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PSU Joins Presidents Climate Commitment Initiative University Takes Lead in Creating Environmentally-Conscious Campus

PLYMOUTH, N.H. –Plymouth State University is taking a leadership role among the nation’s most environmentally friendly institutions of higher learning.

PSU President Dr. Sara Jayne Steen has signed the [American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment](#), committing PSU to a broad effort by the nation's higher education institutions to address global warming by neutralizing their greenhouse gas emissions and accelerating research and educational efforts to equip society to re-stabilize the earth's climate. The heads of more than 180 institutions across the country have signed the pledge.

“Plymouth State is a green campus, and questions of climate, the environment, water systems, energy conservation, fuels, and sustainability will be an even more vital part of our future curriculum, research, and campus processes,” Steen said.

President Steen is also creating the President’s Commission on Environmental Sustainability to manage the University’s current commitments and develop forward-looking strategies and achieve goals. The University will continue its commitment to sustainable design in new and renovated University facilities that achieve the goals of the U.S. Green Building Council’s Certified LEED Guidelines.

PSU has a history of supporting sustainability through administrative commitments, campus construction and academic programs. For example, PSU is one of the first institutions of higher learning nationwide to earn a LEEDS gold certification for its Langdon Woods residence hall, which opened in September, 2006. The University is also creating an undergraduate program specifically tailored to address this critical area.

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“We are developing an interdisciplinary environmental studies major at PSU,” said Brian Eisenhauer, Associate Director of PSU’s Center for the Environment. “The program design will be innovative in a number of ways, including the diversity of specializations students can focus on in their studies and the emphasis on the applications of skills to regional issues through service learning in the program’s senior level project. Currently the goal is to develop a senior class grounded in experiential education principles in which students work in interdisciplinary teams on projects relevant to the needs of communities in the region. The program will include both natural and social sciences, and will offer PSU students a unique and formative educational experience that can contribute to the well-being of the region and the state.”

In signing the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment, President Steen pledges to neutralize the campus’ greenhouse-gas emissions over time. This involves:

- Developing a curriculum that incorporates these initiatives and culminates in a new degree program.
- Integrating sustainability across the curriculum, making it part of every educational experience.
- Within two years, setting a target date and interim milestones for becoming climate-neutral.
- Becoming carbon neutral within seven years.
- Taking immediate steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
- Completing an emissions inventory.
- Making the action plan, inventory and progress reports publicly available.

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Plymouth State University (PSU) is a comprehensive regional university offering a rich, student-focused learning environment for both undergraduate and graduate students. PSU offers 42 majors and 62 minors in programs that include education, business, humanities, arts, and natural and social sciences. The College of Graduate Studies offers coursework that promotes research, best practices and reflection in locations on- and off-campus as well as online. For non-traditional students, PSU’s Frost School of Continuing and Professional Studies offers working professionals opportunities to pursue an undergraduate degree by attending classes in the evenings, weekends and online. Located in a beautiful New England setting, Plymouth State University has been recognized as one of the “Best in the Northeast” by *The Princeton Review*.