



UNCG ANNUAL SUSTAINABILITY REPORT FY22

The following items briefly outline the accomplishments related to sustainability, as facilitated actively, undertaken collaboratively, and reported by the Chancellor's Sustainability Council.

July 1, 2022

INSTITUTIONAL

- **UNCG received a STARS Silver rating** in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education. [Read more here.](#)
 - The university received high marks in the following categories:
 - Academic programs, Research, Community Partnerships, Inter-campus Collaboration, Water management, and Diversity and Affordability.
 - Areas in need of improvement included:
 - Academic Learning Outcomes, Community Service, Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Renewable Energy, Waste Diversion, and Sustainable Investment.
- **UNCG's carbon footprint has declined by 25% since 2009.** Overall, the largest declines can be attributed to reductions in fossil fuel energy production by our utility provider, Duke Energy; the reduced occupancy of campus and the related declines in business travel and student commuting due to the COVID-19 pandemic; and Facilities energy efficiency initiatives. [Read more here.](#)
- **UNCG ranked in the top 200 universities worldwide** for Reduced Inequalities and Sustainable Cities and Communities and is ranked overall in the top 40 percent out of more than 1,400 universities that participated in the Times Higher Education's Impact Rankings for 2022, which are global performance tables that assess universities across all **17 United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)**. [Read more here.](#)
- **UNCG earned Tree Campus Higher Education® recognition for the 13th year in a row.** To obtain this distinction, UNCG met the five core standards for sustainable campus forestry required by Tree Campus USA, an Arbor Day Foundation program, including establishment of a tree advisory committee, evidence of a campus tree-care plan, dedicated annual expenditures for its campus tree program, an Earth Day observance, and the sponsorship of student service-learning projects.



- **Dedication of the Cane Creek Mountains Observatory Nature Preserve**

UNC Greensboro petitioned and received approval from the North Carolina Department of Natural and Cultural Resources and the Council of State to dedicate under the North Carolina Nature Preserves Act approximately 60 acres of undeveloped property located in rural Alamance County, NC as a nature preserve. The primary purpose of the Preserve will be conservation, scientific research, passive recreation, and nature education. This property has been owned by the State of North Carolina since 1954 and is controlled by the University, which operates a research telescope and observatory on approximately 2 acres of the site.

OPERATIONAL

- The **UNCG Green Fund has awarded \$463,800 to 76 projects** during its 7 years of existence to support sustainability initiatives on campus. In FY22, the Green Fund awarded a one-year record of 16 grants, totaling \$77,557 for an average of \$4,847 per grant. The list of projects can be found the UNCG Sustainability website.
 - [Pollinator Garden Takes Root](#)
 - [College of Visual & Performing Arts Community Engagement](#)
- The **Nursing & Instructional Building received Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Gold status** — the second-highest rating on a measurable scale created by the U.S. Green Building Council. Staff from Facilities Design & Construction were keynote speakers in a USGBC project showcase about LEED buildings in higher education. [Read more here.](#)
- 23 employees from the **Department of Facilities, Design and Construction**, and the **Office of International Programs** participated in the **Green Office Certification** program.
- Over 70 residential students participated in the **Green Room Certification** program.
- Tara Webb, School of Theatre, coordinated with the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling to increase **awareness of waste stream outlets for materials related to theatrical productions.**
- Tara Webb and other colleagues in the School of Theatre also received funding for a community engagement grant that supported workshops in the Greensboro community highlighting sustainable uses for clothing. **"Repair Rewear and Reconnect"** hosted a series of pop-up events working with the community to extend the life of the clothes in their closets and keep discarded fashions out of the waste stream. Workshops featured a clothing swap, donation day, tie dye event, and alteration station. The program will continue in FY23.



- The Office of Sustainability partnered with the Department of Recreation & Wellness and Outdoor Adventures to organize a **bicycle maintenance session** and gear giveaway for students.
- Sustainability Specialist, Sean MacInnes, conducted a **recycling audit in the dormitories** over the summer to update recycling signage and partnered with the Office of Waste Reduction and Recycling to replace recycling bins in over 150 dorm rooms.

ACADEMICS

- The **BA in Environment & Sustainability** program enrolled 78 (fall) and 75 (spring) majors while graduating classes of 4 (fall) and 11 (spring). The **MS in Sustainability & Environment** program enrolled 24 & 25 students while celebrating the first class of 4 graduates.
 - The MSSE program is ranked no. 10 in the nation by Academic Influence (2022). Additionally, the E&S Program added two new opportunities for graduate students across the university: in addition to the existing Post-Baccalaureate Certificates (PBC) in Sustainability and in Conservation, the Program now offers PBCs in Climate Justice and in Environmental Humanities.
- The **UNCG Sustainability Council** organized a regional one-day event in collaboration with the Worldwide Teach-In on Climate Solutions and Climate Justice, a project of the Graduate Programs in Sustainability at Bard College. Representatives from the NC Sierra Club, Lumbee Riverkeepers, Maxie B's, & NC Climate Solutions participated.
- Lead by Professor Emerita, Ann Somers, and Dr. Etsuko Kinefuchi, UNCG partnered with NC State, UNC Wilmington, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, and the Plastic Ocean Project to organize a two-day **Ocean Advocacy Workshop** at Haw River State Park to educate attendees about local and state issues, train them on online and in-person civic action and motivate them to become environmental champions through social media and political engagement. The event was supported by a grant from the UNCG Green Fund. [Read more here.](#)
- The **Office of Sustainability** along with **Dr. Sarah Praskievicz** coordinated the [UNCG Sustainability Lecture & Dialogue Series](#), which featured UNCG faculty and student researchers addressing issues integral to transforming our knowledge of and connections to the environment in order for us to build vibrant and thriving communities. Topics covered included:
 - Lobsters, Music, and Rivers: Exploring the Environmental Humanities
 - Social & Environmental Determinants of Health in Latino Communities
 - Electrification in Transportation: An Equitable & Just Transition
 - "For a While at Least" - Toni Morrison's Beloved

UNCG

SUSTAINABILITY

- Spirit of Place: Found & Foraged Color
 - Clean Cooking, Gender Equality, and The Environment
 - Household Water Security
 - Consumption
 - Climate Change & Bioarchaeology
-
- The Department of Communication Studies received a grant from the National Communication Association to launch the **Center for Communication, Community Collaboration, and Change**, which included funding to support a neighborhood agriculture project in Southeast Greensboro, with the Guilford Urban Farming Initiative. [Read more here.](#)
 - UNCG faculty and North Carolina Community members led by Dr. Aaron Allen and Dr. Karen Kilcup, received a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities to develop the **Watersheds for Place-Based Experiential Education** program, an environmental humanities approach to place-based teaching and learning that aims to improve care for human and non-human life. [Read more here.](#)
 - Funding for the [Sustainability Faculty Fellows](#) program was discontinued by the Office of the Provost due to budget shortfalls. The Sustainability Council continues to pursue outside funding opportunities and seeks \$105,000 to support the program over five years. \$400,000 could endow the program.

EXTRACURRICULAR

- **UNCG - Campus Gardens**, which started in July 2010, supports 50 raised beds where fresh produce is grown by faculty, staff, and students. In addition, there is a very active **Student Garden Club**, advised by Dr. Susan Andreatta, Anthropology. Plots that are not rented to faculty, staff or students for personal use are managed by Student Garden Club and Professor Andreatta (from the Department of Anthropology). For the academic year 2021-2022 over 500 pounds of fresh produce was donated to Spartan Open Pantry.