

# SIERRA



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## SIERRA MAGAZINE'S 2010 "COOLEST SCHOOLS" QUESTIONNAIRE



2007



2008



2009

- EFFICIENCY
- ENERGY SUPPLY
- FOOD
- ACADEMICS
- PURCHASING
- TRANSPORTATION
- WASTE MANAGEMENT
- ADMINISTRATION
- FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS
- OTHER INITIATIVES

# SIERRA

*Sierra*, the award-winning magazine of the Sierra Club, is compiling information for our fourth annual “Coolest Schools” issue, which will rate American colleges and universities according to their environmental practices, green initiatives, and caliber of sustainability-oriented education.

Schools that score highly in these realms may be contacted for further discussion and will receive recognition in the magazine’s September/October issue. Please fill out this interactive PDF as thoroughly as possible, save it with your responses as “2010\_coolschools\_ your school’s name” and email it to [cool.schools@sierraclub.org](mailto:cool.schools@sierraclub.org) no later than **March 20, 2010**.

Note that this questionnaire will become a public document and that we will not be altering your responses before publishing them online. Please answer as thoroughly as possible. Questions left blank will receive no credit, and if a question requests a percentage, you must provide a percentage. The scoring key will be available online once the issue is published.

As the publication of the nation’s oldest and largest environmental nonprofit, *Sierra* has a readership of more than 1 million engaged and educated citizens.

Many thanks for your participation.

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**School name:**

**Contact name and title:**

**Contact phone:**

**Contact email:**

**School’s city and state:**

**Number of students:**

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**HONOR PLEDGE:** By completing and submitting this questionnaire, you are certifying that all statements in this document are true to the best of your knowledge.

**INITIAL:** \_\_\_\_\_

**DATE:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Category 1: Energy Supply

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1. Please break down the energy types that your campus uses for electricity by percentage. If the school purchases its electricity from a utility company, this information should be available from that company.

|                   |             |                   |
|-------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| ____% Coal        | ____% Wind  | ____% Biomass     |
| ____% Natural Gas | ____% Solar | ____% Geothermal  |
| ____% Nuclear     | ____% Hydro | ____% Other _____ |

2. What type(s) of energy does your campus use for heating buildings (e.g., natural gas, biomass, coal)?

|                   |                  |
|-------------------|------------------|
| ____% Coal        | ____% Biomass    |
| ____% Natural Gas | ____% Geothermal |
| ____% Electricity | ____% Fuel Oil   |

If cogeneration, please explain.

## Category 2: Efficiency

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1. What percentage of campus buildings completed within the past three years have a LEED certification of at least silver?

\_\_\_\_\_%

Note whether the certification is higher than silver.

2. What percentage of water used for campus landscaping is from recovered, reclaimed, or untreated sources?

\_\_\_\_\_%

3. What percentage of campus lighting fixtures are energy-efficient (e.g., compact fluorescent, LED, or equipped with motion sensors, automatic daylight shutoff, or other energy-saving features)?

\_\_\_\_\_%

4. What percentage of campus appliances are Energy Star-rated?

\_\_\_\_\_%

5. Does the institution have underway a program of energy-efficiency retrofitting projects, such as improving building insulation or sealing heating and cooling ducts?

## Category 3: Food

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1. What percentage (in dollars) of food served at cafeterias is grown or raised within 100 miles of the campus?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

2. What percentage (in dollars) of food served at campus cafeterias is USDA-certified organic?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

3. Do campus cafeterias source seafood that is deemed sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council, the Monterey Bay Aquarium's Seafood Watch Program, or a similar program?

4. What percentage of entrées served in campus dining locations include meat? If the meat is produced sustainably (for example, free-range or grass-fed), explain.

\_\_\_\_\_ %

5. Are nutritionally complete vegetarian and/or vegan options available at every meal?

6. Is bottled water sold or distributed on campus?

7. Does your school maintain a campus farm or garden? Does it use organic methods? Please describe the garden and methods used.

## Category 4: Academics

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1. Does your school offer any environmental- and/or sustainability-related majors, such as environmental studies, ecology, or sustainable agriculture? If so, please list them all.

