



Planetary Health Report Card (Nutrition & Dietetics) 2026: *University of Pittsburgh*



2025-2026 Contributing Team:

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Summary of Findings

Overall Grade	B+
Curriculum	B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Our curricula cover almost all relevant topics of metrics. ● The faculty supports sustainability and is starting to integrate sustainability into course contents, with the guidance of Dr. Varnell in promoting the awareness of sustainability in curricula. ● Recommendations: Linking topics already discussed in nutrition; such as food production, quality, transport, food waste, outdoor activities, patterns of diets (plant-based and animal-based diets, ultra-processed food, etc.), the Social Ecological Model, and SDOH; to sustainability. 	
Interdisciplinary Research	A
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The University of Pittsburgh offers several research opportunities relating to sustainability in healthcare. Students have opportunities via summer research positions and funding opportunities. Faculty are actively researching in this field. ● Recommendations: Involve communities disproportionately impacted by climate change in research agenda at Pitt. 	
Community Outreach and Advocacy	B
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● University of Pittsburgh partners with multiple community organizations relating to planetary health. Health Sciences would benefit from more community facing events. ● Recommendations: More accessible materials for patients and providers to learn about health impacts of climate change. 	
Support for Student-Led Initiatives	A+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● The University of Pittsburgh continues to offer strong support for student led planetary health initiatives through funding, research, and advocacy. The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences (OSHS) has institutionalized student voices through its Student Advisory Committee, and the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (MCSI) provides diverse research opportunities in sustainable healthcare. ● Recommendations: We recommend that student-led sustainability initiatives at the university be advertised more clearly to health sciences students, ideally centralized in one location or through a consistent way of communication. 	
Campus Sustainability	B+
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pitt has a strong commitment to sustainability, evident through its goals, collaborations, and initiatives. The percentage of electricity attributed to renewables is growing each year. ● Recommendations: We recommend focusing on establishing requirements for supply procurement. 	

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 health professional 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 health professional training. It is imperative that we hold our institutions accountable for educating health professional 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) school campus sustainability.

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 health professional 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.
- **Nutrition and Dietetics School/Department vs. Institution:** When “Nutrition and Dietetics School” (or similar derivative therefore) is specified in the report card, this only refers to curriculum and resources offered by the School/Department of Nutrition and Dietetics 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 nutrition and dietetics students, no matter where in the institution the resource comes from or if it is specifically targeted for these students, can meet this metric.

- **Environmental history (Curriculum Section):** This is a series of questions students are taught to ask during medical encounters that elicits 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 lifecourse, 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 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).

Scoring Matrix

- Elective coursework (1 point): This score applies to material that is actively selected by the students such as a module choice, or additional lecture series. By implication, only a given proportion of the cohort will receive this taught material.
- Brief coverage in the core curriculum (2 points): This score applies where a topic is covered only briefly in a core curriculum session. This implies that the entire cohort receives the same material. At minimum brief inclusion would qualify as inclusion in a single lecture slide in a single year.
- In depth coverage in the core curriculum (3 points): This score applies where a topic is taught in significant detail or where a topic is repeatedly brought up in different years. This might look like several dedicated lecture slides, or inclusion of the same topic in different lectures and teaching formats.

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.

Updated in 2025, a complete literature review by metric is available for the 2024/25 Medicine Report Card Template. This largely translates across disciplines although we are hoping to expand this process across all of our covered disciplines. A link to the 2025 literature review by metric is available [here](#).

Planetary Health Curriculum

Section Overview: This section evaluates the integration of relevant planetary health topics into the nutrition and dietetics school curriculum. Today's students will be on the frontlines of tackling the health effects of climate and other environmental changes. Therefore, it is critical that nutrition and dietetics 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 health professional school's core curriculum.

