

Valencia College Presidential Search

Feedback received from community via email and mail

From: John Scolaro
Position: Professor, Humanities
Date: September 11, 2020

Comments: Tracey Stockwell, Chair of Valencia College's District Board of Trustees:

Dr. Bill Mallowney and I just spoke on the phone. We have known each other, as colleagues, for about 30 years now. I respect him dearly! Based on my request, he provided me with your email address. I am hoping that you will share this email with your Board of Trustees colleagues. Years ago, faculty and staff had access to the email addresses of members of Valencia College's District Board of Trustees, which is no longer the case. Might you and/or Dr. Mallowney contact Amy Bosley of HR, and request that such emails be provided, online, when any of us access that Dashboard link, which includes photos and names of each member of the District Board of Trustees.

In any case, this email is about those interviews, conducted by the District Board of Trustees, regarding the selection of the next President of Valencia College once Dr. Shugart retires at the end of June of 2021.

You already know that several women are active members of the District Board of Trustees which, to me, is impressive to the Nth degree! However, since Valencia College was founded in 1967, please explain why we have never selected a woman President when, in fact, we have appointed women as Provosts and/or as Presidents of our diverse campuses? Therefore, I am hoping that a very qualified and competent woman, regardless of her family of origin and/or her skin color, will not only be interviewed, but will also be selected as the next President of Valencia College, especially since the search, conducted by the District Board of Trustees, includes both genders. Before my colleague and friend, Dr. Falecia Williams, recently left Valencia College, and found her way to Largo, Maryland as the President of Prince George's Community College, I suggested, multiple times, that she apply as Dr. Shugart's successor as the first woman President of Valencia College. So, I am hoping that a woman candidate, like Dr. Falecia Williams, will apply and be approved as Valencia College's first woman President ever!

What I have just said above also applies to numerous college wide colleagues of mine as well as to our college wide staff. I am hoping that you and your colleagues will seriously consider what I have just represented. I am wishing you and your colleagues the very best as regards your ongoing search for the next President of Valencia College!

Letter to Orlando Sentinel Editor: <https://www.orlandosentinel.com/opinion/letters/os-op-letters-daisy-morales-phone-missed-meetings-20200923-uvtxkwep15g7beaq6cxaxlpkuy-story.html>

Sincerely,
John Scolaro, Senior Teaching Fellow and Professor of Humanities/West Campus

From: James Adamski
Position: Professor, Geology
Date: September 11, 2020

Comments: Greetings Linda,
I hope you are doing well, and having a good fall semester so far. I wanted to congratulate you on being selected to serve on the Presidential Search Committee. The task of filling the vacancy left by Dr. Shugart will be challenging. His service and leadership will be missed.

Sustainability is one of the key factors for the potential candidates. As a geoscientist with more than 30 years of professional experience, I wanted to emphasize the seriousness of the climate crisis and the adverse impacts it will have on our students' lives.

The current climate crisis is arguably the single biggest threat that humanity faces. The climate crisis is now and will continue to affect every aspect of human society including healthcare, extreme weather events and disasters, food production, and national security. The climate crisis is a social justice issue as much as it's an environmental issue.

A total of 800 million people lack clean, safe drinking water, and another 2.4 billion lack adequate sanitation. The climate crisis will only worsen these conditions.

A total of 1.9 billion people on the planet have moderate to severe food insecurities. Currently, food production is threatened by reduced crop productivity and the increase of severe events like floods and droughts.

Houston has suffered three 500-year floods in 3 years. Hurricane Laura rapidly intensified to a cat 4 storm because of anomalously warm waters in the Gulf of Mexico. Parts of Siberia were over 100 F for the first time in recorded history. The Arctic sea ice is at its second lowest extent in recorded history as wildfires burn through much of the surrounding land.

The western US is suffering record wildfires and heatwaves. Woodland Hills, California, a suburb of LA, reached 121 F earlier this week. Parts of Colorado and other western states went from a record heat (99 F in Denver) to record snows in 24 hours. We've all seen the horrific images of fires and the resulting surreal orange skies in places like San Francisco and Portland.

The current pandemic and the spread of tropical diseases like malaria, dengue fever, and the Zika virus are all strongly related to the climate crisis and our continued exploitation of our environment.

I apologize if I sound like an alarmist. However, these events are very real, are directly related to a warming planet, and will only continue to worsen if no action is taken. Furthermore, this crisis disproportionately affects low-income people and people of color in the US and around the world. The most vulnerable people in our society will feel the biggest impacts.

Valencia College has an obligation to do everything we can to help our students have a safe future without the threat of the climate crisis. I respectfully urge you and the other members of the committee to select a candidate who takes the crisis seriously. We need a president who will continue to transition our college to be zero-carbon emissions by mid-century.

Thank you very much for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the climate crisis in more detail with you and (or) the search committee. Have a good weekend.

Jim Adamski
Professor of Geology

From: Karen Murray
Position: Professor, Communications
Date: September 16, 2020

Comments: Dear Carl,

I would like to thank you for serving on the committee to search for a new president for our college. It will be a difficult task to replace Dr. Shugart.