2. Does your school offer classes about clean technologies, including topics such as energy efficiency and solar-wind energy engineering? If so, please list them all.

3. Does your school provide students with a list of environmental and/or sustainability classes to make such courses easy to identify? Please provide a link, if available.

4. Please provide names of standout professors who work on environmental and/or sustainability issues and list their accomplishments, including awards, honors, and publications.

5. Do you have environment- and/or sustainability-related centers, programs, or research institutions associated with your school? If so, please provide their names and a description.

6. Is an environment-themed class a core curriculum requirement? If yes, please provide the name(s) of the course(s).

7. What percentage of academic departments offer environment- or sustainability-related classes?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

## Category 5: Purchasing

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1. Does your school have a sustainable-purchasing policy? If yes, briefly explain.

2. What percentage of paper used on campus is made from at least 30% postconsumer recycled content?

\_\_\_\_\_%

Does your school purchase paper that is Forest Stewardship Council-certified?

3. Does your school have a policy to purchase Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool (EPEAT)-certified (or similar) electronics? If yes, please describe.

4. Do you have packaging agreements with suppliers that minimize waste? If yes, please describe.

5. Does your school specify in its purchasing contracts that products with energy-saving features be installed or delivered with these features enabled?

## Category 6: Transportation

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1. Does your school provide a free shuttle service around campus and town? If yes, briefly explain.

2. What has your school done to promote bicycling as a transportation method?

3. Does your school encourage its students and employees to use public transit, carpool, or use some other form of alternative transportation? If yes, what are the incentives?

4. Approximately what percentage of students drive to school in a car?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

5. Approximately what percentage of faculty and staff drive to work in a car?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

## Category 7: Waste Management

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1. What is your campus's current waste-diversion rate (i.e., percentage of campus waste being diverted from landfills)?

\_\_\_\_\_ %

2. Does your campus provide recycling receptacles wherever there are trash cans?

3. Are recycling bins readily available at large events such as football games?

4. Does your school compost? If yes, are compost receptacles available at all or most on-campus dining locations?

5. Is your school committed to waste-reduction goals, such as zero waste? Please explain.

6. Does your campus administer a donation program for clothing and other used goods when students are moving out of student housing? If so, are bins located in every dormitory?

## Category 8: Administration

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1. Is environmental sustainability part of your institution's mission statement, guiding principles, or similar document? If so, please provide the text or link.

2. Does your school employ at least one person dedicated to overseeing campus environmental initiatives, such as a sustainability coordinator, or have a sustainability task force or committee? Is the coordinator position a part-time or full-time position?

3. Has your school made an official commitment to reducing its impact on climate change by setting goals of emission reductions by a certain date? If yes, does your school have a plan for achieving these reductions? If so, briefly explain the plan.

4. Has your school conducted a complete greenhouse-gas-emissions audit of its campus?

5. Has your school achieved a reduction in total annual carbon emissions? If yes, please explain and provide the benchmark year and percentage.



## Category 10: Other Initiatives

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1. Have any of your school's students effected positive environmental change on a campus, state, or national level? If so, please describe. (To nominate a specific student for greater attention in our coverage, please email [cool.schools@sierraclub.org](mailto:cool.schools@sierraclub.org) with his or her name, accomplishments, and contact information.)

2. Have students participated in environmental challenges or events such as the Solar Decathlon, environmental design contests, or environmental debates? If so, which events and how did they do?

3. Has your school set aside part of its campus as natural habitat, stipulated limited campus development, or enacted programs preserving its land? If so, please explain.

4. Does your school adhere to an indoor air-quality policy (e.g., the mandated use of nontoxic cleaning supplies)? If yes, describe the policy.

5. Does your school offer outdoor- or nature-based programs, classes, or extracurricular activities to students and/or faculty? If yes, please list and describe.

## Category 10: Other Initiatives, continued

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6. What specific actions has your school taken to improve its environmental sustainability since spring 2009? Please list all improvements.

7. Please use this space to address any other unique or interesting sustainability initiatives that have not been previously mentioned: