

## THEME: Student & Stakeholder Engagement

### Evidence from interviews:

- Eva Rocke, Sustainability Director, University of Montana, 3/11/2021
  - “All campus affiliates, students, faculty, staff, there were students as part of their classwork that were involved in doing some of the research and writing.”
  - “And then our climate action plan does include a number of behavior change strategies for emissions reduction. And all of those would include students. We talk about turning off lights or driving less, right which is one that nobody likes to talk about but honestly it's like yeah if you want to have a personal change, if you want to take an immediate action, meaningful action to address your own emissions footprint then we stop driving.”
  - “So I think they played that kind of role and definitely they advocated for the aggressive carbon neutrality deadline.”
  
- Peter McDonough, Program Coordinator, Climate Change Studies Program, University of Montana, 3/17/2021
  - “Most directly it's students that go from climate change studies to intern with Eva. Like this year the STARS report is the big item, I think that's every few years she has to do that. And other years it's working on recycling projects.”
  - “And especially when you're as under-staffed as we are right now, having students get actively involved kind of can breathe some fresh air into those projects. So just in the past year I've had students work on like zero waste initiatives for all of our dining facilities and native gardens to replace some of the less used lawns, think like that.”
  - “the Climate Response Club and that grew out of a mixture of things. One was climate action now which I think MSU had a version of in the past. And also the Sunrise Movement of Missoula. And our reinvestment campaign. So those things sort of got quiet and then the Climate Response Club kind of grew out of the ashes of that.”
  - “So they've teamed up with like the Pacific Islanders Club and the Black Student Union and other groups to really talk about climate action as more than carbon. It's a whole lot of things.”
  
- Zac Cook, Utilities Senior Energy Manager, Utah State University, 3/16/2021
  - “So we're looking at partnering with the utility and kind of pushing them, and encouraging them is probably a better term. And helping them understand our goals long term so we can become partners in providing not only the University but also the city renewable power.”

- “The other stakeholder from my perception that had a big key was in the facilities leadership.”
- “But the way they came and they asked questions and they wanted to know what the obstacles that we saw in the process were and they tried to understand the problems rather than just telling us what needed to be done, what do they wanted to be partners in understanding and coming up with different ideas.”
- Alexi Lamm, Sustainability Coordinator, Utah State University, 3/8/2021
  - “a lot of buy in on the facilities side and that's helped with the efficiency.”
  - “There are people interested but it's just finding the right combination of people to make some of the other goals happen.”
  - “Yeah in this case it really started more on the faculty side and then picked up on the student side but I could see it going either direction. Getting an advocate is really helpful.”
  - “But I think students can you know advocate for what they want to see. And I feel like it is really helpful. Like we've had students and USUSA, our student government and also just students who are interested, we have a Sunrise Movement on campus as well. And at one point I think they had a petition and then they marched into the president's office. And some of those things I think support that students feel this is an important thing. If the university is considering doing it, having students show that they're interested does help.”
- Steve Nabor, Associate Vice President for Finances and CFO, Weber State University, 3/26/2021
  - “A commitment not only from administrative services who started this, but the entire campus now, and we've got we're in a space now where the whole world is changing, right? So the whole campus has embraced it even beyond the administrative into our academic departments.”
  - “we have that strategic plan also is looking at developing a community sustainability center.”
  - “we have branched out to help our our, uh, the city that we that we live in,”
  - “So, I would say the financial background, you've got to get your financial person on board, you got to get that appropriate vice president, you have to have this level of sophistication in managing that baseline, and the guy we have is in facilities,”
- Katherine Meyr, Student Sustainability Communications Coordinator, Weber State University, 3/22/2021
  - “student sustainability communications coordinator for the Sustainability Practices and Research Center.”
  - “faculty and staff were the ones that really pushed the climate plan before the student body was really aware of it. So it kind of came from the top down, and

that's how I think things happened so fast on the facilities side, which is really great.”