While there are several essential qualifications required of the person who becomes the new president, I would like to remind you of one that is, sadly, often overlooked: a commitment to sustainability. Though sustainability might be easily overlooked by search committee members, it must not be overlooked because, in addition to the moral responsibility of any organization to address the most serious problem facing humanity, a survey of Valencia faculty and students conducted by our human resources department revealed that attention to sustainability is viewed as so critical that it is considered one of the top six priorities of our president. Valencia's Director of Human Resources concluded that it is essential for the new president to have a "demonstrated commitment to action related to equity and sustainability." Placing equity and sustainability side-by-side makes sense. Just

as Valencia has rightly infused a focus on equity in all aspects of our work, so should we infuse sustainability in all aspects of our work. Our college is exemplary in its attention to racial equity and social justice. These issues directly intersect with sustainability, so our college should also be exemplary in its attention to sustainability. Valencia should ramp up the efforts begun by President Shugart in his support of sustainability; for example, he signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment and committed Valencia to carbon neutrality by 2060. The 2020 decade has been deemed by the United Nations to be the "Decade of Action," as the world works towards achieving the [2030 Sustainable Development Goals \(SDGs\)](#). These goals include quality education, reduced inequality, and climate action. These resonate and align with Valencia's values and goals. It will be important to have a college president who prioritizes this.

Prioritizing sustainability also makes sense from an administrative perspective: colleges with good sustainability practices have a high level of attractiveness to potential students, they attract high-quality faculty, they enjoy being known for being on the cutting edge, and they attract important donors.

Please let me know if you would like more information on the necessity to have a president who is committed to sustainability, ready to lead the college to significant, impactful sustainability action, and infuse sustainability into Valencia's long-term modus operandi. (You may find the attachments pertinent.)

Sincerely, Karen
Professor, Communications, West Campus

From: Andy Ray

Position: Professor, Building Construction

Date: September 17, 2020

Comments: Carl –

I understand that you are serving on the Search Committee to find the next President of Valencia College. Congratulations!

It's going to be a supreme challenge to find a worthy replacement for **Dr. Shugart** but you bring great insight to an elite team.

One desirable attribute that I hope the committee establishes as important in this search is to continue the momentum on our efforts to be sustainable in our facilities and policies. Beginning with the sustainable construction practices started under former Facilities Director **Helene Loiselle**, Valencia now has 8 campus buildings that have been recognized for their energy- efficiency: Lake Nona, Poinciana, Osceola building 4, and four structures on West (AHS, SEC, 10 and 11).

Through the efforts of groundskeepers the campuses have moved toward removing invasive species of plants and replacing them with drought-tolerant native vegetation. Valencia has been recognized as a Tree Campus USA and the recycling programs have also been lauded with national awards.

Thanks to Deborah Green, Resham Shirsat and now **Carrie Black**, the Sustainability Committee has supported many initiatives such as Earth Day, workshops during Learning Day and several campus improvement projects.

Dr. Shugart has long been supportive of these efforts and I hope that you can express to the committee how vital **Sustainability** is to Valencia's mission. Our next leader needs to be committed to protecting and nurturing our students, faculty, staff as well as providing a safe and sustainable environment on our campuses.

Thanks for taking time to indulge me. Andy

From: James Adamski
Position: Professor, Geology
Date: September 17, 2020

Comments: Greetings Carl,

I hope you are doing well, and having a good fall semester so far. I wanted to congratulate you on being selected to serve on the Presidential Search Committee. The task of filling the vacancy left by Dr. Shugart will be challenging. His service and leadership will be missed.

Sustainability is one of the key factors for the potential candidates. As a geoscientist with more than 30 years of professional experience, I wanted to emphasize the seriousness of the climate crisis and the adverse impacts it will on our students' lives. The current climate crisis is arguably the single biggest threat that humanity faces. The climate crisis is now and will continue to affect every aspect of human society including healthcare, extreme weather events and disasters, food production, and national security. The climate crisis is a social justice issue as much as it's an environmental issue.

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A total of 1.9 billion people on the planet have moderate to severe food insecurities. Currently, food production is threatened by reduced crop productivity and the increase of severe events like floods and droughts.

Houston has suffered three 500-year floods in 3 years. Hurricanes Laura and Sally rapidly intensified because of anomalously warm waters in the Gulf of Mexico. Parts of Siberia were over 100 F for the first time in recorded history. The Arctic sea ice is at its second lowest extent in recorded history as wildfires burn through much of the surrounding land.

The western US is suffering record wildfires and heatwaves. Woodland Hills, California, a suburb of LA, reached 121 F last week. Parts of Colorado and other western states went from a record heat (99 F in Denver) to record snows in 24 hours. We've all seen the horrific images of fires and the resulting surreal orange skies in places like San Francisco and Portland.

The current pandemic and the spread of tropical diseases like malaria, dengue fever, and the Zika virus are all strongly related to the climate crisis and our continued exploitation of our environment. A warming climate means the range of tropical, disease-carrying mosquitoes are spreading to temperate regions.

I apologize if I sound like an alarmist. However, these events are very real, are directly related to a warming planet, and will only continue to worsen if no action is taken. Furthermore, this crisis disproportionately affects low-income people and people of color in the US and around the world. The most vulnerable people in our society will feel the biggest impacts.

Valencia College has an obligation to do everything we can to help our students have a safe future without the threat of the climate crisis. I respectfully urge you and the other members of the committee to select a candidate who takes the crisis seriously. We need a president who will continue to transition our college to be zero-carbon emissions by mid-century. Valencia needs to demonstrate to our students and the community that we are a leader on this topic.

Thank you very much for your consideration. Please let me know if you have any questions or comments. I would welcome the opportunity to discuss the climate crisis in more detail with you and (or) the search committee. Have a good weekend.

