

Guide to Sustainability

at Cal Poly Humboldt



Prepared by the Sustainability Office
1 Harpst Street
Arcata, CA 95521

2026-2027

What is sustainability?

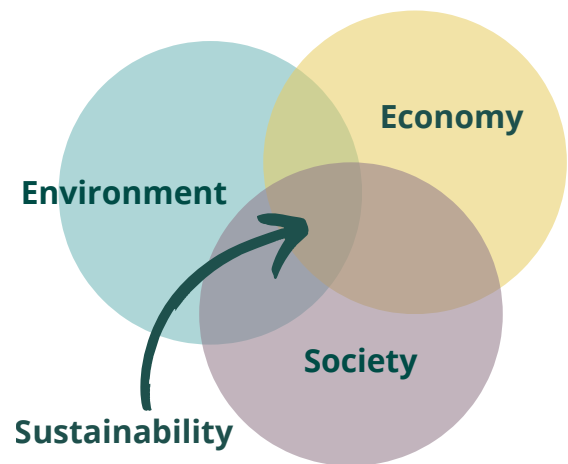
Sustainability is a foundational value referenced repeatedly throughout the 2021- 2026 Strategic Plan

77

of times **sustainability** is mentioned in the 2021 Polytechnic Prospectus

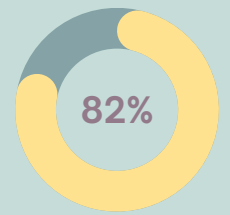
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"Sustainability is the recognition that humanity is a part of the natural world, not separate from it, and that healthy social and economic systems depend on the resilience of ecological systems." -Definition established by the Humboldt Advisory Committee on Sustainability (HACS), 2018



At Cal Poly Humboldt, we use a triple venn diagram (also called the “triple bottom line, or “three legged stool” of sustainability) to examine the world's most pressing sustainability challenges arising from intersections between social, environmental, and economic systems.

Classes



Percentage of
depts offer
sustainability
classes



More students than ever are integrating sustainability concepts and practices into their learning at Cal Poly Humboldt, regardless of their major. Search for keyword "sustainability" in the course catalog to find courses and programs that teach sustainability. Join the movement!

Find the course catalog at catalog.humboldt.edu/

Graduation cord | Earn a sustainability sash to wear at graduation by taking 30 units of sustainability designated courses!

Minor | Earn a minor in Sustainability with 19 units total, read more at humboldt.edu/academics/programs/sustainability-minor

Intern with the Sustainability Office | Email cover letter and resume to mpk9@humboldt.edu or kmk928@humboldt.edu to apply and get a permission number to enroll in ESM 482 (2 units)

Experiential Learning | Get connected to local practitioners off campus for jobs, internships, and volunteering. Check out hum.link/sustainability_practitioners

Applied Learning In the Classroom & Beyond

40+

of applied learning or living laboratory classes related to sustainability reported in STARS

96k+

of hours served by students in service learning or academic internships in Academic Year 25-26

Cal Poly Humboldt is fortunate to be part of a remarkable community of changemakers— (past, present, and future) — leading the way in sustainability and climate justice, both on campus and off. Explore opportunities to build your skills and contribute to innovative solutions, as you prepare to make a positive impact long after graduation.



Graduation Pledge | A campus tradition since 1987, graduates make a personal vow to consider the social and environmental consequences of the decisions that we make after we acquire our degree here at Cal Poly Humboldt. Join the movement humboldt.edu/grad-pledge

Service Learning Classes | Look for an “S” designation at the end of the course number to engage in formal experiential learning; students in these courses provide a service to an organization external to campus. Work with the Center for Community Based Learning to find courses and opportunities aligned to your major and interests, read more at humboldt.edu/internships/service-learning-courses

Youth Educational Services (Y.E.S.) | Student leaders in this program have initiated over 70 programs to address community needs. Student leaders and volunteers contribute their impressive time, talent and passion to Y.E.S. programs and report gaining hands-on learning, new skills, friendship and support, and self-discovery. Read more at humboldt.edu/youth-educational-services

College Corps | This is a service fellowship that provides students with college funding while engaging them in community problem-solving in the fields of K-12 education, environmental stewardship, and food security. Apply to become a fellow at humboldt.edu/ccbl/college-corps/fellows

Amplifying Justice Keywords & Concepts



Seal of Excellence

In Sept 2025, the campus received this honor for showing intentional, data-backed effort to support the success of Latine students

At Cal Poly Humboldt, **sustainability means upholding tenets of justice, liberation, and reconciliation** as well as ethical stewardship of land and care for ecological systems. Uplifting Indigenous sovereignty, meeting basic needs, promoting inclusive and participatory governance, and fostering restorative cultural connections are all part of our sustainability work on campus.



Furthermore, Cal Poly Humboldt is on the cutting edge of research and teaching that bring keywords like **anti-racism, intersectionalism, settler colonialism, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, Indigenous Science, decolonization, and Black Liberation** to the foreground of work on global sustainability issues.