- “So that was kind of my goal as the communications coordinator was to kind of like relay all of these impressive things that were happening. And why we should be supporting them. And just how much room there is to grow on the student side. Not to say that there wasn't a club. There is a club but yeah I just wanted more connection between educating student body on like this really is something that's important to Weber State.”
- “I started with basically just a Facebook page and a Mailchimp newsletter that would go out sometimes. So with my addition we were able to add an Instagram page, a Twitter and then another Facebook page for Intermountain Sustainability Summit.”
- “addition of the sustainability club on campus. The environmental ambassadors, they expanded to have a garden club. And a food recovery network club as well as the citizen and climate lobby club.”
- “So they figure out that was something that was aesthetically pleasing to students and functional, like you would want to park under solar cover as well as providing energy. It's in the shape of a W too. So it's like Weber... Go Weber... And people really like it.... Plus they also made it accessible so it's not in the fancy expensive parking lot, it's in the general student parking lot.”
- “On the community side, like outside of facilities management, they're doing a lot of great stuff. They're saving us a lot of money. They're decreasing our carbon emissions. But at the sustainability center where I work we also do a lot of community outreach that I've seen as really affecting the student body as well as the outside community. Which includes some of our community programs.”
- “There is that... people get really excited about... they just will follow our newsletter just to watch for these community programs which is basically like free stuff.”
- “partnering with Lowes for a couple of these projects. And I don't know the ins and outs of how exactly we got them on board. But basically we have a sign up of say we purchase 1000 LED light bulbs. And people can trade in their old light bulbs. Like trade in 10 of their old light bulbs and get 10 LEDs for free. And then Lowes recycles those... target like low income communities and minority communities to be able to make sure they're getting in on this deal.”
- “So it's just little things like that, like light bulbs and mowers where you can get people really excited about decreasing their overall energy usage. And greenhouse gas emissions.”
- “Like geothermal at a university or solar covered parking lot. Or some xeriscaping that's going on. They really added to the promotional points of Weber State...”

- “So we're totally good with other people stealing our ideas. We're not hiding any of this tech. So I am sure that they would, if you were able to make a relationship with your facilities manager we could take them on a Zoom tour and help explain how we've been able to do this and specifics on the engineering side.”
- “So students specifically have been really important in kind of the engagement of the community and creating partnerships between other campus organizations.
- WSUSA on campus which is the student officers for the whole campus, they were able to be a part of our summit this year and last year.”
- “making those connections between campus organizations to help let them know that this is applicable to like everything in our lives. On the academic side we're starting do courses that are designated as sustainable courses. So students can talk to their instructor and be like I think you should incorporate examples about sustainability in your statistics class or physics class.”
- “So that was interesting because we had to create kind of 3 different tones for each of our sustainability pages. So Facebook is still very professional and informative. While like our Instagram page is a little bit more informal. We repost advocacy things like Fridays for Future or things from the (?) like things we really couldn't send out in our newsletter.”
- “So just like being able to see where I can have a little bit of leeway and speaking more in a student voice was important to identify. I am not good at twitter at all, because you have to be so short and punchy. I am definitely better at Instagram. Twitter, I still treat it more like Facebook because I just don't know.”
- “we get engagement on Instagram utilizing stories. Creating highlights is something I really liked doing, because I think it just... I don't know how effective that is with students but I think it shows all of the stuff that we do on an annual basis. I am pulling it up right now.”
- “We just had our Intermountain Sustainability Summit last week, which also really engages students because it's a huge networking opportunity. Like you meet, we have an eagle expo hall where there's a bunch of businesses who are interested in sustainability. As well as a bunch of sessions speakers from the region. So like you could potentially make a connection with somebody that's speaking there and be offered a position or learn more about whatever you want.”
- “And then cool campus speakers which is always fun that we open to the public. So anyone on Weber State campus can go see that for free. So people like free things!”
- “Yeah so they have a sustainability center Instagram, find them and follow them and repost their thing. And then they'll like repost your thing. So that I think is the most effective for our reach.”
- Jennifer Bodine, Sustainability Manager, Energy and Sustainability Office, Weber State University, 3/11/2021