Jim Adamski
Professor of Geology

From: Carrie Black

Position: Director, Energy Conservation & Sustainability

Date: September 18, 2020

Comments: Hi Amy, Happy Friday!

In today's Presidential Search Committee meeting, I believe in Stanton's comments on sustainability, he asked for a definition of sustainability. Sustainability can be such a broad term that it is a great request.

Attached is the sustainability definition developed by the Office of Sustainability. It has been reviewed by President Shugart and Faculty Council, among others. In addition to the definition, in this one-pager is our vision and goals/objectives, which further expound on what sustainability means and what it looks like at Valencia.

Thanks for all your hard work in helping us find our next great President! All

My Best,
Carrie

From: Sylvana Vester

Position: Professor, Mathematics

Date: September 23, 2020

Comments: Hello,

I hope this email finds you well.

I am writing to you in hopes that you will strongly give weight to sustainability as you search for our new president.

I am committed to living sustainably. Inch by inch, I work diligently and set up systems to homestead my property. Living in the country, I love being surrounded by nature and wildlife. It may sound corny, but I care about my feathered friends, my furry friends, the trees and grasses and lakes.

I care about insects, which used to be plentiful. Do you remember having to stop at gas stations and squeegee-wash your windshield because there were so many bug splatters? Unfortunately, that's not much of an issue anymore. Insect populations, which are at the bottom of the food chain, are rapidly declining: <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/animals/2019/02/why-insect-populations-are-plummeting-and-why-it-matters/>.

The decisions we make and what we do matters. Please make sustainability an important factor in your consideration.

Sylvana Vester

From: Karen Murray

Position: Professor, Reading

Date: October 28, 2020

Comments: Hello Presidential Search Committee- With all due respect, I am obliged to share with you some concerns about what to a number of my colleagues and me feel like broken promises. Having read the application documents of the semi-finalists you have selected, we are surprised, disappointed, and, frankly, worried about the fact that two of the candidates you selected make no mention of sustainability. As you know, interested Valencia employees determined that one of the six traits that our new president must have is a demonstrated commitment to sustainability. We were given the impression that we were heard and that the committee would ensure that our president would possess these six essential traits. Significant forward movement to becoming an institution that is part of the solution rather than continuing to be part of the problem -continuing to contribute to the environmental catastrophe- is crucial if Valencia is to remain a respected institution in the 21st century. If any candidate had

made no mention of learning or equity or leadership, would (s)he have been selected? Why have you decided that sustainability is expendable? We implore you to face the fact that sustainability is *not* expendable. In addition, contrary to what AGB Search assured, the pool of applicants has turned out to be 'underwhelming' both quantitatively and qualitatively. One would imagine that the \$80+K that Valencia paid the search firm would yield a truly excellent pool of candidates as assured. Sincerely, Karen

From: Ken Ward

Position: Part-time Faculty, New Student Experience

Date: October 29, 2020

Comments: First off, I think you guys are doing an outstanding job on the presidential search process. That said, without question I unanimously put my vote behind Dr. Kathleen Plinske, our current EVP and Provost. She has served Valencia College tirelessly for many years and has done so remarkably. Because unlike the others, she knows Valencia very well and she is uniquely qualified to lead Valencia into the next chapter of academic success. I believe she is the perfect heir apparent to Dr. Shugart, since he has groomed her for just this opportunity. I know in my heart that he would agree with me wholeheartedly. Professor Ken Ward, MBA

From: Anonymous

Position: Unknown

Date: November 4, 2020

Comments: https://media.rff.org/documents/Florida_Climate_Outlook.pdf

From: Karen Murray

Position: Professor, Reading

Date: November 9, 2020

Comments: Many of my colleagues and I are worried about prematurely/unsafely returning to face-to-face mode. Some of the decisions of some candidates are concerning in this regard. We truly care about our students and their education, and we abhor online instruction, but SAFETY FIRST.

From: Karen Murray

Position: Professor, Reading

Date: November 9, 2020

Comments: Hello, Ms. Bosley and members of the selection committee. I am as interested in *all* critical topics at our college as you are, but my role is to focus on sustainability. I will be brief and concise, so please forgive frankness that you might find harsh. Donald Green should be taken out of the running. Anyone who finds focusing on and investing in sustainability "a luxury," as Dr. Green stated, is out of touch with reality. Shah Ardalan demonstrates little to no commitment to environmental sustainability, and therefore should also be taken out of the running. I also suggest taking Margo Martin out of the list of finalists as she does not have a track record of sustainability action. Although the sustainability records of Charles Lepper and Lee Ann Nutt are weak, they both demonstrated an openness to learning about it and demonstrate that they are aware of its importance. Anton Reese leaves the impression that he is committed to sustainability. Kathleen Plinske is the top choice. Facts demonstrate that she is super in all areas, BUT she needs to step it up in the realm of sustainability to be a truly premier college leader in the 21st century. Sustainability will only become more important with each passing year -- important to *every* entity, not just government and industry, so if we want Valencia to truly be a premier

institution, the college must increase and accelerate sustainability efforts. Whoever the president is must lead this. Just as she said, "I absolutely believe that environmental sustainability is an issue of social justice," she should say, "I absolutely am committed to placing a high priority on sustainability in the college's capital planning."