Join our world-class team of scholars by attending events, joining groups, taking classes, conducting research, and exploring programs that elevate discussions and action on these topics!

Decolonizing Sustainability

Events, Groups & Organizations

278

events hosted at
Food Sovereignty
Lab in 2025
(first year of
operation)

3,724

people reached
through events at
Food Sovereignty
Lab in 2025
(first year of
operation)



Annual Events

- Hispanic Heritage Month (September)
- Indigenous Peoples' Week (mid-October)
- Campus & Community Dialogue On Race (End of October)
- Indigenous Foods Festival (Timing Varies, often held in Fall)
- Black Liberation Month (February)
- Social Justice Summit (early March)
- ADPI SWANA Holi Festival of Colors (March)
- CA Big Time & Social Gathering (April)
- Cinco De Mayo (May)
- Decolonizing Sustainability Speaker Series & Faculty Book Circles (Timing Varies; held semesterly)

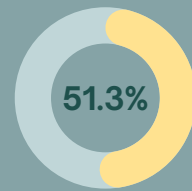
Groups

- Rou Dalagurr Food Sovereignty Lab & Traditional Ecological Knowledges Institute
- Umoja Center for Pan African Excellence
- El Centro Académico Cultural
- Oh SNAP! Student Food Programs
- ITEPP (Indian Teacher and Educational Personnel Program)
- INRSEP (Indian Natural Resources, Science and Engineering Program)
- Social Justice, Equity & Inclusion Center
- ADPI SWANA (Asian, Desi, Pacific Islander & Southwest Asian North African Collective)
- Diverse Male Scholars (DMS)
- Queer Center (Q Center)
- Office of Diversity, Equity & Inclusion (ODEI)

Zero Waste

At Cal Poly Humboldt, we are working to achieve **zero waste**.

Our pursuit of zero waste means we are minimizing weight, volume, and toxicity of what we send to the landfill by preventing single use items from entering campus and maximizing reuse, recycling, composting, and recovery.



Percentage of non-hazardous waste diverted from landfill in 2025



Percentage of construction & demolition waste diverted from landfill in 2025

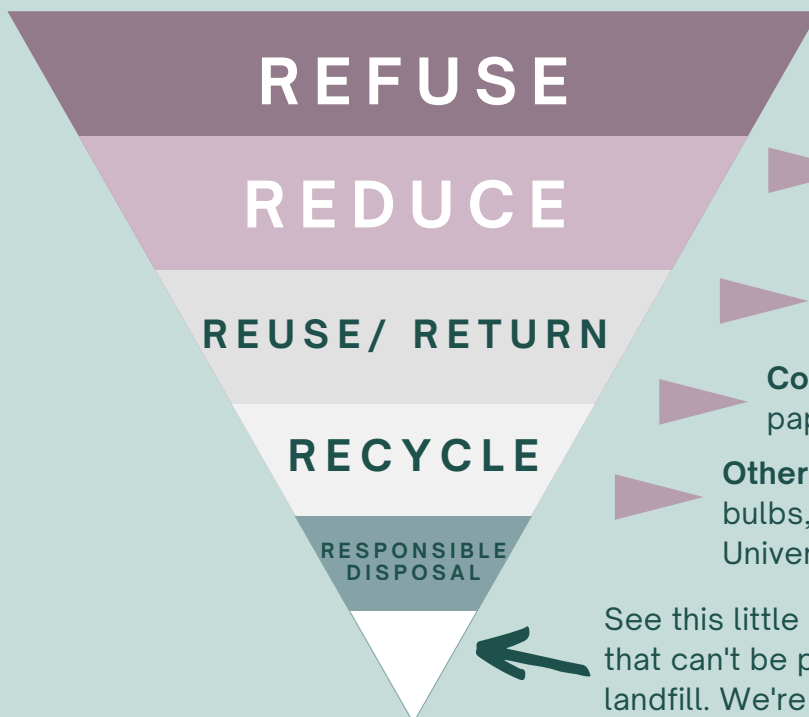
To support our zero waste goals, we:

- Banned single-use plastic water bottles (since 2011!)
- Offer OZZI reusable to-go containers in Dining
- Reward reusable coffee cups with a free drink after 6 uses through the Stamp Me app

Check out campus waste resources & info at humboldt.edu/sustainable-campus/campus-operations/waste-reduction



FOLLOW THE ZERO WASTE HIERARCHY



ZERO WASTE TIPS

ROSE: Visit the Reusable Office Supply Exchange (ROSE) to drop off or get free office supplies. Contact WRRAP for info wrrap@humboldt.edu

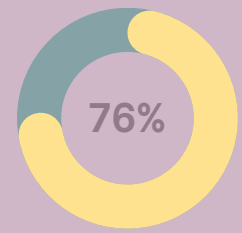
Recycle: Sort paper, cardboard, aluminum, glass, and plastics #1-5 into recycling bins

Compost: Sort all food scraps and food soiled paper into compost bins

Other required recycling: Collect batteries, light bulbs, CDs, electronics and return them to Universal waste bins on campus

See this little piece? This represents any material that can't be prevented or diverted from the landfill. We're looking to eliminate this part altogether!

