforts in the area of environmental stewardship and is only fitting,” said President Nuñez. “Conserving natural resources, seeking alternative energy sources, and educating students and the public about sustainability issues are fundamental to our mission.”

The U.S. Green Building Council has also certified Southern’s West Campus Residence Complex, which opened in 2004. The project minimized air pollution and results in better indoor air quality. Previously, Southern has earned recognition from the U.S. environmental Protection Agency for its commitment to controlling spiraling energy costs, recognizing the series of measures – from improved recycling to completion of a more efficient power plant — put in place across the university.

“As a university, we are dedicated to being a good citizen for the betterment of our local communities, the state, the nation and indeed the world,” President Norton said. “Southern has been and will continue to be a leader in being environmentally responsible. It is only natural, therefore, for us to become one of the pioneer members of this program.”

John W. Miller, President of Central Connecticut State University was one of the first 10 university presidents from across the country to officially endorse the Focus the Nation, Global Warming Solutions for America and CCSU’s Climate Action Coalition resolution in Spring 2007. President Miller notes that, at Central, “we are determined to keep in the vanguard of worldwide sustainability efforts.” A centerpiece of Central’s efforts is its new Energy Center. This state-of-the-art facility is more efficient and cleaner-burning compared to regional plants and the antiquated 50-year old Power House that it replaced. All new buildings at CCSU are tied into the Energy Center for heat and chilled water.

In addition, CCSU is directly involved in creating newer, greener standards for CSUS and the State. A critical part of that effort is the University’s hosting the inaugural Global Sustainability and Climate Change Symposium at the end of January 2008, which brings together state and national government leaders, agency heads, business leaders, faculty, students, staff, and the general public to examine the global climate change crisis. Other new and ongoing programs include recycling, water conservation, green purchasing

practices, and green building design. Some of the buildings on campus have efficiencies such as energy-efficient lighting, motion-sensored fixtures, daylighting, low-flow water systems, and central HVAC systems.

Among the policies that may be pursued by universities signing the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment:

- Establish a policy that all new campus construction will be built to at least the equivalent of the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Silver standard of the U.S. Green Building Council.
- Adopt an energy-efficient appliance-purchasing policy requiring purchase of Energy Star certified products.
- Establish a policy of off-setting all greenhouse gas emissions generated by air travel paid for by the institution.
- Encourage use of and provide access to public transportation for all faculty, staff, students and visitors to the institution.

More information is available at www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org

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