



Planetary Health Report Card (Healthcare Management): *Rush University*



2024-2025 Contributing Team:

- Students: Darius Baginskis, Alex Negrón Price*, and Sydney Schultz
- Faculty Mentors: Dr. Andrew Garman, PsyD, Ian Hughes

*Primary Contact: Alex Negrón Price, alexander_j_negronprice@rush.edu

Land acknowledgment: We recognize the indigenous lands in which Rush University operates: the traditional homelands of the Anishinaabe, or the Council of the Three Fires: the Ojibwe, Odawa, and Potawatomi Nations.

Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	C
Curriculum	D
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Health Systems Management Program leverages a teacher-practitioner model and introduces students to planetary health principles at a level of understanding equal to that of trained health care managers and executives. For example, students are introduced to Employee Resource Groups, the financial effects of climate change on operating costs, the environmental impacts on AI implementation in informatics, and current work being done to reduce Scope 1, 2, and 3 emissions. <p>These topics are only briefly touched upon in the classroom and could use more in depth instruction. Topics relating to the importance of a plant-based diet, the impacts of extreme weather events on healthcare systems, the outsized impact of climate change on marginalized communities and the unequal regional impacts on climate change globally are lacking in the classroom.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommendation #1: Given the dynamic changes in healthcare, students recommend that the program consider prioritizing the elective, “Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability,” and introduce the next generation of leaders to this important work. Recommendation #2: Students recommend that the program continue leveraging the teacher-practitioner model and invite leaders in clinical spaces to introduce strategies to have conversations with them about the effects of climate change. 	
Interdisciplinary Research	B-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rush Medical College has faculty actively engaged in planetary health and healthcare sustainability research, particularly in reducing the environmental impact of the operating room. However, there is no dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. The institution does have a process for incorporating input from communities disproportionately affected by climate change and environmental injustice, primarily through CAPriCORN, the Institute for Translational Medicine, and the ALIVE Faith Network. While these programs allow for community engagement in broader health research, there is no direct mechanism for community members to influence the planetary health research agenda. Recommendations: Establishing a dedicated department or institute for planetary health research would strengthen Rush’s commitment to sustainability and interdisciplinary collaboration. Additionally, integrating community input into the planetary health research agenda—either through existing advisory bodies or a new dedicated initiative—would ensure that research efforts align with the needs of those most impacted by climate change and environmental injustice. 	
Community Outreach and Advocacy	B-
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rush Medical College has two meaningful community partnerships with urban gardens. Students, faculty, and staff receive intermittent news about Rush’s sustainability efforts. This year Rush significantly increased its community facing events regarding planetary health by hosting the Academy of Management conference which invited participants to learn about sustainability initiatives and held a Rush Supplier Summit which invited 100 local businesses/vendors to learn about opportunities available to partner with Rush. Recommendations: Increased engagement or onboarding requirements for post-graduate professionals to ensure the sustainability dialogue is continued into the professional workspace. Though Rush Hospital and ambulatory clinics provide patients with information regarding environmental health exposures, especially 	

when relating to their discharged conditions, there is a need for resources to educate patients in protecting their health in the face of climate crises overall; this could be achieved with a “guide” available on the Environmental Sustainability webpage.

Support for Student-Led Initiatives

C

- Rush Medical College generally supports students in their individual efforts to explore projects related to planetary health through opportunities such as the Dean’s Fellowship. The Office of Student Life and Engagement provides support for student organizations that would pursue planetary health and sustainability endeavors, but there is not a current student-led organization dedicated to planetary health.
- **Recommendations:** Student-led initiatives in planetary health could be further supported by creating an additional page on the Office of Environmental Sustainability webpage that is dedicated to sustainability research at Rush, as well as contact information for potential mentors. We also suggest that the internal OES website be more accessible by including additional links to it on the Rush internal website. Finally, we suggest the creation of a student organization dedicated to planetary health.

Campus Sustainability

C

- The Office of Environmental Sustainability actively works towards reducing the hospital and medical schools environmental footprint through many initiatives. In the past year, they have improved Rush’s supply procurement significantly, increased the amount of foods that are sourced sustainability, and increased back-of-house composting. While a pledged goal of carbon neutrality by 2050 has been set, this is later than the 2040 goal achieved by other institutions. The institution has also created new Additionally, there have been no formal efforts for the institution to divest from fossil fuel investments.
- **Recommendations:** Additional incremental progress toward our transition to renewable energy and carbon neutrality will benefit ours and the communities future. One smaller initiative that could be implemented would be a composting program that allows staff and students to bring their organic waste from home. Lastly, we urge Rush University Medical Center to divest from fossil fuel investments.

Statement of Purpose

Planetary health is human health.

The Planetary Health Alliance describes planetary health as “a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth’s natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.” This definition is intentionally broad, intended to encompass the multitude of ways that the environment can affect health, including water scarcity, changing food systems, urbanisation, biodiversity shifts, natural disasters, climate change, changing land use and land cover, global pollution, and changing biogeochemical flows. The health of humanity is dependent on our environment, and our environment is changing rapidly and in disastrous ways. Although the World Health Organization has called climate change “the greatest threat to global health in the 21st century,” many medical school’s institutional priorities do not reflect the urgency of this danger to human health.

As future health professionals, we must be prepared to address the impacts of human-caused environmental changes on our patients’ health. This preparation is in the hands of the institutions providing our medical training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating medical students about the health impacts of climate change and other anthropogenic environmental changes, generating research to better understand health impacts and solutions, supporting related student initiatives, embracing sustainable practices as much as possible, and engaging with surrounding communities that are most affected by environmental threats. Because climate change and environmental threats disproportionately affect vulnerable populations (for example, communities of colour, older adults sensitive to health threats, and individuals in low-resource settings), these issues are inherently ones of equity and justice.

With the purpose of increasing planetary health awareness and accountability among health professional schools, we have created a Planetary Health Report Card that students internationally can use to grade and compare their institutions on an annual basis. This student-driven initiative aims to compare health professional schools nationally and internationally on the basis of discrete metrics in five main category areas: 1) planetary health curriculum, 2) interdisciplinary research in health and environment, 3) university support for student planetary health initiatives, and 4) community outreach centred on environmental health impacts 5) medical school campus sustainability.

Healthcare management:

Healthcare management professionals work hard to ensure their organizations keep people healthy. But people need more than just good healthcare. They also need healthy environments. Healthcare managers are critically important collaborators in safeguarding planetary health. Through the choices they make, their organizations can lead by example in transitioning to more sustainable practices and advocating for environmental health in the communities they serve.