From: Anonymous

Position: Unknown

Date: November 16, 2020

Comments: We have learned that Dr. Reece has applied to become the next president of Valencia College. We would love to see Dr. Reece move to Florida; however, that is NOT a recommendation. There are several deficiencies in Dr. Reece's personality and management style. You may have noticed some during your brief time with him. Some wouldn't manifest until you made the mistake of choosing him as Valencia's next president. We will briefly mention a few of them. Dr. Reece, in his interview, bragged about the college he now heads, as though he were responsible for that success. To the contrary, he took a college that was thriving and has overseen that college's decline during his tenure here. Even pre-Covid, our college was heading in the wrong direction regarding enrollment and retention. We understand that problem is being faced across this nation, but we seem to have taken a bigger hit than we should have. Our graduation numbers are plummeting.

When Dr. Reece talks about the relative size of WKCTC within the system, that has nothing to do with Dr. Reece. Most of the community colleges in the state of Kentucky are in rural settings. The Paducah campus will always be among the largest. We are one of the largest goldfishes in a small aquarium. Employee morale has been abysmal under his leadership. We have lost many good faculty and staff members recently who have chosen to leave the college because of the politics and mismanagement. Some of those chose to retire early. Some decided to walk away from their years of service even though they didn't qualify for retirement. Others were just about to retire early and may be putting that decision on hold to see whether Dr. Reece leaves. In the short time you've spent with Dr. Reece, you may not have noticed his signature shortcoming.

If you have the misfortune to have him lead your college for just a couple months, you'll quickly notice what drives him. His background is in Minority Affairs. Either his personal background or his professional background has led him to believe that everything is about race. Yes, in education, there are many aspects where race is a component to be considered. But there are many times where race has nothing to do with the situation at hand. That won't stop Dr. Reece from attempting to inject race as a component or even making race the entire issue. It quickly becomes tiresome and rebarbative. It is counterproductive. On the subject of race and other demographics, Dr. Reece, in a written response, answered a question about your demographics. His mention of your African American enrollment percentages was almost nonsensical. It was especially disingenuous considering the percentage of African American students at WKCTC is 8%, according to Wikipedia or any other data you use. Despite Dr. Reece's obsession with race, that percentage has remained fairly constant throughout his tenure here. Similarly, when he mentions your gender gap, he seems to be ignorant on the subject and have a callous lack of self-awareness. Regarding Valencia's demographics, Dr. Reece wrote, "There is a noticeable gender gap in enrollment with 56.8% female compared to 41.0% male students, and I would encourage a deeper dive into recruitment, advising and programmatic trends to increase male student attendance in college. Valencia's gender gap is perfectly in line with United States colleges collectively. Meanwhile, at WKCTC, enrollment is comprised of two females for every one male student (Wikipedia, if you don't have access to another source of our data). We've never heard of Dr. Reece performing a "deeper dive" into that more glaring disparity. Regardless, that disparity hasn't moved appreciably during Dr. Reece's tenure.

In short, Valencia does not need Dr. Reece coming in with his "expert" analysis and wasting time, money, and morale chasing after a problem that doesn't exist. Dr. Reece's written answers hint at something for which he's well known: word soup. Consider the written answers he provided which he had time to consider, type, and proofread. He really wants away from here, but that was the best he could offer in written responses. Likewise, his oral communications make many of us shake our heads. In Education, we are accustomed to hearing buzzwords

falling like rain with Dr. Reece, the buzzwords come in a downpour. Another common complaint is that retaliation is often the motivation here at WKCTC. We hope that explains why we can't put our names on this document. He may be gone soon enough; we don't want to unnecessarily jeopardize our jobs or work conditions during his last days. In summary, we'd love to see Dr. Reece move to Florida or anywhere else, but that's not a good enough reason to wish our problems onto you. We are attempting to grant you the luck of Kokura. UPDATE: As of today, November 16, all K-12 schools in our county and every contiguous county is closed because our region is a virus hotspot right now. Dr. Reece, in a move which is indicative of his poor judgment, has insisted that our campus remain open. We are all professionals and we want to be in class. But we are not myopic. We care about the health of our students and their families as well as the health of our families. We have seen as few as one student show up for our in-person classes recently. Having only three or four students show isn't unusual. We can't blame the students for making a sensible decision regarding the safety of themselves and their families. We recognize that the spread of the virus looks very different in Florida than it does in Kentucky. We wish Dr. Reece had the common sense his position would dictate.

From: Karen Murray
Position: Professor, Reading
Date: November 18, 2020

Comments: Now that the baton has been passed to the board, I should remind the board that Valencians have clearly expressed that our new president must be committed to sustainability and will have the responsibility to actionably demonstrate this commitment. The president is obligated to support and fulfill Valencia's Sustainability Action Plan and to expand it. Accordingly, the board has the responsibility to require this of our new president. Board members, please bear in mind that sustainability does not compete with student success or equity work; rather, it supports it. Implementing sustainability practices in all areas of Valencia's work also supports the community, another requisite of our president. Please do not lose sight of the crucial importance of sustainability even as you might personally be focused on other areas. Thank you.

From: Aaron Powell
Position: Professor, EAP
Date: November 19, 2020

Comments: Dear Sir or Madam: I am writing to ask that the Presidential Search Committee hold sustainability in high regard when choosing our next Valencia College president. In particular, support for alternative transportation, such as construction of multi-use pathways (10'-wide) on and around our campuses that allow students, faculty, and staff to walk, bicycle and scooter will be a critical component of bringing our campuses into the 21st century. Valencia College is no longer just a commuter school, and we have the ability to reduce single-occupancy vehicle traffic if we choose a president who supports not only the greatly successful Lynx initiative but also multi-use pathways to better connect our buildings and our campuses to their nearby communities. Thank you.