- “We're still a Rocky Mountain Power customer and we will be.”
- “And we pay for a pass for every single one of our faculty, students and staff, right, it's totally free for them to ride public transit.”
- Stacey Baumgarn, Campus Energy Coordinator, Colorado State University, 3/14/2021
  - “And it talked about scope 1, scope 2, scope 3 emissions and nobody knows what you're talking about. So, we kind of recreated it in a way... well Carol and I go out on campus and give presentations about our sustainability efforts, our greenhouse gas inventory all these things, all the time. And in giving those public presentations we don't talk about scope 1, scope 2, scope 3 because nobody knows, and nobody cares. So, we say this is the impact to our campus from commuting. This is the impact from air travel. We use words that we use every day and then people know what you're talking about.”
  - “And now we were supposed to have an updated climate action plan in 2020. And we had started this, I don't know for us relatively elaborate outreach effort to try to get a lot of student voices and get a lot of faculty input. And try to involve more people in the process. One so that more people would feel ownership in the plan. But then of course the pandemic kicked off about the same time our outreach was being kicked off. Let's just say we're about at the same place today as we were a year ago in making that update. Now Carol's been crunching all the numbers in the background and I've been starting to write a bunch of the narrative. And what we've decided is when we get ready to go back out to do a road show and talk to our campus community and students, that we really need to have a draft document in front of them. And it's okay if it changes wildly, but we were kind of just... I think we made a mistake in that we were trying to say... you know you don't know anything about what a climate action plan, what do you think should be in it.”
  - “I don't know if Carol mentioned at CSU, we don't have an office of sustainability. So, there's no one person or no one office where these things happen. And we do not have a student fee related to sustainability. Though you could argue students do pay an alternative transportation fee which is kind of funny language. It's a fee but then you get a free bus. Whatever, it's not free you just paid for it but anyway skipping over that! So, students do pay a fee that's related to transportation and now that fee is used a little more broadly and it not only covers your transit pass, but it has helped to fund some bike lanes and skateboard racks outside of buildings and different things like that that enable alternative transportation behaviors. So, students do pay that fee but not a general generic sustainability fee. So, when our student government, this was about 2 years ago, 2 and a half years ago, it took forever for all this to happen. But anyway, I don't know what happened in student government, but they realized that they had a bunch of money that they didn't know they had. Which when does

that happen!?! But it's like open up your checkbook and realize you got an extra \$100,000 oh okay. So, while the students were trying to talk about well should we just have a big concert? What should we do to blow this money. I came along and I said hey what about solar. And long story short, myself and a whole group of students worked together to get a bill passed within the student government to utilize that money to fund a solar array. And the cool part is because that's on the student center, the student center is 100% funded through student fees. So now we put that solar up there. Every month it's going to generate electricity, helps reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, helps reduce our inventory. And all the money that it saves, it saves the students money. I say you, but you the students were paying the bill for that electricity. So that was a really unique and cool fun project to have evolve too over time.”

- “There's a couple of things. One thing, I don't know if you've run across it. It's called the student sustainability center. It's the student branch if you will of a unit on campus, we just call it SOGES, all of our acronyms, but it's the School of Global Environmental Sustainability. And so SOGES opened their doors, became a school 2008 or 2009. And it was mostly academics and faculty and academics around teaching sustainability and encouraging interdisciplinary research for sustainability. And I think when the faculty who created SOGES, I think from the very beginning they said there needs to be a student component. And so just built into how they designed their whole thing there was a student sustainability center from day 1. And they funded and hired a student director and so there was a Director of the Student Sustainability Center, a student Director and they ran the student sustainability club. And that became a place for students to be engaged in sustainability... both classes and just through... learning about what's going on on campus. And those student directors did an amazing job. I mean some of those early directors, I mean today too, they just do a really, really amazing job. And having events and creating a newsletter that connected not just what was going on on campus but what was going on in the community and in the surrounding areas. And it was just really, it's really, really impressive what they have done. And so, a lot of credit I think goes to SOGES for what they created academically on our campus and they created the minor, the first global environmental sustainability minor on our campus and now you can get a global environment sustainability minor or an energy minor or a water minor or a peace and reconciliation minor. So, a really cool social justice program. Anyway, they've done a lot so in my mind that was the first real important student led and student organization that came around. And then it was maybe a couple of years later but then the student government, they created a position that they call the Director of Environmental Affairs. They didn't want to call it sustainability. It's that politics thing where you go oh, we don't want to say the word green, we don't want to say the word