Definitions & Other Considerations

Definitions:

- **Planetary Health:** is described by the Planetary Health Alliance as “the health of human civilisation and the state of the natural systems on which it depends.” For example, topics such as climate change, declining biodiversity, shortages of arable land and freshwater, and pollution would all fall under the realm of planetary health. Both planetary health and traditional ‘environmental health’ examine the relationship between human health and the external environment, including extreme temperatures, chemicals, vector-borne diseases, etc. Planetary health explicitly concerns itself with the potential health harms associated with human-caused perturbations of natural systems. Therefore, the human health focus of planetary health makes the field well-adapted for the context of medical school education. Throughout this report card, we use the term planetary health to refer to this broad swath of topics, but resources do not need to explicitly include the term “planetary health” to satisfy the metric.
- **Sustainable Healthcare:** As defined by the Academy of Royal Colleges, sustainable healthcare involves ensuring the ability to provide good quality care for future generations by balancing the economic, environmental, and social constraints and demands within health care settings. A sustainable healthcare system maintains population health, reduces disease burden and minimises use of healthcare services.
- **Education for Sustainable Healthcare (ESH):** is defined as the process of equipping current and future health professionals with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and capacity to provide environmentally sustainable services through health professional education, thus working to decrease the enormous environmental impact of the healthcare industry. Planetary Health Education is an integral part of this education rather than an end in itself. This is because knowledge on Planetary Health is required to be able to fully understand the necessity of sustainable healthcare as well as being part of the broader knowledge needed to fully protect and promote health. In summary, ESH is covered by the three Priority Learning Outcomes of the Centre of Sustainable Healthcare below, and Planetary Health Education is embraced in the first learning objective and is a fundamental requirement to achieve learning outcomes 2 and 3:
 1. Describe how the environment and human health interact at different levels.
 2. Demonstrate the knowledge and skills needed to improve the environmental sustainability of health systems.
 3. Discuss how the duty of a doctor to protect and promote health is shaped by the dependence of human health on the local and global environment.
- **Healthcare Management School/Department vs. Institution:** When “Medical school” is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/Department of healthcare management and does not include offerings from other parts of the university (e.g. undergraduate departments (USA), other related departments (e.g. Public Health, Population Health departments). In contrast, when “institution” is specified in

the report card, we are referring to the university more broadly, including all of its campuses. Any resource reasonably accessible by healthcare management students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is specifically targeted for medical students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Metric #19 in Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicit patients' exposures and environmental risk factors. Historically, this has included consideration of exposures like pesticides, asbestos, and lead, though in the modern era shaped by climate change, it can be expanded to include things like wildfire smoke exposure, air pollution and mould after flooding. Key components include place of residence over the life course, occupational history, food and water sources (e.g. meat from industrial feeding operations, regular fishing in contaminated water, access to clean drinking water), and exposure to air pollution. Please be as specific as possible when providing evidence for this metric.
- **Elective:** The word "elective" refers to an optional course or lecture series that a medical student can opt to take part in but is not a requirement in the core curriculum. Generally, these elective courses take place in the preclinical curriculum but vary by school.
- **Core Curriculum:** This refers to taught material that is delivered to the entire cohort of students in one year.
- **Clerkship / Outreach:** This is a term used in the USA to refer to placements that medical students go on e.g. Pediatrics, General medicine, Psychiatry. In the UK these are referred to as rotations, outreach or placements. This is a relatively short (approximately 4-8 weeks) period of study and patient-centred clinical experience that takes place as part of the undergraduate programme.
- **Clinical rotation:** This is a term used to refer to placements that students go on (e.g., ophthalmology, surgery, cardiology).
- **Physiotherapy vs Physical Therapy:** For the purposes of this report card these terms are considered interchangeable. However, physiotherapy will be used primarily.
- **Community organisations:** For most institutions, there are existing groups that are not directly affiliated with the university and exist as a product of what the community the institution exists in cares about or needs. These specific community organisations relevant to this report include those that are focused around some aspect of climate and health preservation. These community organisations can include but are not limited to local mutual aid initiatives, underserved-resource distribution groups, clean-up and nature conservation groups, community gardeners, and other environmental-related organisations. If your institution does not have access to local volunteerships with community groups, please report any community organisations your institution or school has collaborated with.
- **Climate justice:** The idea that certain population groups and geographical locations which are disproportionately more impacted by climate change are already economically and socially disadvantaged. This double vulnerability sits alongside pre-existing social justice concerns and should therefore shift policy and practice to mitigate the inequitable effects of the climate crisis.

- **Extractivism:** The removal of natural resources typically in large quantities. Within anthropology this term is often used in the context of colonialism to refer to the historic seizing of natural resources, a practice which has developed business models tied to ecological degradation and loss of biodiversity.
- **Global South:** Nations that often have less economic and industrial development and are typically in the southern hemisphere. These nations have been found to be disproportionately impacted by the climate crisis.
- **Low socioeconomic status (SES):** An individual or geographical area that across a variety of socioeconomic factors (e.g., income, education, race/ethnicity) is considered vulnerable. This vulnerability has been correlated to more adverse health outcomes often as a consequence of encountering more barriers in accessing and receiving healthcare.
- **Low and Middle-Income Countries (LMIC):** Countries that have lower degrees of economic affluence.
- **Anthropogenic:** Created through human activity
- **Marginalized communities:** Groups excluded from mainstream economic, educational, social, and/or cultural experiences due to race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, physical ability, language, and/or immigration status (Sevelius et al., 2020).

Other considerations:

- If there are more than one “tracks” at your institution with two different curricula (for example, Harvard Medical School has a Pathways and HST curriculum track), you can choose to fill out a report card for each track, or fill out just one report card and average the scores received by each track in cases where the scores are different (see the 2021 Harvard or Oxford report cards as examples). Where possible please indicate the proportion of students that are on each track.

Completed in 2022 a [Literature Review by Metric](#) is available for the 2022 medicine report card metrics. We are in the process of updating this review and making it more applicable to all the disciplines. However, the review serves as a rough collection of references for further learning and a resource for those advocating for increased planetary health engagement at their institutions.

