



Eastern Connecticut State University in Willimantic has been officially designated a 'Green Campus,' according to the Princeton Review. That is evident in this fountain scene taken earlier this semester. Roxanne Pandolfi | Staff

ECSU campus garners 'Green' status

WILLIMANTIC — Eastern Connecticut State University is one of the most environmentally responsible colleges in 2018, according to The Princeton Review.

Eastern is listed in the Review's 2018 edition of "Guide to 399 Green Colleges," published last month.

It is the ninth year in a row Eastern has made the list.

Schools were selected based on a summer 2018 survey that measured more than 25 data points related to sustainability practices and policies.

Only schools with "Green Rating" scores of 80 or higher (out of 99) are featured in the guide.

"We are pleased to release our 2018 edition in October, as the month has been designated National Campus Sustainability Month," said Robert Franek, editor-in-chief of The Princeton Review.

"To all students wanting to study and live at a green college, we strongly recommend the outstanding schools we identify and profile in this guide."

ECSU officials said they were proud of the designation.

"We are proud to again be recognized as an environmentally friendly school by this important publication," said Lynn Stoddard, director of Eastern's Institute for Sustainable Energy (ISE).

"We're happy that today's college students value sustainability, and that our institutional efforts to minimize environmental impact have not gone unnoticed."

Eastern's commitment to sustainability is demonstrated through its use of renew-

able energy and strides toward carbon neutrality, the construction/renovation of "green" buildings, environmentally related academic and extracurricular offerings and other green initiatives.

The Eastern campus boasts five LEED-certified buildings (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design), including three residence halls, the Science Building and the new Fine Arts Instructional Center.

These buildings feature daylight-harvesting and gray-water systems, recycled flooring, native plants and rainwater collection systems.

LEED buildings can reduce energy and water costs by as much as 40 percent.

This fall 2018 semester, Eastern reopened its newly renovated Communications Building, which now meets the high-performance building standards set by the state of Connecticut.

Such standards include utilizing recyclable materials for a portion of the construction, as well as materials sourced within 500 miles of the worksite.

Improvements have also been made to water conservation, energy conservation and insulation.

Eastern is also home to Connecticut's largest geothermal installation.

Located at the High Rise residence hall, the system draws energy from the internal heat of the earth and reduces energy use by 12 percent.

Elsewhere on campus, a 400-kilowatt phosphoric-acid fuel cell provides clean energy that prevents the release of approximately 1,350 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year.

Lining Eastern's walkways and roads

are solar-powered lighting fixtures.

Furthermore, campus commuters can take advantage of Eastern's electric vehicle charging stations, and are rewarded with choice-parking spots for having electric or hybrid vehicles.

A university's greatest amount of waste may come from its dining hall.

To reduce food waste, Eastern's Hurley Hall and food provider, Chartwells, has a three-pronged program that involves offering students plates (rather than trays) of food, donating leftovers to the local soup kitchen and composting discarded food.

Eastern is also home to the Institute for Sustainability Energy (ISE), the organization spearheading the statewide initiative "Sustainable CT."

Among its academic and extracurricular offerings, Eastern offers a strong environmental earth science (EES) program — with tracks in EES, general earth science, and sustainable energy science — as well as a new minor in environmental health science.

The Environmental Club advocates for the importance of human impact on the environment, while promoting sustainable awareness and practices on campus.

The annual Campus Sustainability Week engages students in environmental issues and gathers volunteers for service projects.

The Green Theme housing community — located in the LEED-certified Nutmeg Hall — allows environmentally minded students to live together and participate in activities related to "going green" and sustainability