

SU completes greenhouse gas inventory, decreases global warming impact by 3.8 percent

Syracuse University recently published its first-ever inventory of greenhouse gas emissions. This inventory shows the amount of carbon dioxide and five other gases that were released into the atmosphere as a result of SU's operations for the years 2001-07. The six gases inventoried include all major contributors to global warming, as specified in the Kyoto Protocol.

SU completed this inventory in partial fulfillment of its obligations under the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, of which Chancellor Nancy Cantor is a charter signatory. SU's Sustainability Division staff collected data from various University administrative systems, including energy management, space management, student records, human resource, and study abroad. A stratified survey was conducted of commuters (faculty, staff, students) during the Spring 2007 semester; commuting averages calculated were extrapolated to previous timeframes based on headcounts.

Syracuse has already cut its greenhouse gas output by 3.8 percent since 2004, while at the same time growing by 500 full-time students and 400,000 square feet of building space. Other steps the University has taken under the commitment include purchasing 20 percent of its electric power from sustainable sources (mainly wind and small hydropower generation), and providing students with free public transit throughout an area near campus and to major shopping destinations.

The University is now committed to developing a plan by which it will effectively eliminate its contribution to global climate disruption. SU will continue reduce its greenhouse gas emissions as much as possible through a combination of energy conservation, new energy-saving technologies and purchasing as much power as possible in sustainable forms or from sustainable sources. Those emissions that cannot be eliminated will be offset, by enabling the elimination of an equivalent quantity of greenhouse gas emissions at other sites in Central New York or elsewhere.

The greenhouse gas inventory is available online at <http://www.aashe.org/pcc/reports/index.php?page=8> or <http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org>. For further information, contact Steve Lloyd, SU's Chief Sustainability Officer, at 443-4993 or visit <http://greenuniversecity.syr.edu/>