Planetary Health Curriculum

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the health professional school curriculum. Today's medical students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that medical students are trained to understand the health effects of these changes, as well as planetary health issues and principles more broadly. Topics like the changing geography of vector-borne diseases, the health consequences of air pollution, environmental health inequities, and disaster response principles must be part of every medical school's core curriculum.*

Healthcare administration is a highly interdisciplinary industry with core areas such as operations, strategy, finances, supply chain, and infrastructure. Its execution within a health system has immediate and long-term effects on quality of care and patient outcomes. As the next generation of healthcare leaders, healthcare administration students will ultimately be significant sources of influence for sustainability and climate change initiatives within their health systems. Therefore, a curriculum that is well-versed in planetary health and sustainability is essential for preparing students for the unique challenges of managing hospitals facing the impact of climate change and creating health systems with minimal planetary harm.

Curriculum: Planetary Health

1.1 Does your Master’s curriculum address the impact of planetary health and climate change on health system operations, finances, service lines, emergency preparedness*, or any other element of a health system?

*Public health emergency preparedness (PHEP) is the capability of the public health and health care systems, communities, and individuals to prevent, protect against, quickly respond to, and recover from health emergencies, particularly those whose scale, timing, or unpredictability threatens to overwhelm routine capabilities.

Reference: Nelson C, Lurie N, Wasserman J, Zakowski S. Conceptualizing and defining public health emergency preparedness. *Am J Public Health.* 2007 Apr;97 Suppl 1(Suppl 1):S9-11. doi: 10.2105/AJPH.2007.114496. Epub 2007 Apr 5. PMID: 17413078; PMCID: PMC1854988.

This topic was **fully addressed** by the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was **partially addressed** by the **core** curriculum. (1 points)

This topic was **not covered**. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: The Rush HSM curriculum has specific units that briefly discuss the above criteria in different courses such as finance, healthcare organizations, and is specifically highlighted in the Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability elective.

1.2 Did your Master’s curriculum offer elective courses (student-selected modules) to engage students in Education for Sustainable Healthcare or Planetary Health in the past year?

Several elective courses were offered to master's students on ESH or planetary health. (2 points)	
Some elective courses were offered to master's students on ESH or planetary health. (1 points)	
No elective courses were offered to students (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<i>Score explanation: Yes, one climate change elective course, Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability, is offered in our curriculum.</i>	

1.3 Does your Master’s curriculum address the impacts of extreme weather events or changing weather patterns on healthcare systems, such as but not limited to severe thunderstorms, storm surges, drought, or excessive heat?	
The Master’s curriculum addresses at least two of the above in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
The Master’s curriculum addresses at least one or a relative alternative of the above in the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation: There is no curriculum aspects to address this.</i>	

1.4 Does your Master’s curriculum address the relationships between community health, food and water security, ecosystem health*, and climate change?	
*: the state or condition of an ecosystem in which its dynamic attributes are expressed within the normal ranges of activity relative to its ecological state of development” (van Andel and Aronson, 2006)	
This topic was explored in depth by the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic was briefly covered in the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<i>Score explanation: It is addressed in the Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability elective. The Health Equity and New Models of Care course discusses the connection to community health.</i>	

1.5 Does your Master’s curriculum address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalized populations such as those with low socio-economic status, women (including

reproductive health), communities of color, indigenous communities, children, homeless populations, and older adults?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: There is no dedicated curriculum to address the outsized impact of climate change on marginalized populations, but is discussed briefly as a unit in the health equity elective.

1.6 Does your Master's curriculum address the unequal regional health impacts of climate change globally?

Yes, the **core** curriculum covers the unequal regional health impacts of climate change. (1 point)

No, this topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability is focused majority on local, near Chicago communities. It does cover global impact, but not comprehensively.

1.7 Does your Master's curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-forward (plant-based) diet, especially one that is locally sourced?

Yes, the **core** curriculum covers the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet AND includes the benefits of locally sourced food. (2 points)

Yes, the **core** curriculum covers the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet but does NOT include the benefits of locally sourced food. . (1 point)

No, this topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: No HSM specific curriculum addressing plant-forward meals and locally sourced meals.

1.8 Does your Master's curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems via

Scopes 1 (“Direct emissions from sources owned or controlled by the organization”), 2 (Indirect emissions purchased energy), or 3 (All other indirect emissions including those within the supply chain) per the Greenhouse Gas Protocol?

Two or more emission scopes were covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

Only one emission scope was covered in the **core** curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: Scope 1, direct emissions, is covered in multiple courses including Supply Chain and Applications of Human-Centered Design to Planetary Health and Sustainability. Scopes 2-3 are less directly addressed.

1.9 Does your Master’s curriculum introduce strategies to have conversations with physicians or other healthcare providers about the health effects of climate change?

Yes, the **core** curriculum covers strategies to have conversations regarding the health effects of climate change. (1 point)

No, this topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: There is no curriculum covering this.

1.10 Does your Master’s curriculum address important human-caused environmental threats that are relevant to the university’s surrounding community?

Yes, the **core** curriculum covers important human-caused environmental threats relevant to the institution’s surrounding community. (1 point)

No, this topic was **not** covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Score explanation: There is no curriculum covering this.

1.11 Does your Master’s curriculum emphasize the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems as essential components of planetary health systems?

Yes, the **core** curriculum emphasizes the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems. (1 point)

No, this topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation: There is no curriculum covering this.</i>	

1.12 Does your Master's curriculum cover these components of sustainable management practice in the core curriculum? (1 point each)	Score
HR: Leveraging environmental sustainability to attract and retain talent (e.g. through employer branding and employee resource groups). (1 point)	1
Facilities: Incorporating environmental sustainability considerations into facilities master planning? (1 point) <i>Examples of facilities master planning: Equipment, access, information technology, systems and processes, sustainability initiatives, and staff</i>	0
Governance: Incorporating environmental sustainability and climate resilience considerations into enterprise risk management? (1 point)	0
Finance: Financing mechanisms for supporting environmental sustainability practices (e.g. green bonds, green revolving funds). (1 point)	0
Leadership & Policy: Organizational advocacy in regional, national, and global healthcare policies (e.g. ATACH/WHO). (1 point)	1
Law: Legal and regulatory frameworks involving measuring and reporting of environmental footprints (e.g. SBTi, TCFD)? (1 point)	0
IT: The environmental footprint associated with information systems / AI? (1 point)	1
Quality: Expectations of emerging accreditation standards associated with measuring, reporting, and reducing emissions. (1 point)	0
Community Health: Integrating climate considerations into community reliance planning. (1 point)	1
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> Total points awarded = 4; HR – 1 focus on employee resource group (Green Employee Resource Group), Facilities – 0, Governance – 0, Finance – 0, Leadership and Policy – 1 (Healthcare Organizations has comprehensive units on healthcare reform and policy, advocacy both nationally and internationally), Law – 0, IT – 1 (Healthcare Informatics course covers the environmental impact of AI implementation), Quality – 0, Community Health – 1 (Health Equity and New Models of Care addresses climate considerations and their impact on preventative care and chronic conditions).</p>	