Sustainable Transportation



Percentage of students who routinely used a sustainable commute method in 2025



Choosing smart transportation alternatives for your commute will save you money, avoid parking frustrations and reduce carbon emissions.



Examples:

- Use our **low cost bike share** program
- Get your bike repaired for free through the **Bicycle Learning Center** (and access tools)
- Students take the **bus for free** by swiping their student ID card
- Find a carpool, bike or bus partner with through the **Ride Match network**
- Grab a **Zipcar** when you need it (so you can leave your car back home)
- Walk, jog, or skate with human-powered transportation and more!



Get more info at
www.humboldt.edu/sustainable-campus/guides-resources/commute-transportation

Energy & Water

1.8 MW solar
+ 5.8 MW battery
(11.6 MWh storage)

size & capacity of
planned campus
microgrid, coming
2027



Cal Poly Humboldt is reducing energy and water use in line with its Climate Action Plan, state guidelines and CSU sustainability policy. There are a multitude of ways campus users can participate in conserving these precious resources:

- Turn off lights when daylight is available or when leaving a room.
- Put computers and A/V equipment into sleep mode or turn them off entirely when not in use.
- Close doors & windows when heating and cooling systems are on.
- Wash clothes in cold water.
- Limit shower times to five minutes or less.
- Turn off the tap when lathering hands.
- Report water leaks to Facilities Management.

This year, construction of a campus-wide microgrid began, marking an exciting milestone that will bring added resilience and allow campus to stay energized during a power outage! The microgrid will consist of a large battery energy storage system (BESS) with solar spread throughout campus over selected parking lots and rooftops. A microgrid controller acts as the brains of the system.

The BESS and solar are owned by 3rd party vendors. The microgrid controller was designed by Humboldt's own Schatz Energy Research Center. The microgrid will increase the amount of renewable energy used by campus, accounting for approximately 20% of our annual electricity use.

Real-time displays will be integrated and the microgrid will be a teaching and learning tool for students, particularly those in the School of Engineering.



Landscape

Moon Trees

A group of redwood seedlings were sent to orbit the moon in 1971 and then planted on campus.



Did you know that we are a certified **Bee Campus** and a certified **Tree Campus**? We are reducing the use of chemicals, promoting pollinators, enhancing our tree canopy and more!

Read more at

www.humboldt.edu/sustainable-campus/campus-operations/grounds-landscape

Furthermore, campus acts as a living laboratory for classes and individuals to learn and explore the natural world around them. Plant taxonomy classes, ecology classes, ethnobotany classes and classes in many other areas of study regularly access the University's diverse and noteworthy collection of plant species from all over the world.

Read more about landscape management at: humboldt.edu/facilities-management/services/grounds

Cal Poly Humboldt Creates a Paradise for Pollinators

Powerful Pollinators Protect Life

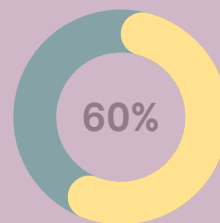
Native pollinators are unsung heroes of our ecosystem, sustaining the delicate balance of nature. These vital creatures facilitate the reproduction of over 180,000 plant species and more than 1,200 crops. Without our pollinator pals, our food supply would crumble. Can you imagine a world without pollinators?

Nourishing Native Pollinators

The native pollinators you'll find around campus are bees, birds and butterflies, each pollinating in a unique way. The yellow-faced bumblebee carries pollen on its hind legs, bringing it flower to flower. Our native hummingbirds, weigh less than a nickel and gracefully transport pollen with their beaks. The Anise swallowtail extends its long tongue to sip nectar, getting coated in pollen, before fluttering to the next bloom.

Scan this QR code to learn more about our native pollinators and how you can help promote them!

Student Clubs & Organizations



Estimated percentage of students who engage in institutional sustainability activities outside of class



Explore a campus club focused on sustainability through the Office of Student Life or join one of the groups listed below!

- humboldt.edu/wrrap
- humboldt.edu/green-campus
- humboldt.edu/ccat
- humboldt.edu/shift
- humboldt.edu/associated-students/sub-committee-environmental-affairs
- humboldt.edu/sjei
- humboldt.edu/housing-reslife/resident-resources/sustainable-living

Get more info at
www.humboldt.edu/clubs and
www.humboldt.edu/associated-students/asprograms-services-funded-areas/main



About the Sustainability Office

Areas of Service

Waste, energy, water, transportation, landscape, procurement, academics, research, food, environmental justice, engagement, planning & governance, green investing, professional development, among others as requested by partners.

Purpose Statement

The Office of Sustainability seeks to integrate sustainability into the built, natural, and learning environments, and to advance a community that actively pursues environmental and social justice for the common good.

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