

Sustainability at UW–Madison: Fall 2021

Strategic Initiatives

- UW–Madison is a founding partner of the [Midwest Climate Collaborative](#), a cross-sector collaboration of key organizations across the region that represents a dedicated Midwestern response to the climate crisis.
- In partnership with dozens of campus data stewards, the Office of Sustainability will complete the university’s second [STARS assessment](#) by summer 2022.
- The Office of Sustainability is establishing several action groups to fulfill the recommendations of the [Sustainability Advisory Council](#). These action groups will also inform a Climate Action and Adaptation Plan under the [UW–Madison Resilience Commitment](#).

Research

- The Office of Sustainability’s [Green Athletics](#) intern team conducted game day waste audits to analyze and eventually improve the sustainability of Badger athletics.
- PhD candidate Gesangyangji is analyzing [climate modeling data](#) in unprecedented ways to reimagine how we design buildings in the face of climate change.
- A student team from UW–Madison was one of the [top winners](#) in the \$5 million XPRIZE



The Green Athletics intern team completes a waste audit at a soccer game during the fall 2021 semester.



48

majors represented by undergraduate students enrolled in the sustainability certificate

\$3.2 million strategic allocation by the university for renewable energy and energy efficiency projects for fiscal year 2022

for Carbon Removal Student Competition, a contest funded by the Musk Foundation that kickstarts projects that could mitigate the impacts of climate change by removing carbon dioxide from the air, ground, and oceans.

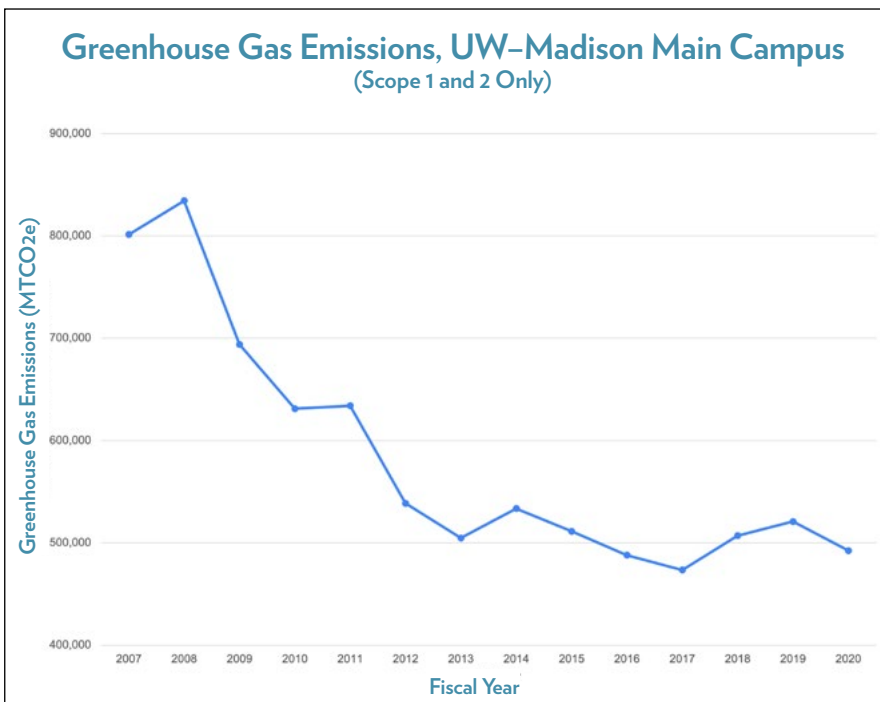
Student Involvement

- The [SustainUW Podcast](#) and the [Amplifying BIPOC Voices in Sustainability series](#), both hosted by Office of Sustainability interns, kicked off their second seasons with conversations about mental health, indigenous activism, single-use plastics, and sustainability careers.
- [Sustain-a-Bash 2021](#), co-organized by University Housing and the Office of Sustainability, featured 26 different sustainability-related organizations.
- Office of Sustainability interns are working with university staff to ‘green’ Commencement and spread awareness about the [Sustainability Graduation Pledge](#).

Green Fund

The [Green Fund](#) offers support for student projects that make campus more sustainable. Recent highlights include:

- Bird-strike mitigation: Students, faculty, and staff installed [window glazing at Ogg Residence Hall](#) designed to reduce bird collisions with the glass. Data collected through a citizen science effort suggests that the glazing is highly effective.
- EV Food Truck: Students and Dining staff will launch an [electric vehicle food truck](#) in spring 2022 that will minimize packaging and highlight locally-sourced seasonal ingredients.





- Art Contest: Students submitted [original artwork](#) that focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion to be considered for the new Multicultural Student Center at the Wisconsin School of Business.
- Pollinator Lawns: Students are collaborating with the UW Arboretum and Campus Planning and Landscape Architecture to [establish pilot sites](#) with flowering plants that offer habitat for pollinators. A Psychology PhD student is designing signage to encourage adoption of these “pollinator lawns.”

Wisconsin Experience

- Students in Urban and Regional Planning conducted a campus transportation fleet audit and delivered [recommendations](#) to Transportation Services for a greener fleet.
- The annual [Net Impact Sustainability Competition](#), a collaboration between the Wisconsin School of Business and the Green Fund, implemented projects at Grainger Hall including a safe, electric-current disinfection system for surfaces, an innovative catering cart, an HVAC update, and the installation of motion sensors on lighting in the building.
- Five UW–Madison students leveraged skills they learned from the Zero Waste Atlas Fellowship program to conduct the [university’s first Zero Waste Assessment](#).

5600
respondents to an all-campus sustainability survey distributed during fall 2021

84%
proportion of respondents to the Campus Composting Survey who stated they were moderately or extremely concerned about campus food waste



“I have been working with Office of Sustainability staff for two years. Everyone has a strong commitment to planning and implementation using a systems approach. There is a keen understanding that it takes a village to build a sustainable campus and world.”

—Deb Gurke, Internal Consultant, Office of Strategic Consulting

Staffing

- [Tim Lindstrom](#) joined the Office of Sustainability as Intern Program Manager. Tim holds a PhD in Environment & Resources from the Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, where he is also an instructor. Tim’s research focuses on the intersection of sustainability science, life cycle assessment, and higher education institutions.

Alumni

- Josh Cook (Engineering ‘15), a project engineer for EDF Renewables, [was instrumental](#) in the construction of the 20MW O’Brien Solar Fields, the largest solar installation in Dane County.
- [Michael Williams](#) (Psychology ‘21), the first graduate of a precollege program for Native students and president of student org Wunk Sheek, also served as a student representative on the Sustainability Advisory Council.

Honors & Mentions

- UW became the second school in the Big Ten to be designated as a [Fair Trade University](#).
- UW ranked among the top 30 college and university partners of the [EPA’s Green Power Partnership](#).
- For its award-winning sustainable commuting infrastructure, UW was [recently recognized](#) as a “Best Universities for Commuters.”