Curriculum: Administrative Support for Planetary Health

1.13 Is your Master's curriculum currently in the process of implementing or improving Education or Sustainable Healthcare (ESH)/planetary health education?	
Yes, the curriculum team are in the process of actively including ESH / Planetary Health (2 points)	
No, but this is something that is being considered. (1 point)	
There are no current plans or considerations of including ESH / Planetary Health. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation: Our Master's curriculum has student champions Sydney Schultz and Darius Baginskis, promoting and implementing sustainable healthcare/planetary health education. We won the CAHME/Cannon Design Award as leader of a consortium of universities for our work on implementing the PHRC in MHA programs. Our program also has faculty advisors Dr. Andrew Garman and Ian Hughes.</i>	

1.14 How well are the aforementioned planetary health/Education or Sustainable Healthcare topics integrated longitudinally into the core curriculum?	
Planetary Health / ESH are very well integrated longitudinally into the curriculum (2 points)	
Planetary Health / ESH are well integrated but there is room for improvement. (1 point)	
Planetary Health / ESH are poorly integrated into the longitudinal curriculum. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation: It is poorly integrated longitudinally into the core curriculum and is still in the beginning stages.</i>	

1.15 Does your Master's curriculum assign a faculty member to oversee the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the program?	
Yes, there is an assigned faculty to develop ESH / Planetary Health education. (1 point)	
There is no assigned member of staff. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	1
<i>Score explanation: Dr. Andrew Garman has volunteered and been assigned in an unofficial capacity to oversee the incorporation of planetary health and sustainable healthcare as a theme throughout the program.</i>	

Section Total (11 out of 32)

34%

Interdisciplinary Research

Section Overview: This section evaluates the quality and quantity of interdisciplinary planetary health research at the broader institution. Interactions between health and the environment are complex and multifactorial. While climate change has been extensively studied from an environmental science perspective, planetary health is an emerging field. As leading health institutions with talented researchers and research resources, institutions should fund research studying the health effects of climate change and anthropogenic environmental toxins. This obligation is particularly strong because the public and policymakers are more attentive to climate change when its implications for human health are emphasised.

2.1. Are there researchers engaged in planetary health research and healthcare sustainability research at your <u>institution</u>?	
Yes, there are faculty members at the institution who have a primary research focus in planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare. (3 points)	
Yes, there are individual faculty members at the institution who are conducting research related to planetary health or healthcare sustainability, OR are part of a national/international sustainability working group, but it is not their primary research focus. (2 points)	
There are sustainability researchers at the institution , but not specifically associated with healthcare/vetcare. (1 point)	
No, there are no planetary health and/or sustainability researchers at the institution at this time. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Dr. Ami Shah and Dr. Brian Gulack have appointments within Rush Medical College and have primary research focuses in healthcare sustainability. Their research is primarily focused on improving the environmental impact of the operating room.</i></p> <p><i>Here are recent publications from these authors:</i></p> <p><i><u>A Life Cycle Assessment of Reusable and Disposable Surgical Caps</u></i></p> <p><i><u>Surgeon Perspectives on Preference Cards and Environmental Stewardship</u></i></p>	

2.2. Is there a dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at your <u>institution</u>?	
There is at least one dedicated department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research. (3 points)	
There is not currently a department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research, but there are plans to open one in the next 3 years. (2 points)	
There is an Occupational and Environmental Health department , but no interdisciplinary department or institute for planetary health research. (1 points)	

There is no dedicated department or institute. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>There is currently no department or institute for interdisciplinary planetary health research at Rush.</i>	

2.3. Is there a process by which communities disproportionately impacted by climate change and environmental injustice give input or make decisions about the research agenda at your institution?	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice have decision-making power in the climate + environmental research agenda. (3 points)	
Yes, there is a process in which community members impacted by climate and environmental injustice advise the climate + environmental research agenda. (2 points)	
No , but there are current efforts to establish a process for community members to advise or make decisions on the research agenda. (1 points)	
There is no process, and no efforts to create such a process. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Rush Medical College is a participant organization in the Chicago Area Patient-Centered Outcomes Research Network (CAPriCORN) Consortium, a partnership of 11 local research institutes joined together to investigate ways of improving health care focused on the people living in Chicago. CAPriCORN research initiatives are driven by input from an established Patient Community Advisory Committee (PCAC) and the Health & Medicine Research Policy Group (HMPRG) composed of patients, community members, caregivers, advocates, and healthcare providers. The PCAC and HMPRG allow for input from a wide variety of community voices about the research priorities of CAPriCORN.</i></p> <p><i>Rush University, with the University of Chicago, is a co-leader of the Institute for Translational Medicine (ITM). The ITM is a NIH Clinical and Translational Science Award (CTSA) program dedicated to improving health in Chicago and around the world. Rush Medical College faculty member James Mulshine, MD is the ITM Community and Collaboration Core Leader, overseeing city-wide research collaborations between community members, organizations, industry, and researchers.</i></p> <p><i>Through the ALIVE Faith Network program, a collaboration between Rush and local pastors, there has been work to improve the health of urban, segregated communities in Chicago and a new expansion into the Northwest Corridor of the Chicago suburbs. The Community Health Ministry is an advisory council of churches that help Rush University researchers through the ALIVE Faith Network in identifying community health needs and creating sustainable health programming. Additionally, the ALIVE Faith Network facilitates community-based participatory research partnerships with local churches to more accurately identify health inequities and improve well being of African American communities.</i></p>	

Currently, there is no process where community members can make decisions regarding the planetary health research agenda, namely because we do not have a specific department dedicated to this research.

2.4. Does your institution have a planetary health website that centralises ongoing and past research related to health and the environment?

There is an **easy-to-use, adequately comprehensive** website that **centralises** various campus resources related to health and the environment including all of the following: upcoming events, leaders in planetary health at your institution, and relevant funding opportunities. (3 points)

There is a website that **attempts to centralise** various campus resources related to health and the environment, but it is hard-to-use, not updated, or not adequately comprehensive. (2 points)

The **institution** has an **Office of Sustainability website** that includes **some** resources related to health and the environment. (1 point)

There is **no** website. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

There is not a centralized, publicly available website describing current or past research in environmental sustainability at Rush. Rush does have an [Office of Environmental Sustainability webpage](#) that describes current sustainability efforts and provides general resources related to health and the environment, however it is not comprehensive and does not include research opportunities.

