



## University of Louisville Sustainability Council FY 2014-2015 Report

### *Major Milestones in the University of Louisville's Sustainability Initiatives July 2014 - June 2015*

*Justin Mog, Assistant to the Provost for Sustainability Initiatives*

- Another important area in which UofL continues to show leadership is in Sustainability - our commitment to thoughtful decision-making that balances environmental stewardship, social justice, and economic vitality.
- The latest accolade came in August, when it was announced that UofL was the only school in Kentucky this year to earn a spot on the [Sierra Club's Cool Schools list](#) of 153 institutions nationwide. This is the seventh straight year that UofL has been on the list, but we increased our ranking to #71 by making significant progress across the board.
- UofL scored particularly high in terms of Co-Curricular Activities, such as our EcoReps leadership program, student sustainability groups, organic campus gardens, model green dorm room, and near-constant sustainability events. Our sustainable Food initiatives won praise for sourcing nearly 30% of food locally, offering vegan options, zero-waste trayless dining, extensive composting, reusable to-go containers and discounts for reusable mugs and bottles. We got high marks in Planning due to the tireless coordination of our university-wide Sustainability Council, our comprehensive Climate Action Plan, Bike Master Plan, and incorporation of sustainability into our Campus Master Plans and UofL Strategic Plan with meaningful metrics to track progress. Our Waste minimization efforts were lauded because of our 55% landfill diversion rate achieved through comprehensive recycling programs capturing everything from common recyclables to electronics, batteries, chemicals, organics, and even the reusable items we collect during move-out and every week at our volunteer-powered Free Store.
- The rankings also pointed out some areas that UofL needs to continue to improve upon, including shifting away from polluting, non-renewable energy sources, establishing socially-responsible investment guidelines for our endowment funds, increasing our academic offerings in sustainability, improving our water efficiency, and reducing our reliance on cars. All of these things will be priorities in our work moving forward.
- But there is undoubtedly much to celebrate, especially as we welcome students back to our green campus, including graduate students in our brand new Interdisciplinary Masters in Sustainability degree program, launched this fall!
- The history of our leadership in sustainability is a solid foundation on which to build.
- The Climate Commitment that I made in 2008 to ensure that UofL would take steps to begin reducing our greenhouse gas pollution down to net zero has already born fruit with a 22% reduction in our carbon emissions, even as our institution continues to grow.
- Last Spring, UofL was only one of seven gold-level Student Action Award-winning schools out of 125 recognized nationwide by Purposeful Networks.
- Having first appeared in the **2012** and **2014** editions, UofL is one of only three Kentucky schools featured in this year's [Princeton Review Guide to Green Colleges](#).
- Last Fall, UofL won the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education [AASHE Award for Best Case Study](#) for our innovative and ever-popular [Earn-A-Bike Program](#); and our

EcoReps Program received the [2014 Most-Valuable Pollution Prevention Award](#) for best video series from the National Pollution Prevention Roundtable.

- In 2013, [UofL was named 1 of 9 Great Colleges for Cyclists](#) by Bicycling Magazine, after being [recognized as the most bicycle-friendly university in Kentucky](#), with a Silver rating from the League of American Bicyclists.
- And last, but certainly not least, UofL has achieved [Tree Campus USA](#) status from the Arbor Day Foundation for every year since 2010!

*Find out more about these and many other UofL sustainability initiatives at our UofL Sustainability website: [louisville.edu/sustainability](http://louisville.edu/sustainability)*