Curriculum: General

1.1. Does the school within your university responsible for nutrition and/or dietetics offer opportunities to learn about sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or Planetary Health?	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school offers two or more core courses which focus primarily on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (3 points)	
Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school offers one core course which focuses primarily on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (2 points)	
The nutrition and dietetics school does not have any core courses whose primary focus is sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. However, they offer one or more electives on these topics in addition to core courses that include a lecture on planetary health. (1 point)	
No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not offer any core or elective courses on sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> At the University of Pittsburgh (Pitt), the course Food Application has a guest lecture titled “Nutrition & Sustainability” where we get to participate in discussions about sustainability as it relates to health care and also as it relates to sustainable food systems. Another part of this presentation was highlighting the resources available at Pitt related to combating malnutrition, food insecurity, and food waste. In this course, we also had to perform research for debate topics, one of which was related to conventional vs. organic farming methods and the potential environmental and health benefits.</p> <p>In the course Principles of Nutrition Education, we learn about conducting an audience assessment to tailor a lesson plan based on what resources a given audience has access to. We also take a field trip to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (GPCFB) to volunteer as shopping buddies for guests who utilize the food bank, and we learn about the operations of GPCFB.</p> <p>During the course Food Service Management, we talk about sustainable menu planning which leads into a discussion about surplus food donation programs.</p> <p>In Lifecycle Nutrition, we have to complete an assignment where we plan out a day’s worth of meals for someone on a SNAP budget. This is to help us gain awareness of things like</p>	

environmental restraints people have when they have disproportionate access to resources like food.
 In Nutrition Assessment, we have an entire lecture on food insecurity in the United States.
 As part of the nutrition and dietetics curricula, students in their second year are allowed to partake in independent studies that can cover any topic they wish to explore more in the field of dietetics.

Curriculum: Health Effects of Climate Change

1.2. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the relationship between climate change and social determinants of health (e.g. reduced access to nutritional and/or traditional food, inequities in food distribution)?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score Explanation: In our Introduction to Research course, we have a lecture on Epidemiology Basics, and one of the three key factors descriptive epidemiologic studies focuses on is “place”, with one of the factors that contribute to place being climate. We also discuss the Social Ecological Model and how the natural environment; including water, air, weather, and topography; contributes to health.

- These courses cover SDOH, but there is no tie directly to climate change:
 - o Lifecycle Nutrition
 - o Principles of Nutrition Education
 - o Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition
 - o NFPE
 - o Nutrition Assessment
 - o Intro to Research
 - o Professionalism

1.3. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the disproportionate impact of climate change on marginalised populations (e.g. low socioeconomic groups, women, communities of colour, Indigenous communities, children, people experiencing homelessness,

and older adults)?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score Explanation: In our Introduction to Research course, we have a lecture on Epidemiology Basics, and one of the three key factors descriptive epidemiologic studies focus on is place. One of the factors that contribute to place is climate. We also discuss the Social Ecological Model and how the natural environment; including water, air, weather, and topography; contributes to health.

- These courses talk about disproportionate impacts of things like access, built environment, etc. but not specifically climate change:
 - o Principles of Nutrition Education
 - o Introduction to Research
 - o Social and Behavioral Sciences and Public Health (elective)
 - o NFPE
 - o Nutrition Assessment
 - o Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition
 - o Professionalism
 - o Public Health Nutrition: most chapters in the course.

1.4. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the impacts of environmental degradation from climate change on food production, food supply, and quality (e.g. crop yields, nutritional values, etc)?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score Explanation:</i> In Pitt's Food Application course, we have to perform research for debate topics, one of which was related to conventional versus organic farming methods and the potential environmental and health benefits.	

1.5. To what extent does your nutrition and dietetics school emphasise the importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems to inform planetary health solutions?	
The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is emphasised throughout the nutrition and dietetics school's planetary health education. (3 points)	
The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is briefly addressed (e.g. in one course or lecture) in the core curriculum. (2 points)	
The importance of Indigenous knowledge and value systems is emphasised (comprehensively or briefly) in elective coursework but not in the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score Explanation:</i> In the Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition course, we watch a webinar that discusses factors to take into consideration when designing a school lunch menu that is culturally appropriate and representative of different populations, including Indigenous populations.	