2.5. Has your institution recently hosted a conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health?

Yes, the **institution** has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to planetary health in the past year. (4 points)

Yes, the **institution** has hosted at least one conference or symposium on topics related to sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past year. (3 points)

Yes, the **institution** has hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health /sustainable healthcare/vetcare in the past three years. (2 points)

The **institution** has not hosted any conferences directly, but they have provided financial support for a local planetary health event. (1 point)

No, the **institution** has not hosted a conference on topics related to planetary health in the past three years. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

4

Rush University hosted a student-led conference for Earth Day in 2024, showcasing planetary health research and educating students and staff on climate change. This is a yearly event that started in 2022.

2.6. Is your institution a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation?

Yes, the institution is a member of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organisation. (1 points)

No, the institution is **not** a member of such an organisation. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Rush is a member of Practice Greenhealth and the Consortium of Universities for Global Health (CUGH), both of which are involved in healthcare sustainability research and advocacy nationally and internationally.

Section Total (11 out of 17)

65%

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Community Outreach and Advocacy

Section Overview: This section evaluates medical school engagement in community outreach and advocacy efforts associated with planetary health. Researching and teaching planetary health is necessary but not sufficient. It is critical that institutions also directly engage with communities most affected by environmental health harms. Although climate change is a problem largely created by those with power and resources, its impacts fall disproportionately on under-resourced populations and communities of colour. Institutions should partner with local communities affected by climate change and pollution to share information about environmental health threats, advocate together for change, and provide opportunities for students to be a part of this work.

3.1. Does your <u>institution</u> partner with community organisations to promote planetary and health?	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with multiple community organisations to promote planetary and environmental health. (3 points)	
Yes, the institution meaningfully partners with one community organisation to promote planetary and environmental health. (2 points)	
The institution does not partner with community organisations, but has participating in community focused events relating to planetary health. (1 point)	
No, there is no such meaningful community partnership. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Rush Medical College partners with two community gardens through the Rush Community Services Initiative Program, Healthy Hood Chicago and BEET Chicago. Rush students and faculty participate in city gardening at two Healthy Hood garden locations and the BEET Chicago North Lawndale garden. Student organizations hosted clothing drives to donate gently used clothes and hygiene products to community organizations, such as Brave Alliance and Philips High School. In addition, our institution has helped collect data for the Cool Chi program, which measures heat across communities in Chicago in summer, and sent organic waste to Green Era Chicago to support their biodigester, education center, and community garden effort in Auburn Gresham in Chicago's South Side.</i></p>	

3.2. Does your <u>institution</u> offer community-facing courses or events regarding planetary health?	
The institution offers community-facing courses or events at least once every year. (3 points)	
The institution offers courses or events open to the community at least once per year, but they are not primarily created for a community audience. (2 points)	

The **institution** has promoted community-facing courses or events, but was not involved in planning those courses or events. (1 point)

The **institution/medical school** have not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

Rush University hosted the Academy of Management conference, inviting participants to learn about sustainability initiatives at Rush University and Erasmus, share strategies, and explore opportunities for healthcare management research aimed at furthering ecological sustainability. Also, our institution led Rush Supplier Summit that attracted over 100 attendees from local businesses/vendors to learn the opportunities to partner with Rush for commercial activities and celebrate their diverse, local, and sustainable made products and services.

3.3. Does your institution have regular coverage of issues related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare in university update communications?

Yes, all students **regularly** receive communication updates dedicated to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare topics are regularly included in communication updates to **some courses**. (1 point)

Students **do not** receive communications about planetary health or sustainable healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Students at Rush Medical College receive intermittent emails regarding issues related to planetary health and sustainability. Rush's Office of Environmental Sustainability contributed to RUSH News, University News, and Student Life newsletters 23 times over the past year. Examples of excerpts include bike to work goals, tree planting, employee sustainability guides, and tree giveaways.

3.4. Does the institution or main affiliated hospital trust engage in professional education activities targeting individuals post graduation with the aim of ensuring their knowledge and skills in planetary health and sustainable healthcare remain up to date during their professional career?

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers multiple in-person or online courses relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers, including at least one with a primary focus of planetary health. (2 points)

Yes, the **institution** or **main affiliated hospital trust** offers one course relating to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare for post-graduate provider. (1 point)

There are **no** such accessible courses for post-graduate providers. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Rush University does not offer any courses related to planetary health and sustainable healthcare for post-graduate providers.

3.5. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about environmental health exposures?

Yes, the **medical school** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

No affiliated medical centres have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Rush University Health System utilizes “Patient Pass”, a supplemental educational material that relates to a patient’s specific diagnosis and is added as part of a patient’s “After Visit Summary” for those discharged from the Emergency Department and ambulatory clinic sites. These supplemental materials describe specific environmental factors that can exacerbate existing conditions. Through MyChart patients are able to access diagnosis-specific educational materials but this is not always accessible for all patients.

3.6. Does your institution or its affiliated teaching hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients about the health impacts of climate change?

Yes, the **medical school** or **all affiliated hospitals** have accessible educational materials for patients. (2 points)

Some affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (1 point)

No affiliated hospitals have accessible educational materials for patients. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

The website for RUSH University System for Health, representing the medical college and all affiliated hospitals, has a patient and community-facing [environmental sustainability webpage](#). The website explains the relationship between human and planetary health, acknowledges the impact of the healthcare sector, and addresses RUSH’s sustainability efforts. However, it does not provide specific resources to patients for protecting their health in the face of climate crisis.

Section Total (9 out of 14)

64%

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Support for Student-Led Planetary Health Initiatives

Section Overview: *This section evaluates institutional support for student-led planetary health initiatives, such as funding, fellowships, programming, and student groups. Planetary health is a young field and, as young people facing a future deeply shaped by climate change, students are often some of the first at an institution to engage with it. Institutions should provide support for students to engage in sustainability quality improvement (QI) initiatives, discover mentors in their area of interest, and receive funding for planetary health projects.*

4.1. Does your **institution** offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?

Yes, the **institution** *either* offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects *or* sustainability QI projects are part of the core curriculum. (2 points)

The **institution** encourages sustainability QI projects (to fulfil clerkship or longitudinal requirements) and offers resources to help students succeed in these projects, **but** there is no student funding available and there is no requirement to participate. (1 point)

No, **neither** the medical school or the institution offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Rush Medical College offers the Dean's Fellowship in the summer between the M1 and M2 years. To be eligible, students must find and develop a research project which is either self directed (with advising from faculty) or as part of an existing research project (with advising from the principal investigator). Students receive a stipend and are largely free to pursue any topic that interests them. While this is a legitimate avenue to pursue a sustainability initiative/QI project, it is not a protected or guaranteed avenue to do so. Several barriers exist: availability of sustainability/QI projects, availability of faculty advisors, its self-directed nature, and lastly, projects are contingent upon an acceptance into the Dean's Fellowship. A previous student who received this fellowship worked on a project about the impact of the operating room on the environment.