sustainability. We don't know what to say! Whatever doesn't matter. But they called it the Director of Environmental Affairs so that's a position within our student government that also then does a bunch of coordinating and they have a little budget somehow. And again, they do events and education. Like right now the director of Environmental Affairs, Sofia Shepp, she's really on about composting, great. So, we do not currently do much composting in the student center. Some back of the house in the coffee shops catering area, there's a little bit that they do. But anyway, they wanted to support public composting and so together ASCSU, the student government, Student Sustainability Center from SOGES and we have a Zero Waste Team a student organization that's focused on zero waste. Those three are in partnership working with the student center and working with facilities management. And are starting to collect compostables from users of the student center right now in public areas.”

- “I feel lucky that it's been I feel like a mix of both. There's certainly been grassroots effort from both our students but even so... when Carol and a colleague Toni Miamoto, I think she was on one of your lists earlier too, they kind of knew what they wanted to have happen, and its kind of just did what they could get away with. They did a little energy challenge in a building to prove that if you ask people in a building to conserve energy and help show them the ways they can do it, that that building can reduce electricity consumption. So, they did this little pilot and they showed that I think they saved 6% of the electricity consumption of that building and that was the basis, that was the pilot example Carol used in order to ask for the funding that created the position that I have.”
- Carol Dollard, Energy Engineer, Colorado State University, 3/10/2021
  - “Everybody does their sustainability projects on campus pretty much without us, but we help connect the dots because sometimes really sustainability kind of bubbled up at CSU from the ground up. So there's people doing social justice work, there's people doing academic work, there's people doing research work all around sustainability.”
  - “But on the PSC which is what we call our commission, we connect people... like an academic that may be working on something with somebody in operations so that they can test their research right on campus.”
  - “for the climate action plan we put out a call, as a matter of fact we were in the midst of it about this time last year where we had gone out and done a bunch of publicity and got people to come to some public meetings and give us feedback about climate action plan and what was important to them. So that was students and employees of the university. But that team we made a Microsoft Teams thing and we were communicating and we had actually in person meetings before March of last year right. And so we were doing all kinds of things. They were

coming forward with scenarios and we would say okay let's test that and see how much that impacts our climate action plan and that kind of thing.”

- “So we need to restart, that’s what I want to do, is involve employees and students in the final climate action plan because I want to feel like people have ownership of it. Because honestly Carol and a handful of other employees are not going to solve the climate problem at the university. It has to be an all in thing.”
- “We're trying to, you know engaging students frankly – don't take it personally – is really hard. You guys are busy, you like... and then you do things like you go and graduate. You know we have a great team working on something and the next thing you know 3 or 4 people oh they left the university and got real jobs. Oh okay I guess that happens, you know that's part of our world right?! So we do want to make sure that we have as many people involved as we can.”
- “But back then that group pulled together everything from athletics to students to academics. Everybody kind of fed into the first one. And when we published it, we tried to do publicity. But I would still say for about the first 5 years of our climate action plan, if you just stopped people on the plaza and said did you know your university has a climate action plan, that most of them would say no.”
- “So we tried to go public but it didn't really stick or people weren't talking about it then. Or whatever. And now it feels like people get it. They ask what are your carbon goals. I get asked that when I present to different organizations and stuff. So it's become more of the lexicon that we talk about.”
- “We talked about doing a road show, going out to classes and staff meetings and that kind of stuff across campus to talk to different pieces of campus and say this is our climate action plan. And by the way this is your role in it! Because again 10 people from the President's sustainability commission or a couple people from facilities are not going to make this plan happen. It's everybody's job.”
- “So it's hard to kind of break through the noise of everything that's happening to get people to pay attention to something else, so we'll see how that goes.”