From: Melissa Alvarez
Position: Unknown
Date: November 20, 2020

Comments: I am looking for a president that will maintain our principles. Valencia has always maintained their employees and student as main priority during this pandemic and I want to continue to work for an employer that cares about my well-being, that upholds holistic approaches when it comes to our students, and cares about its community.

From: Anonymous

Date: December 2, 2020

Comments: Dr. Anton Reece has the experience and knowledge to move Valencia into the next phase of development. He is a strategic leader who understands relationships and leading teams. He has a deep understanding of diversity and inclusion and practices and lives the principle of inclusion and leads by example. He is a humble person who is approachable, but also a visionary and strong leader. He has strong connections nationally and is comfortable working in the federal, state and local governments. He understands his role as president of out-facing and engaged in the community all the while building trusting and effective teams around him. He has a breadth of knowledge, skill and ability. He would be well respected in the community and will be able to lead Valencia with grace and style. He said he makes intentional connections that work for both the college and the agencies or governments or associations he is apart of. He brings 30 years of experience as a leader. He is well qualified and not scripted. He doesn't have to be, he has the experience.

From: Kevin D. O'Farrell

Position: Provost, Pasco-Hernando State College Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch

Letter Dated: November 17, 2020

The following letter was received by the Organizational Development and Human Resources team via mail.

November 17, 2020

Ms. Tracey Stockwell
Chair, District Board of Trustees
Valencia College
P.O. Box 3028
Orlando, FL 32802

Dear Chair Stockwell and Valencia College District Board of Trustees,

Please accept this unsolicited letter as my strong endorsement of Dr. Kathleen Plinske to become the next President of Valencia College.

As a fellow Florida College System Administrator, I serve as the Pasco-Hernando State College Provost of the Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch and oversee all aspects of campus operations. This includes the learning, policy, fiscal, operational, and physical aspects of college administration. From my unique perspective, I am confident you will not find a more qualified or prepared candidate than Dr. Plinske to lead Valencia College into the future.

I have witnessed Dr. Plinske's expertise, courage, compassion and commitment to student success. Her extensive experience at the local, regional, and national level make her the ideal candidate to serve as the next President of Valencia College. Her candidacy is further bolstered by her ability to easily and seamlessly navigate between various constituency and stakeholder groups. She possesses the bilingual fluency that allows her to effortlessly move within circles of influence that advance the mission of the college, while building trust among students, employees and business and community leaders.

I have been so impressed with Dr. Plinske's leadership, that I invited her to be a keynote speaker at one of my institution's professional development days. This marquee event, in which the entire college was closed to allow all full-time employees to attend, gave Dr. Plinske time to share from her perspective the challenges and opportunities that leaders have when serving students in a diverse, multi-faceted, and dynamic society. Her presentation, filled with personal examples of professional grit and service, left the entire assembly motivated to "dream big" for our students and "go the extra mile" in our service to the region.

Dr. Plinske's list of accomplishments, accolades, and appointments is vast; far too numerous to itemize here. However, as a former Valencia College student, I felt it was incumbent to share with you the immense value and opportunity you have in selecting Dr. Plinske as the next president.

EAST CAMPUS

36727 Blanton Rd.
Dade City, FL 33523
352.567.6701

NORTH CAMPUS

11415 Ponce de Leon Blvd.
Brooksville, FL 34601
352.796.6726

PORTER CAMPUS AT WIREGRASS RANCH

2727 Mansfield Blvd.
Wesley Chapel, FL 33543
813.527.6615

SPRING HILL CAMPUS

450 Beverly Ct.
Spring Hill, FL 34606
352.688.8798

WEST CAMPUS/ DISTRICT OFFICE

10230 Ridge Rd.
New Port Richey, FL 34654
727.847.2727

phsc.edu

800.855.NOW



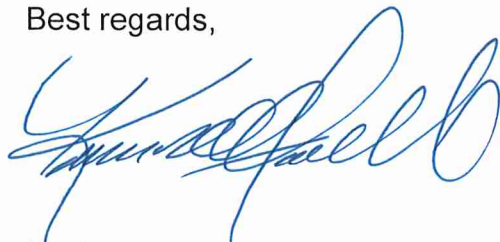
Rarely does a candidate of Dr. Plinske's caliber so closely align with the exceptional national prestige of an institution like Valencia College. Your stewardship of the presidential selection process would be highly affirmed with the selection of Dr. Plinske.

I am confident you already know what I have been honored to learn about Dr. Plinske, that she is a humble servant to others. Her compassion, skill, professionalism, and work ethic set her apart.

Please feel at liberty to contact me should you require any additional information regarding my enthusiastic endorsement of Dr. Kathleen Plinske as the next President of Valencia College.

I wish you the very best in the ongoing presidential selection process.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Kevin D. O'Farrell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "K" and "O".

Kevin D. O'Farrell, Ph.D.
Provost
Porter Campus at Wiregrass Ranch

ATTACHMENTS

AASHE Beyond the Right Thing to Do Environmental Sustainability and Anti-Racism

Submitted by: Karen Murray

Sustainability Defined

Submitted by: Carrie Black

Beyond the Right Thing to Do: The Value of Sustainability in Higher Education



University of Victoria's LEED Gold Administrative Services Building.