In addition, Rush Medical College offers an elective for first-year medical students called Innovation in Medicine. This elective is not primarily focused on issues of sustainability but provides an opportunity to integrate clinical and basic science knowledge in a broader context.

Regarding other avenues, the Office of Student Life and Engagement at Rush University, including the medical college, provides support and coordination to student organizations.

4.2. Does your **institution** offer opportunities for students to do research related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare?

The **institution** has a **specific** research program or fellowship for students interested in doing planetary health/sustainable healthcare/vetcare research. (2 points)

There are research opportunities for students to perform research related to planetary health/sustainable healthcare, but these **require student initiative** to seek these out and carry them out in their spare time. (1 point)

There are **no opportunities** for students to engage in planetary health/sustainable healthcare research. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Rush Medical College offers the Dean's Fellowship in the summer between the M1 and M2 years as discussed in metric 4.1. This avenue requires significant student initiative on their own and also requires acceptance into the fellowship. In addition, there is an interdisciplinary, informal cohort within Rush as an institution that works on medical sustainability research that students may participate in by joining projects.

4.3. Does the institution have a webpage where students can find specific information related to planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare/vetcare activities and mentors within the institution? For example, projects achieved, current initiatives underway at the medical school and/or contact of information of potential mentors.

The institution has a webpage with specific information related to planetary health or sustainable healthcare/vetcare that includes up-to-date information on relevant initiatives and contact information of potential mentors. (2 points)

There is an institution webpage that features some information on projects and mentors within planetary health and sustainable healthcare within the medical school, but it lacks key information. (1 point)

There is **no institution** specific webpage for locating planetary health and/or sustainable healthcare projects or mentors. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

Rush's Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) has created a new internal webpage that highlights sustainability initiatives at Rush. The website highlights the work and goals of the OES office in regards to their five pillars (Climate, Resources, Waste, Purchasing, and People). It contains a calendar for upcoming events and information on volunteer opportunities. It also contains various internal resources such as a sustainability guide for Rush employees, instructions on how to make an account on Practice Greenhealth, and a local vendor guide which highlights businesses close to Rush that are owned by Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) and/or women-owned businesses with public sustainability initiatives. There are also links to educational articles on topics such as public health and climate change. It does not include information on potential mentors. This is accessible to any student or faculty in the Rush system, however it is not accessible to the general public.

There is also a [webpage](#) within the Rush University public website detailing the OST's efforts to improve campus sustainability. This website does not include information on current research or mentors.

Finally, there is a [website](#) dedicated to Rush Medical Center's Green Team, a program within the Anesthesia department, dedicated to reducing Rush's environmental impact with various recycling

programs throughout the operating rooms. This outlines current and ongoing projects and provides information on the current Green Committee members.

4.4. Does your institution have registered student groups dedicated towards fostering a culture of planetary health engagement, scholarship, and advocacy on campus, supported by faculty advisors?

Yes, there is a student organisation **with faculty support** at my medical school dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, there is a student organisation at my medical school dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare but it **lacks faculty support**. (1 point)

No, there is **not** a student organisation at my institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

There is currently no active student organization dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. Many efforts have been made in the past, however there have been barriers over student participation and continuation from year to year.

4.5. Is there a student liaison representing sustainability interests who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council to advocate for curriculum reform and/or sustainability best practices?

Yes, there is a student representative that serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 points)

No, there is no such student representative. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

1

There is a student who is heavily involved in medical sustainability research and advocacy who participates in the Student Curriculum Advisory Council, which submits monthly reports to faculty detailing suggested changes to curriculum. She has given a presentation on the importance of medical sustainability education to the pre-clerkship course directors.

4.6. In the past year, has the institution had one or more co-curricular planetary health programs or initiatives in the following categories? (1 point each)

Score

Projects where students are able to gain experience in organic agriculture and sustainable food systems, such as gardens, farms, community supported agriculture (CSA), fishery programs, or urban agriculture projects.

1

Panels, speaker series, or similar events related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
Events in which students learn directly from members of a local environmental justice community about the climate and environmental challenges they face, and how health professionals can partner with their community to address these exposures and impacts.	0
Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	0
Local volunteer opportunities related to building community resilience to anthropogenic environmental impacts.	1
Wilderness or outdoors programs (e.g., that organise hiking, backpacking, kayaking, or other outings for students)	1
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Rush University students and faculty participate in city gardening at two Healthy Hood garden locations and the BEET Chicago North Lawndale garden. In addition to this, the Rush Central Kitchen has adopted a Kitchen Organic Waste program that was started by a student initiative in efforts to divert kitchen organic waste from landfill to composting.</i> 2. <i>The Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) has provided multiple presentations and overviews of planetary health/healthcare impacts/human health implications for students, for example: WVU Sustainable Healthcare Summit, Academy of Management Workshop on advancing Healthcare Sustainability, and the Student Health Equity Cohort Sustainable Healthcare Presentation. The Office of Global Health held their annual week-long Global Health Symposium with this year's presentations focusing on climate change. The intended audience was students and faculty .Speakers focused on public health threats of climate change and how healthcare professionals can care for patients during climate disasters, as well as the global and local impacts on health equity.</i> 3. <i>There has not been an event for students to learn from members of a local environmental justice committee in the past year.</i> 4. <i>There are no visual or performing art events at Rush with themes of planetary health.</i> 5. <i>The OES provides multiple volunteer opportunities, information can be found on their internal site. Additionally, during Earth Month, the Rush Office of Environmental Sustainability has hosted volunteer opportunities, such as a Tree Planting Day etc, which they also did the previous year.</i> 6. <i>There is a Rush Wilderness Medicine group on campus that provides educational lectures for students. In the past year, they held a Wilderness Medicine Simulation day in a local park with simulated patients for students to both enjoy a walk outside and work on clinical skills. The group has also held hiking outings and rock climbing events at a local gym in past years.</i> 	
Section Total (8 out of 15)	53.33%

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The Rush Office of Environmental Sustainability runs a bi-yearly volunteer program where individuals can take part in migratory bird collision monitoring efforts every spring and fall migration. Individuals are given instructions and tools on how to safely and humanely capture

stunned and injured birds, who are then picked up by Chicago Bird Collision Monitors and transported to local wildlife centers to heal and eventually continue on their journeys.