1.6. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the carbon footprint of healthcare systems?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was covered in two or more courses within the core curriculum, including specific strategies for healthcare professionals to reduce the carbon footprint. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum, including basic awareness of the carbon footprint of healthcare systems. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score Explanation: The course Food Application has a guest lecture titled “Nutrition & Sustainability” where we get to participate in discussions about sustainability as it relates to health care and also as it relates to sustainable food systems. Another part of this presentation was highlighting the resources available at Pitt related to combating malnutrition, food insecurity, and food waste.

1.7. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address global issues that impact the sustainability of our food system? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	Score
Impact of the increasing global population on food supply and food security. (1 point)	1
Impact of declining biodiversity on access to a variety of nutritious foods. (1 point)	1
Impact of urbanisation on demand for less environmentally sustainable dietary patterns. (1 point)	1
Impact of colonisation on food system practices and long-term food supply and food security. (1 point)	1
Impact of socio-political instability, caused by pandemics, natural disasters, war and conflict on food supply and food security. (1 point)	1

Score Explanation: In our Professionalism course, we have a designated space at the beginning of class to discuss news updates about topics related to national and global food access, nutritional policies, and more.

In Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition, throughout the course of the semester, we talk about providing culturally relevant care to patients who may belong to a different culture. We have a final project where we have to role play a scenario in which we are giving care to someone of a different culture. Everyone also has to choose a country to do research on and present to everyone about the typical dietary patterns followed by that country, which usually involved showing their version of the Dietary Guidelines.

The course Food Application has a guest lecture titled “Nutrition & Sustainability” where we get to participate in discussions about sustainability as it relates to health care and also as it relates to sustainable food systems. Another part of this presentation was highlighting the resources available at Pitt related to combating malnutrition, food insecurity, and food waste.

During the course Food Service Management, we talk about sustainable menu planning which leads into a discussion about surplus food donation programs.

In Nutrition Assessment, we have an entire lecture on food insecurity in the United States.

1.8. Does your nutrition and dietetics school address the environmental and human impact of food transport on planetary health and food quality?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum, including critical analysis of both imported and locally-sourced foods (i.e. food sold and consumed within its region of production), considering factors such as environmental impact, nutritional value, and economic implications. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> In Public Health Nutrition, we discuss partnerships with local farmers in Nutrition Programs, such as the Senior Farmers Market Nutrition Program. The course Food Application has a guest lecture titled “Nutrition & Sustainability” where we get to participate in discussions about sustainability as it relates to health care and also as it relates to sustainable food systems. Another part of this presentation was highlighting the resources available at Pitt related to combating malnutrition, food insecurity, and food waste. During the course Food Service Management, we talk about sustainable menu planning which leads into a discussion about surplus food donation programs.</p>	

1.9. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental impact of food waste and examine solutions to minimise food waste in various settings (e.g. institutions such as hospitals, schools, prisons, small and large retail shops, the food industry and food manufacturing companies, and households)?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> For Food Application Lab, students are required to be ServSafe certified which includes a section (Chapter 7: The Flow of Food Storage) that discusses how to store food to minimize food waste, mentioning methods such as First In First Out (FIFO).</p>	

The course Food Application has slides in the Meal Management lecture that discuss the importance of prioritizing eliminating food waste. There is also a guest lecture titled “Nutrition & Sustainability” where we get to participate in discussions about sustainability as it relates to health care and also as it relates to sustainable food systems. Another part of this presentation was highlighting the resources available at Pitt related to combating malnutrition, food insecurity, and food waste.

In Principles of Nutrition Education, we talk about infographics as a part of effective communication. The example infographic used is titled “Reducing Food Waste: What Schools Can Do.”