Photo credit: University of Victoria

How to Use This Publication

This document is intended to help higher education sustainability practitioners more powerfully articulate the value of sustainability to higher education leaders as well as the general public. As different points will be more or less relevant at individual institutions or with specific audiences, practitioners are welcome to create more targeted versions of this publication. After each point is a reference link that will take the reader to a list of supporting resources in the [Campus Sustainability Hub](#), AASHE's online resource center. AASHE will be adding new resources over time so the list of supporting resources will grow over time. As the reference links will not be accessible in printed copies, this publication is best used in electronic form.

This publication was written primarily by Alex Novak and Julian Dautremont-Smith with contributions from the [AASHE Advisory Council](#).



Solar energy jobs are growing many times faster as the US economy as a whole.



This work by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](#). You are free to share or adapt it as long as you provide attribution.

Humanity faces a series of complex, interrelated, and, in some cases, existential sustainability challenges. These include climate destabilization and its attendant consequences, resource depletion and degradation, widening inequalities, a growing population, and loss of biodiversity. As the educators of future leaders and as laboratories for experimentation, institutions of higher education have an opportunity and a responsibility to help overcome these pressing challenges. This briefing demonstrates that sustainability isn't just the right thing to do, it's also smart business. By prioritizing sustainability, institutions can contribute to key institutional goals such as boosting revenue and enrollment, while also preparing students for solving society's greatest challenges. A strong sustainability culture can alleviate administrative challenges and promote institutional success.

1. Sustainability education prepares students for career success and responsible citizenship.

- As sustainability becomes more and more central to the strategy of business and government, employers are increasingly emphasizing sustainability competencies, even for jobs that aren't explicitly focused on sustainability. This means that sustainability education is an essential part of workforce development.¹
- The jobs of the future are sustainability jobs. Indeed, the fastest growing segments of many industries are sustainability-oriented (e.g., renewable energy, organic agriculture, green buildings and electric vehicles).²
- Sustainability literacy helps empower students to participate effectively in civic dialog, which is likely to focus increasingly on the management of sustainability challenges.³

2. Sustainability improves organizational efficiency, decreases operational costs and reduces risk.

- Energy efficiency (e.g., new lighting, HVAC technologies and retrofits), energy conservation and renewable energy can save institutions hundreds of thousands of dollars each year on utility costs, distribution system repair and maintenance.⁴
- Waste reduction, reuse, and recycling can lower hauling costs, save on purchasing costs and reduce litter. Programs that reduce consumption (e.g., print management programs and water refilling stations) can also lower costs and conserve resources.⁵ Sustainable fleet management programs lower fuel costs, improve local air quality, and can reduce vehicle procurement and maintenance costs.⁶



Stanford's new energy system is reducing GHG by 68% and saving \$420 million over 35 years. Photo credit: Stanford University

- Further, transportation demand management programs reduce traffic and can eliminate pressure to build expensive new parking facilities.⁷
- Sustainable buildings not only cost less to operate, but also improve occupant productivity, learning, health and comfort.⁸
- Including sustainability principles in campus planning helps make campuses more resilient and can reduce the risks associated with environmental changes (e.g., droughts or extreme weather events) and future regulations (e.g., on greenhouse gas emissions). Likewise, renewable energy sources can provide protection against volatile fuel costs.⁹

3. Sustainability catalyzes increased giving and new funding sources.

- Sustainability is a powerful motivator for potential donors who want to support people and projects making a positive impact.¹⁰

- Billions of dollars in government and corporate funding is invested annually in sustainability-related research at colleges and universities. ¹¹
- Industry partnerships in clean technologies can generate revenue via commercialization of intellectual property. ¹²
- Students at many institutions of higher education have voted to raise their own fees to fund sustainability initiatives on their campuses. ¹³

4. Sustainability helps attract, retain and motivate top students and employees.

- Students are seeking schools that actively demonstrate sustainability leadership and provide them with the tools for complex decision-making and problem-solving. ¹⁴ Sustainability, and the sense of purpose it provides, may also enhance student retention. ¹⁵
- Similarly, strong sustainability performance facilitates the recruitment of high-quality faculty and staff, who increasingly seek work for organizations that are making a positive impact on the world. ¹⁶ Sustainability also helps to foster organizational commitment and improve employee retention. ¹⁷

5. Sustainability strengthens community relations and facilitates new partnerships.

- Sustainability enhances town-gown relations by improving community wellbeing and quality of life (e.g., by reducing air pollution from traffic or maintaining natural spaces for recreational use) and contributing to municipal sustainability goals. ¹⁸

- Sustainability provides a focal point to engage new partners (e.g., businesses and government agencies) for high impact research collaborations and powerful experiential and applied learning opportunities. ¹⁹
- Strong sustainability commitments facilitate approval of campus expansion and development projects and are often a necessary part of agreements negotiated to gain support for new development. ²⁰

6. Sustainability research and education demonstrates relevance in addressing grand challenges and helps unify the campus around a shared sense of purpose.

- Making tangible contributions to solving real world sustainability problems can improve an institution's reputation and enhance public support for higher education. ²¹
- In a sign of its importance to solving pressing sustainability challenges, sustainability research is growing faster and receives more citations than research generally. ²²
- Sustainability is an inherently interdisciplinary field and tackling sustainability challenges often necessitates increased levels of campus coordination. As a result, sustainability can stimulate innovation and catalyze improvements in organizational performance. ²³

Embracing sustainability in higher education is a win for everyone: students, employees, communities, and society overall. Today's graduates are putting their educations to work in professions that bridge geographical and disciplinary boundaries. Higher education has the opportunity, the responsibility, and the great honor of leading global efforts to create a sustainable future. This is not a future for which we can afford to wait, but one we must actively forge by teaching our students, and ourselves, how to achieve human health and happiness, environmental quality, and economic well-being for current and future generations.