Campus Sustainability

Section Overview: *This section evaluates the support and engagement in sustainability initiatives by the institution. The healthcare industry is a major contributor to greenhouse gas emissions as well as pollution that harms local, regional, and global ecosystems. While healthcare is, by nature, a resource-intensive endeavour, the healthcare sector is well poised to lead the world to a more sustainable future. This will involve scrutinising every aspect of how our systems operate, from where we source our energy, to how we build our infrastructure, to what companies we invest in. Our medical schools, clinics, and hospitals must set the standard for sustainable practices, and show other sectors what is possible when it comes to minimising environmental impact.*

5.1. Does your <u>institution</u> have an Office of Sustainability?	
Yes, there is an Office of Sustainability with multiple full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability. If the Office of Sustainability serves the entire campus, there is at least one designated staff member for sustainability at the hospital. (3 points)	
There is an Office of Sustainability with one or more full-time staff dedicated to campus sustainability, but no specific staff member in charge of hospital sustainability. (2 points)	
There are no salaried sustainability staff , but there is a sustainability task force or committee. (1 point)	
There are no staff members or task force responsible for overseeing campus sustainability. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<i>Rush has an Office of Environmental Sustainability (OES) that consists of a core Sustainability Department with currently two full time employees (the Director of Sustainability and Sustainability Coordinator), as well as a Health Systems Management Student Intern and Program Analyst working part time. These staff members are dedicated to advocating for environmentally sustainable practices throughout the Rush University campus, which includes both the Armour Academic Center and the connected main hospital campus.</i>	

5.2. How ambitious is your <u>institution's</u> plan to reduce its own carbon footprint?	
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 (5 points)	
The institution has a written and approved plan to achieve carbon neutrality by 2040 (3 points)	
The institution has a stated goal of carbon neutrality by 2040 but has not created a plan to reach that goal or the plan is inadequate (1 point)	
The institution/medical school does not meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0

Rush University System for Health has [committed to the HHS Health Sector Climate Pledge](#), demonstrating a commitment to reduce scope 1 & 2 greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieve net zero across all scopes by 2050.

5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?

Yes institution buildings are **100%** powered by renewable energy. (3 points)

Institution buildings source **>80%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)

Institution buildings source **>20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)

Institution buildings source **<20%** of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Although Rush University Medical Center currently purchases all brown power from Constellation, there is a 25% renewable energy goal by 2025 through the Healthcare Anchor Network Impact Purchasing Commitment (HAN-IPC). With Rush's commitment to meet the HHS pledge to reduce Scope 1 and 2 greenhouse gas by 50% by 2030, an additional goal to procure 100% renewable electricity for the medical school buildings by 2030 has been made. There are plans to install solar panels on the university buildings in the future, but the project has been placed on hold as further funding is required.

5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the institution's campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?

Yes, sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus and the **majority** of old buildings **have been retrofitted** to be more sustainable. (3 points)

Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have **not been retrofitted**. (2 points)

Sustainable building practices are **inadequately or incompletely** implemented for new buildings. (1 point)

Sustainability is **not considered** in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

3

Rush University Medical Center currently supports sustainable building practices for new buildings as the three most recently constructed buildings on RUMC's campus have been or are

currently seeking LEED certification. The recent Joan and Paul Rubschlager Building used more than 30% recycled materials to build, with 46% of materials being manufactured and harvested within 500 miles of RUSH. This helped earn the building a LEED-gold certification; it is the third building on the RUSH campus to be LEED-certified.

The majority of buildings have some form of retrofitting, however it is not sufficient to meet the standards for LEED certification in older buildings. Additionally, in 2022 Rush University Medical Center opted into ComEd's energy efficiency program to pursue the following projects: installation of more efficient HVAC equipment, upgraded LED light fixtures, and monitoring-based commissioning (MBCx).

5.5. Has the institution implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options for students and reduce the environmental impact of commuting?

Yes, the institution has implemented strategies to encourage and provide **environmentally-friendly transportation options** such as safe active transport, public transport, or carpooling and these options are well-utilised by students. Alternatively, the campus location is not amenable to unsustainable forms of transportation by default. (2 points)

The institution has implemented **some** strategies to provide environmentally-friendly transportation options, but the options are **unsatisfactorily** accessible or advertised. (1 point)

The institution has **not** implemented strategies to encourage and provide environmentally-friendly transportation options. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Rush University Medical Center offers multiple options for students to reduce the environmental impact of commuting. Students are offered a discounted Ventra UPass which provides use of Chicago CTA Buses and Transit each semester while school is in session. RUMC is also a Divvy bike campus, students are offered a discounted annual membership. In addition to these services, RUMC has shuttle services from Union Station to campus and back. Ride sharing/carpooling is also encouraged through the use of LUUM for commuting. In 2024, a student-led initiative to bike to work was started by a current M3 student which was encouraged by administrators through email and social media postings.

5.6. Does your institution have an organics recycling program (compost) and a conventional recycling program (aluminium/paper/plastic/glass)?

Yes, the institution has **both** compost **and** recycling programs accessible to students and faculty. (2 points)

The institution has **either** recycling **or** compost programs accessible to students and faculty, but not both. (1 point)

There is **no** compost or recycling program at the medical school. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Rush University Medical Center as of early 2025 has officially implemented composting in their “back-of-house” operations after a successful pilot composting program with West Side Food Hall to better understand waste generation rates. In addition to introducing a new composting program, Rush has continually been involved with the Kitchen Organic Waste Composting program, which collected and transferred 32,761 pounds of organic waste to commercial composting facilities. Organic waste is collected through partnership with Collective Resource, and is transported to Green Era’s anaerobic digester facility. There is no composting program available to students or staff for their individual, home organic waste. Rush has also partnered with Franciscan Outreach to divert surplus food to provide meals for the houseless and marginalized and has delivered 37,015 pounds of food to date.

There is an ongoing recycling program in the medical school buildings with recycling bins placed in exterior spaces across the school.

5.7. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about the campus food and beverage selections (e.g. local sourcing, reduced meat, decreased plastic packaging)?