1.10. Does your nutrition and dietetics school explore the global, regional, national and local regulations that govern food systems, and the factors that drive changes in these regulatory systems?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

4

Score Explanation: In Public Health Nutrition, Chapter 3 is titled “Creating Public Policy: Nutrition Public Policies” and discusses this in-depth. Chapter 4 is titled “Role of the Federal Agencies in Public Health Nutrition” which discusses the Food & Drug Administration (FDA), Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) involvement in federal nutrition programs (Supplemental Nutrition Assistance [SNAP], Women, Infants, and Children [WIC], etc.). This chapter also comes with a supplemental reading titled “Role of government policy in nutrition – barriers to and opportunities for healthier eating.” Chapter 5 discusses Community Needs Assessments which are beneficial in identifying the factors/needs to help shape/create nutrition programs/policies. The Healthy People 2030 goals are also a large part of the discussion about shaping nutrition policy, and students have to present on this.

In our Professionalism class, we also have a lecture on Community Needs Assessment and Program Planning.

In Principles of Nutrition Education, the final project is to present topics from the Healthy People 2030 goals at an interprofessional health fair, one of which is food insecurity.

For Food Application Lab, students are required to be ServSafe certified which includes a section on Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) plans.

In Nutrition Assessment, we have lectures on Food Guides, Dietary Reference Intakes (DRI), Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), Dietary & Nutrition Survey, and Nutrition Facts Label and how these are all implemented by governmental agencies.

1.11. Does your nutrition and dietetics school address the role of food marketing and commercial interests in shaping dietary patterns and food systems?	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	4
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> In Lifecycle Nutrition, we discuss media influence on “school-age” children and how that can impact their food choices in the Child & Preadolescent Nutrition lecture. We also discuss factors that affect adolescent eating behaviors in the Adolescence lecture.</p> <p>In Nutrition Critical Thinking, a key assignment is the Media Portrayal vs. Original Research Analysis to determine whether the media accurately represented the research findings to see the accuracy of claims and its impacts on the public. Students also have to analyze an article titled “Instagram and Orthorexia” and pay extra attention to conflict of interest in an article funded by a food corporation.</p> <p>In Public Health Nutrition, there is a supplemental reading titled “Role of government policy in nutrition – barriers to and opportunities for healthier eating.” In Chapter 8, part of the lecture focuses on factors that affect eating behaviors like media messages and the food industry.</p>	

1.12. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum cover these topics in the core curriculum? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	Score
The health and environmental co-benefits of innovations in novel and emerging food ingredients with a specific focus on their positive impact on planetary health. (1 point)	1
The benefits of applying a sustainability lens when learning about food labelling, product development and other food-industry practices. (1 point)	1
The environmental and health co-benefits of outdoor activities, human-powered transport and immersion in nature. (1 point)	0
Responsible prescription practices for oral nutrition supplements and tube feeding in healthcare. (1 point)	1

Score Explanation: In Food Application, another debate we perform research for in the Omnivore vs. Herbivore debate which includes topics like meat, plant-based meat, and vegan/vegetarian diet impact on the environment.

During the course Food Service Management, we talk about sustainable menu planning which leads into a discussion about surplus food donation programs.

We talk about responsible prescription of ONS in Nutrition Therapy, Medical Nutrition Therapy 1 and 2, and Lifecycle Nutrition.

Many lectures include physical activity as a health recommendation; however, they do not mention its environmental benefits, so these cannot be counted as evidence.

Curriculum: Environmental Impacts of Dietary Patterns

1.13. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental and health co-benefits of a plant-based diet?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)

This topic was not covered. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score Explanation: In Food Application we perform research for the Omnivore vs. Herbivore debate, which includes topics like meat, plant-based meat, and vegan/vegetarian diet impact on the environment.

In Lifecycle Nutrition, we discuss vegetarian diets for adolescents in the Adolescent Nutrition lecture.

1.14. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the environmental impact of dietary patterns high in animal-derived foods (particularly red and processed meats) on planetary health?