Faculty and students at Swarthmore College collaborate with community leaders on Serenity Soular, which is implementing solar and other sustainability projects in North Philadelphia. Photo credit: Swarthmore College



Students at University of California, Irvine celebrate Bike Month.

Photo credit: University of California, Irvine

AASHE empowers higher education administrators, faculty, staff and students to be effective change agents and drivers of sustainability innovation. AASHE enables members to translate information into action by offering essential resources and professional development to a diverse, engaged community of sustainability leaders. We work with and for higher education to ensure that our world's future leaders are motivated and equipped to solve sustainability challenges. For more information, visit www.aashe.org.



Environmental Sustainability and Anti-Racism

The destruction of the environment of our planet, and global climate change in particular, are a threat to all of us and to our species. People of color, both in the United States and around the world, are disproportionately targeted by the degradation of the environment. In short, the situation is that huge profits are being made, mostly by white men, through enterprises that are destroying the environment, while people of color pay a large percentage of the costs of those endeavors.

Taking a stand

Because people of color bear such a large percentage of the burden of the effects of the degradation of the environment, a full stand against racism requires standing against the destruction of the environment and against climate change. Because the ideology and distresses of racism underlie the enactment of environmental destruction, and because peoples of all backgrounds must unite to preserve and restore the environment, a wholehearted effort to save the environment requires building a united, multi-racial environmental movement that stands fully against racism as an integral part of its work to create the conditions for sustainable life on our planet.

What it will take

A full solution will require ending divisions among people, including those created by racism. The restoration and preservation of the environment must take precedence over any group of humans having material advantage over others. The nearly universal feeling of always “needing more”, and of willingness to obtain more even if it comes at the expense of others, must be replaced by a deep commitment to the common good of all humans. Such a commitment is impossible with racism in place. In most cases we will also need to be willing to live with less, in order for all humans to live sustainably on the Earth.

People of color are environmental leaders

It is a myth that caring about the environment and seeking sustainable ways of living on the earth is a “white thing”. Although widely ignored and underreported, indigenous people and other people of color, both in the U.S. and around the world, have been leaders in protecting and restoring the environment. A few examples include the Latino farm workers in Kettleman City, California and the African American families in the Hyde Park neighborhood of Augusta, Georgia organizing successfully to fight against toxic chemicals from polluting industries affecting their communities; Wangari Maathai, the Kenyan woman who won the Nobel Prize for establishing the grassroots Green Belt movement that has planted over 40 million trees across Africa; and Van Jones, the contemporary African American environmental advocate and civil rights activist who co-founded Color of Change, Green for All, and Rebuild the Dream.

Environmental racism in the U.S.

In the United States, “environmental racism” includes such common practices as locating landfills, trash incinerators, coal plants, toxic waste facilities, and polluting factories in poor communities of color all over the country. These affect the air, water, and food, and have major harmful health effects on the people of color living in these communities. People of color in every part of the United States bear a disproportional burden of the nation’s environmental problems. For example three out of every five African Americans, Latinos, and Native Americans live near toxic waste sites. African Americans are 79 percent more likely than white people to live in neighborhoods where industrial pollution is suspected of causing significant harmful health effects.

How climate change affects people of color

With super-storms, record-breaking flooding, devastating droughts, out-of-control wildfires, and record-breaking temperatures, climate change is affecting our world dramatically already. The rapid increase in carbon in the atmosphere (especially from the burning of fossil fuels) threatens to drastically change conditions everywhere and eventually to make our planet uninhabitable by humans. This is a worldwide problem and all of the world’s peoples are truly “in this together”. However, climate change, too, is disproportionately affecting people of color and poor people world-wide.

- In 2012, 31.8 million people were displaced from their homes by catastrophic climate and weather-related events, nearly twice as many as in 2011. The vast majority of these were people of color in Asia and Africa.
- As Hurricane Katrina showed us, and Superstorm Sandy reinforced, people of color living in neighborhoods with the fewest resources have a harder time escaping, surviving, and recovering from climate change driven disasters.
- When temperatures soar, heat-related deaths among urban blacks occur at a 150 to 200 percent greater rate than for whites people due to black population density in urban areas with an abundance of concrete and asphalt.
- Global warming is already expanding the range of disease-bearing insects and parasites and infecting new populations, disproportionately of people of color, with deadly diseases such as malaria, dengue, and cholera.

Subsidizing the profits of the wealthy

Usually when a company makes something, its profit is the money left over after it pays all the expenses of making the product. In the case of industries that pollute or sell products that pollute, they don’t pay all the expenses. They don’t pay the cost of the harm their product does to people’s health. They don’t pay the cost of cleaning up the air or the water that they pollute. In the case of the fossil fuel industries, they don’t pay the many costs of the climate change being caused by their products. Even though those costs are part of the cost associated with the product, these costs are not being paid by the producers. These costs are paid by the whole society, and disproportionately by the people of color who are impacted by them. In that sense

the profits of the polluting industries, including the fossil fuel industries, are being subsidized by all of us, and disproportionately by poor people of color. This is systemic racism and it's not only targeting people of color, it's destroying the planet on which we all live.