## Evidence from plans:

- (CSU) “Academic areas at CSU that address environmental sustainability are offered in all eight of the University’s colleges and span across programs in engineering, natural resources, forestry, public policy, environmental ethics, global and sustainable business, atmospheric science, soil and crop sciences, construction management, and many other programs.” (10)
- (CSU) “Launched in 2008, SoGES is an umbrella organization that encompasses all environmental education and research at CSU. It is an interdisciplinary program that conducts the innovative research necessary to solve the most pressing human-environmental problems. The School provides innovative and challenging education programs to equip students – and the community – with the principles and the practices of sustaining the environment and meeting demands of the workforce for the environmental economy.” (11).
- (CSU) “As a land grant university, CSU plays a key role throughout Colorado in education, engagement, and outreach through Extension. The system of county offices puts Extension resources within easy reach of residents in all of Colorado’s 64 counties.” (14)
- (CSU) “The original CAP was developed through a collaborative process involving input from a campus task force, the campus community at large, and a consultant team. This 2018 update was prepared by Facilities Management staff and reviewed by the President’s Sustainability Commission.” (6)
- (CSU) “In 2016, CSU and the local utility companies collaborated to conduct a detailed study to understand the feasibility of this option in the medium term. The economics seemed promising until the gas utility quoted \$4 million+ to bring a high-pressure gas line to the site. As a result, this project has been pushed to a long-term project and one additional phase of utility scale wind power has been shifted to a medium-term project to keep the goals in the plan on track.” (19)
- (CSU) “CSU has involved and engaged students in sustainability efforts for many years through curriculum, dozens of student organizations, and Residence Life. In addition, the Associated Students of Colorado State University (student government) has appointed a student Director of Environmental Affairs & Sustainability to increase outreach and involvement of the student community and, developed an

- Alternative Transportation Fee Advisory Board focusing on transit and transportation.” (20)
- (CSU) “Housing & Dining Services has a Senior Sustainability Coordinator who administers the Eco Leaders program. There is one Eco Leader per residence hall. Eco Leaders help educate fellow students about sustainability issues, waste reduction, energy conservation, plan activities and implement campaigns. The Eco Leaders program started in 2011 and has grown each year since.” (20)
  - (UM) “Completing this Climate Action Plan was undertaken as a community effort. A public involvement process was designed and implemented through public meetings, internet social networking, stakeholder meetings, media announcements, and an all-campus survey” (10).
  - (UM) “In order to create a stronger bike culture, students can generate points throughout the year and win cash prizes depending on how many days they walked or biked to campus. Another idea is for students to log their bike days and receive credit toward graduation, or even win free bike gear from participating stores. The idea is to reward students who bike and showcase their efforts, therefore encouraging other commuters to bike or walk to campus” (39).
  - (UM) “Because there is no longer a local supplier, the University can start a program through the College of Technology and other departments to teach students how to produce, manufacture and store biodiesel. Another idea is to use fryer grease from Dining Services to turn into fuel. Not only would this turn our current ASUM diesel buses into biodiesel, but it would develop hands-on research opportunities for students and faculty” (48).
  - (UM) “The University of Montana has implemented a faculty development program on sustainability called the Green Thread Initiative. This initiative features a two-day faculty development workshop each spring and is intended to infuse issues of sustainability into courses across the UM curriculum.” (67).
  - (UM) “The School of Journalism recently revamped its Master’s degree program, changing it from a general journalism graduate program to one focused on Environmental and Natural Resource Journalism. The new program was approved by the Board of Regents last year and is in its first year of operation. The new program responds to a critical need for journalists trained to tell compelling stories that illuminate the complex relationship between nature and society” (69).
  - (UM) “One such program is Eco-Reps, a peer to peer outreach forum that utilizes student environmental champions. Founded by Tufts University, this program encourages students living in the dorms to participate in weekly meetings and focus on educating their dorm-mates about environmental issues and encouraging fellow students to live in a more eco-friendly way. This program could become a credit-

earning class or internship so that students are motivated to attend meetings and become active in engaging other students” (71).