This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)

This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)

This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score Explanation:</i> In Food Application, another debate we perform research for in the Omnivore vs. Herbivore debate which includes topics like meat, plant-based meat, and vegan/vegetarian diet impact on the environment.	

1.15. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum address the impact of dietary patterns high in unhealthy ultra-processed foods on planetary health? (e.g. environmental burden of food processing, excessive food packaging)	
This topic was explored in depth in several courses, either in the classroom, hands-on practical experiences (e.g. practicums, community projects), and/or student research opportunities. (4 points)	
This topic was explored in depth in two or more courses within the core curriculum, exploring current challenges and solutions regarding food processing and packaging practices. (3 points)	
This topic was briefly covered (e.g. in one course or a lecture) within the core curriculum. (2 points)	
This topic is addressed in elective coursework but not the core curriculum. (1 point)	
This topic was not covered. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score Explanation:</i> For Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition, there is an opportunity for students to join a webinar titled “Obesity and Climate Change.”	

1.16. Does your nutrition and dietetics school curriculum provide opportunities for students to develop the following skills to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health? (1 point each, provided the topic is offered in 1 or more courses)	Score
Advocacy (a strategic and evidence-based approach or action aiming to disrupt the status quo, influence policies, practices and behaviours in sustainable food system relevant contexts) for sustainable food systems in the context of both the food industry and within a broader multidisciplinary context. (1 point)	1
Systems-thinking (understanding the interconnections and interdependence in complex systems (e.g. natural, social, health, economic, and political)) in sustainable food system relevant contexts. (1 point)	1

Leadership (to think innovatively, and inspire others to advocate for transformative changes) in food systems that prioritise health and sustainability. (1 point)	1
Knowledge and research translation (to apply high quality evidence-based research in communication to inform decision-making to individuals and groups). (1 point)	1
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> In Principles of Nutrition Education, we discuss conducting Audience Assessments which allows us to understand how to best provide nutrition education within a complex system. We also present research we conduct throughout the course of the semester related to Healthy People 2030 at an interprofessional fair that also has lay people in attendance, so we have to translate our findings accordingly.</p> <p>In Cultural Influences in Food and Nutrition, we discuss how to advocate for patients who have different dietary preferences and needs due to things like cultural and religious factors. The final project also involves role-playing a patient interview and creating a recipe card for a traditional dish of another culture. We also have a final presentation where we perform research on food traditions and dietary recommendations of different cultures and present it to the class to share our findings.</p> <p>In Food Service Management, we discuss Sustainability in Menu Planning.</p> <p>In Introduction to Research, we have an entire lecture on Bridging Research into Practice.</p> <p>In Nutrition Critical Thinking, these are key components of the course syllabus, as well as implemented in class activities and assignments.</p> <p>These are also components covered in Public Health Nutrition.</p>	

Curriculum: Skills and Practical Applications

1.17. Does your nutrition and dietetics school offer students an opportunity to critically analyse existing interventions or practices that aim to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There are multiple opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions within core courses (e.g. case studies, research projects, or practical assignments) in various settings. (3 points)	
There are 2 or more opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions within core courses. (2 points)	
There is only 1 opportunity for students to critically analyse these interventions within a core course or lecture. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students to critically analyse these interventions throughout their degree. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score Explanation:</i> Not covered in a course, only extracurriculars	

1.18. Do students from your nutrition and dietetics school have the opportunity to gain
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real-world experience volunteering or working within projects or organisations that promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There are multiple opportunities for students to gain real-world experience in various settings throughout the degree. (3 points)	
There are 2 or more opportunities for students throughout the degree. (2 points)	
There is 1 opportunity for students throughout the degree. (1 point)	
There are no opportunities for students throughout the degree. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score Explanation:</i> In Principles of Nutrition Education, we take a field trip to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (GPCFB) to volunteer as shopping buddies for guests who utilize the food bank, and we learn about the operations of GPCFB.</p> <p>Our representative student organization, the Student Dietetic Association (SDA), has a Sustainability Chair who does one presentation or makes an infographic each semester detailing a current sustainability topic.</p> <p>Within the School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences (SHRS), there is a Student Sustainability Leaders group that works on sustainability projects.</p>	