The ideology of racism and the degradation of the environment

The underlying ideology of racism is that some groups of people can be defined as "other" and labeled "inferior" by a dominant group that sees itself as "superior". As the age of colonization began in the 16th and 17th centuries, white Europeans developed the ideology of racism to justify the theft of resources, degradation of the land, the enslavement of people, and genocide directed at dark-skinned people and indigenous people all over the world. Greed was the primary driver of these practices. Disregard for the effects of these practices on the targeted populations was (and is) central to the operation of the system.

Practices and enterprises today that contribute to the degradation of the environment and to climate change are rooted in the same features – greed, a feeling of being "superior" to those most affected, and seeing prioritizing one's own profits and comfort as completely legitimate, regardless of the effects on others or on the environment. Racism has long provided a justification for such perspectives, as enacted through colonization, genocide and slavery, extending into the present. Only through dismantling racism can we remove these perspectives and the practices that result from them.

We are in this together

Racism, and environmental degradation and climate change are intertwined. Trying to make a significant difference in dismantling either racism or the environmental crisis can be a daunting, even overwhelming, prospect. To suggest that they need to both be taken on together could lead some to feel despairing or discouraged. Some may feel that including a "second" issue dilutes the attention given their primary issue. However, knowing these issues are linked can create opportunities for anti-racists and environmental activists to form broad coalitions and work together as allies. It can be a source of hope to realize that action taken on either of these issues can move things forward on the other as well. It becomes clearer and clearer that we are all in this together, and that ending racism and preserving and restoring the environment are in our common interest. There are no limits to the possibilities for bringing people together to address these crucial issues.

Russ Vernon--Jones

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Valencia College – Business Operations and Finance

Sustainability Definition, Vision and Objectives

Definition: Promote and execute operational practices in the service of environmental, economic, and social responsibility, while effectively communicating and educating about the significance of these practices for people and the planet.

Vision: Serve as a role model in our community by accomplishing sustainability goals.

Sustainability Objectives/Goals:

1. Obtain Carbon Neutrality
2. Reduce the waste the college generates
3. Improve on Water Quality & Conservation

Objective 1 – Obtain carbon neutrality

A. Lower Energy Usage

- Deliver capital projects that meet Green Globes two or better.
- Identify and adopt behavioral changes that conserve energy
- Implement new technologies and operational processes
- Monitor usage to ensure continuous process improvements.

B. Pursue Renewable Energy Options and Carbon Offsets

- Pursue an energy transition plan, implementing renewable energy options that are most feasible and financially responsible for the longevity and resiliency of the College.
- Plant trees and explore additional meaningful carbon offsets.

C. Reduce Transportation Emissions

- Identify and secure processes and capital projects that can lower student, employee and fleet vehicle fuel usage and time in vehicles.
- Collaborate with community partners to improve access to mass transit.

Objective 2 – Reduce the waste the college generates

- Establish day-to-day practices and guidelines that reduce and eliminate landfill waste streams and/or improve recycling rates, such as by reducing contamination.
- Identify opportunities that would change current landfill waste items to recyclable or reusable items.

Objective 3 – Improve on Water Quality and Conservation.

- Stormwater Management- Design and construct parking and landscaping to implement stormwater runoff best management practices.
- Identify operational processes and capital projects to improve water use efficiency and/or reduce usage. Green building water conservation standards incorporated into the construction and renovation of buildings.

Valencia College Presidential Search

Feedback received from community via email

From: Unknown

Position: Unknown

Date: December 17, 2020

Comments: Good afternoon District Board of Trustees, I am following your Presidential search closely as your search has led you to my President, Dr. Anton Reece, as a finalist. While reviewing the finalists feedback, I was shocked and sickened by an email you received from an apparent colleague or perhaps a disgruntled former employee of WKCTC. This email will seem as though there are two presidents at WKCTC because I don't know that President the other email was referencing. You see, my President has a passion for education and the success of students. He takes the time to have listening tours with our students. He goes into the classroom and asks them what is working for them and how we can improve. My President invites the student groups into his home during the holidays. My President attends the college basketball games in support of the team. My President engages in conversation with the students he passes in the halls. My President records video to our students to encourage them to stay the course and finish strong. Those are just some examples of how he interacts with the students to encourage enrollment and retention. Enrollment and retention should be everyone's job at the college and for the writer to say that Dr. Reece is responsible for the decline is unsubstantiated. Dr. Reece has a passion for the underrepresented minority and has developed several initiatives to move WKCTC in the direction we need to serve this population. He understands first-hand the opposition to embrace the changes for diversity, equity, and inclusion. The fact that the writer of the email stated that these attempts quickly becomes tiresome and rebarbative and counter productive indicates there is still much work to be done. Dr. Reece collaborates with his team and listens to their departmental needs and concerns. He encourages their growth in leading their departments. He knows they have tough decisions to make during these unprecedented times, and he supports them. Yes, as the writer indicated, we have lost some faculty and staff for various reasons, but for the writer to say that Dr. Reece is responsible is unfounded. The number one reason employee morale is low is that we have not received raises in several years. The annual raise decision doesn't come from Dr. Reece but is decided at the system level based on the budget. Dr. Reece recognizes the budget restraints and has responded with additional paid days off for both faculty and staff. Dr. Reece has also given flexibility for employees to work remotely during the pandemic and continues to do so to ensure employees and students safety to the best of his ability. In conclusion, the writer of the derogatory email doesn't know the President that I know. My President works tireless hours and sleepless nights. My President seeks input and feedback from individuals and his leadership team to make informative decisions to lead our college. My President is without question a person of integrity and wants only the best for our students, faculty, and staff. How could I not support the same for him?