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for food and beverages, including meat-free days or no red-meat, and **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution **is engaged** in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for food and beverages, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not** engaged in efforts to increase food and beverage sustainability. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for food and beverages. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Sustainable food purchasing at Rush University Medical Center includes local businesses but not necessarily locally sourced material. RUMC is currently following the sustainability guidelines that [Healthcare Without Harm](#) have put forth regarding food purchasing. These efforts are further amplified through the Healthcare Anchor Network - Impact Purchasing Commitment (HAN-IPC) sustainable food targets. RUMC reached its target of 20% Sustainable food spend which was originally targeted for 2025 and, as of early 2025, has reached 56% of total spending going to businesses within Healthcare Anchor Network and other local, minority-owned and women owned businesses. RUMC signed the Coolfood Pledge to address greenhouse gas emissions associated with food procurement and are in the process of baselining our food-related GHG emissions since 2023. RUMC signed up for the Good Food Purchasing Project in 2023 - a metric based framework that encourages large institutions to direct their buying power toward five core values: local economies, environmental sustainability, valued workforce, animal welfare and nutrition; they received an updated draft action plan to continue work with this partnership. Additionally, in 2024, the Food and Nutrition Staff have implemented “Leanpath” which has been engaged in taking steps to partner with “Greener by Default”, an organization that provides guidance for institutions to provide plant based food solutions as a default in order to meet carbon reduction goals, save on food costs and improve overall health and wellness.

5.8. Does the institution apply sustainability criteria when making decisions about supply procurement?

Yes, the institution has **adequate** sustainability requirements for supply procurement **and** is **engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (3 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (2 points)

There are sustainability guidelines for supply procurement, but they are **insufficient or optional**. The institution is **not engaged** in efforts to increase sustainability of procurement. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for supply procurement. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Rush University Medical Center is associated with the Rush Anchor Mission Team/Rush Local and part of the HAN-IPC. This includes making conscious decisions to support our local communities through procurement regarding furniture, food and other local spend. In 2024, the Office of Environmental Sustainability was moved under the VP of Supply Chain which resulted in a streamlined connection to procurement and strategic sourcing teams. They have established a working group that is in the process of developing a sustainable procurement policy which will act as a guideline for products and vendors in the future.

They also have a new working group that meets weekly and drives data tracking, analysis and insights to identify new sustainable procurement opportunities. As part of HAN-IPC, they have been able to make great strides at Rush to start eliminating PVC/DEHP from priority medical products by creating an official baseline/mapping of opportunities and are using this to target breast pumps and accessories, gloves and enteral tubes for which they anticipate to be able to eliminate from two of those categories by the end of 2025.

5.9. Are there sustainability requirements or guidelines for events hosted at the institution?

Every event hosted at the institution **must** abide by sustainability criteria. (2 points)

The institution **strongly recommends or incentivizes** sustainability measures, but they are **not required**. (1 point)

There are **no** sustainability guidelines for institution events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Currently, there are no sustainability guidelines for medical school events. Several different vendors incorporate recycling containers and silverware etc., thus it becomes difficult to have a set of guidelines for each vendor to follow. Many medical school events are held off site as well, and would be held to the standards of the off site venue rather than Rush University Medical Center's. Rush is currently in the process of putting together event sustainability guidelines university wide.

5.10. Does your institution have programs and initiatives to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable?

Yes, the institution has **programs** and **initiatives** to assist with making lab spaces more environmentally sustainable. (2 points)

There are **guidelines** on how to make lab spaces more environmentally sustainable, but not programs or initiatives. (1 point)

There are **no** efforts at the institution to make lab spaces more sustainable. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

The Rush University Medical Center human anatomy lab has replaced all overhead fluorescent lights with low energy LED bulbs on dimmable switches with movement sensors that turn off the lights where there is no movement. They have also converted the ventilation system to a higher efficiency system and they are preparing to invest in a new, highly efficient air handler to power the system. This ventilation system will have the ability to lower its energy use during times when there is no one in the laboratory, such as during the overnight hours. For the last three years, they have also been using non-formalin embalmed donors (donors embalmed with an ethanol-based solution rather than formalin-based). The histology teaching lab at Rush University Medical Center has moved from the use of microscopes and glass slides to virtual histology which decreases the waste of materials and the use of chemicals. The virtual histology effort has also decreased the need for transportation of students to the lab in order to access materials. The Office of Environmental Sustainability has begun offering My Green Lab Certification sponsorships in an effort to improve the sustainability of research by reducing energy, water, waste, and money used in the lab. At the moment, five labs on campus have registered to become My Green Lab Certified.

5.11. Does your institution's endowment portfolio investments include fossil-fuel companies?

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels **and** has made a **commitment to reinvest divested funds** into renewable energy companies or renewable energy campus initiatives. (4 points)

The institution is **entirely divested** from fossil fuels. (3 points)

The institution has **partially divested** from fossil fuel companies **or** has made a **commitment to fully divest**, but **currently** still has fossil fuel investments. (2 points)

The institution has **not divested** from fossil-fuel companies, but faculty and/or students are **conducting organised advocacy** for divestment. (1 point)

Yes, the institution has investments with fossil-fuel companies and there have been **no efforts** to change that. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

0

Rush University Medical Center has investments with fossil fuel companies and has not made a formal effort to divest from these companies. The Office of Environmental Sustainability and an

investment committee oversee the institution's endowment portfolio but formal efforts to divest from fossil fuel companies have not been made.

Section Total (15 out of 32)

46.88%

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Grading

Section Overview

This section focuses on the grading of the report card. The institution received a grade for each of the individual sections as well as an overall institutional grade. Section point totals were tallied, divided by the total points available for the section, and converted to a percentage. The overall institutional grade is a weighted average of the section grades, with the curriculum receiving a higher weight owing to its larger number of metrics. Letter grades for each section and the institution overall were then assigned according to the table below.

Letter Grade*	Percentage
A	80% - 100%
B	60% - 79%
C	40% - 59%
D	20% - 39%
F	0% - 19%

**Within each grade bracket, a score in the top 5% (_5 to _9%), receives a “+”, and a score in the bottom 5% (_0- _4%) receives a “--”. For example, a percentage score of 78% would be a B+.*

Planetary Health Grades for the Rush School of Healthcare Management

The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the Rush School of Healthcare Management on this institution-specific Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	$(11/32) \times 100 = 34\%$	D
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	$(11/17) \times 100 = 64.7\%$	B-
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	$(9/14) \times 100 = 64\%$	B-
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	$(8/15) \times 100 = 53\%$	C
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	$(15/32) \times 100 = 47\%$	C
Institutional Grade	$(A \times 0.3 + B \times 0.175 + C \times 0.175 + D \times 0.175 + E \times 0.175) = 50.2\%$	C