- (USU) “USU has several extension programs specializing in community outreach. These programs have partnered with local, state, and federal agencies and provide educational programs state-wide that focus on sustainability. These programs include the Utah Botanical Center and the Swaner Preserve and EcoCenter.” (14).
- (USU) “USU seeks to implement sustainable practices in all areas of the University with students serving key roles, particularly in special events such as Sustainability Week, Earth Day, multicultural events, and the bioneers and Sustainable Landscapes conferences.” (6)
  - (USU) “Most recently, an effort was launched to involve all incoming freshmen and new students to our mission through workshops and exhibits during the Student Orientation Advisory and Registration (SOAR) and “Connections” programs” (6)
- (USU) “The University also has instituted a program working with science departments to encourage closing of fume hood sashes in laboratories to minimum levels when hoods are inactive” (9)
- (USU) “USU actively promotes sustainability efforts on campus and in the greater community by increasing awareness and encouraging involvement. An important first step for the Sustainability Council was to create a universal symbol for sustainability with a new tagline, “Blue Goes Green,” and the corresponding logo shown above” (12)
- (USU) “The Council maintains a presence at many USU events and organized USU’s first sustainability Week in 2009. Members of the Council created and maintains a University Sustainability Website, and has implemented a pledge program titled “Take the Challenge,” in which students, faculty, and staff who commit to lowering their personal carbon footprint are provided with T-shirts, tote bags or other items and track their progress via email” (12)
- (USU) “The institution is committed to growing its portfolio of research to address global challenges in climate change and sustainability, including studies to promote new policies that support emerging technologies. To address this goal, USU established a Research Sustainability Committee in 2008, charged with the responsibility to harness the institution’s research capabilities to enable Utah and the Intermountain West to move toward climate neutrality and sustainability” (21)

- (WSU) “Our vision is for Weber State University to achieve carbon neutrality by 2050... All of the students, faculty and staff will be engaged in this effort both on and off campus” (4)
- (WSU) “The University President’s Council will be the governing body for execution of this plan, and will provide policy approval, program guidance and funding support as resources allow” (5)
- (WSU) “The appointed staff member from Facilities Management] will assure that long term carbon reduction and sustainability issues are addressed in the University planning efforts, and will communicate long term planning goals to the FS-EIC and other stakeholders” (6)
- (WSU) “The university must work with Ogden City to promote trails and bicycle friendly routes to allow more students, faculty and staff to use bicycles as the mode of transportation to and from campus” (32)
- (WSU) “Outreach initiatives will be encouraged and supported to the maximum extent possible given resources available. Collaboration with other colleges and universities in the state and region will be encouraged” (33)

### **Summary of clear subthemes:**

**Curriculum:** Many Universities have integrated sustainability into their curriculum, intending to give students a hands-on experience. Classes give students the ability to engage with crucial issues impacting the environment while giving them the tools to think critically about solutions. Instructors can encourage students to get involved on their campus or their community by joining sustainability efforts. Students are better prepared to meet sustainability challenges when schools promote an interdisciplinary approach. Universities need to embrace sustainability beyond the administrative level and continue to integrate climate topics into the educational framework

**Clubs/Events:** Universities rely on events and clubs to promote sustainable efforts on campus. Whether that be through a fun event promoting hand on activities or hosting a guest speaker- these activities inherently encourage involvement and increase awareness. Universities often have a sustainability council that organizes events, fundraisers, and programs to educate the students, faculty, and staff about critical issues impacting the environment.

**Public Involvement Process:** Commonly, universities utilized public meetings, media announcements, and surveys to inform the planning process. Considering the importance of stakeholders, especially those who fund projects, institutions often welcome their opinions. It is crucial that stakeholders feel a sense of ownership in the final Climate Action Plan. Universities sought out ways to understand what issues were important to stakeholders by asking for feedback

on the plans' rough drafts. These types of networking strategies encourage community-wide participation while giving Universities essential feedback to advise the planning process.