Curriculum: Leadership and Administrative Support

1.19. Does your nutrition and dietetics school demonstrate commitment to continuous improvement in the quality and quantity of education to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health?	
There have been significant efforts made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, with strong evidence of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. It is therefore likely that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (3 points)	
There have been significant efforts made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, with some evidence of an ongoing commitment to continuous improvement. It is therefore likely that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (2 points)	
There has been minimal effort made to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years. It is therefore unlikely, but possible, that next year's PHRC will reveal an increased score against the metrics in this curriculum domain. (1 point)	
There has been little or no investment in curriculum updates to integrate more content on these topics over the past 3 years, and no evidence of a commitment to do so in the near future. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2

Score Explanation: Course revisions take place to change and update curricula each year (one of these changes was adding the Nutrition and Sustainability lecture to Food Application). Our program was granted reaccreditation for seven years through the Academy Council for Education in Nutrition and Dietetics.
Faculty support PHRC teams and other sustainability-focused projects: seed library, etc.
SDA sustainability chair.

1.20. Does your nutrition and dietetics school employ a faculty member to specifically oversee and take responsibility for curricula to promote sustainable healthcare, sustainable food systems and/or planetary health as a theme throughout the degree(s)?

Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school has at least one dedicated faculty or staff member (e.g. curriculum champions with clearly and formally defined responsibilities for overseeing and advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula across the degree(s)). (3 points)

Yes, the nutrition and dietetics school has at least one faculty or staff member (e.g. curriculum champions) responsible for overseeing and advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula across the degree(s), however this is a voluntary, undefined and informal role. (2 points)

No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not have any dedicated faculty or staff members responsible for advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula, however there is evidence of a consistent and coordinated approach to this work. (1 point)

No, the nutrition and dietetics school does not have any designated faculty or staff members responsible for advancing sustainability and planetary health curricula. There is no evidence of a consistent or coordinated approach to this work. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score Explanation: We have one faculty member, Dr. Varnell, who is the dedicated Director of Sustainability for all School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences majors.

1.21. Does your health professional curriculum include teaching on civic engagement/advocacy to address the environmental and structural determinants of health?

This topic was explored **in depth** by the **core** curriculum. (3 points)

This topic was **briefly** covered in the **core** curriculum. (2 points)

This topic was covered in **elective** coursework. (1 point)

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

Score Assigned:

3

Score Explanation: In Principles of Nutrition Education, we take a field trip to the Greater Pittsburgh Community Food Bank (GPCFB) to volunteer as shopping buddies for guests who utilize the food bank, and we learn about the operations of GPCFB. During the course Food Service Management, we talk about sustainable menu planning which leads into a discussion about surplus food donation programs. One elective offered to students in their second year of the program is Social and Behavioral Science and Public Health where discussions on different programs that exist to address public health needs and the different factors, like policy, that go into effective program planning occur frequently.

Section Total (52 out of 78)

67%

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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>Score explanation:</i> There are faculty members at the medical school conducting research in environmental health, specifically in the Pulmonary Medicine and Obstetrics and Gynecology departments. A few faculty have primary research focus on planetary health. Dr. Woods researches the environmental impact of surgery. Dr. Maximous researches the effect of climate change and the environment on pulmonary health. Dr. Artsen conducts research on sustainable mesh materials with the aim to transform the field from using petroleum-based plastic mesh to sustainable and biodegradable materials.</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 point)	
There is no dedicated department or institute. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> Pitt opened the Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences in 2024. They have summer research students every year. This past academic year, research projects included:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nutrition Security & Sustainability • Energy and Smart Data Analytics • Developing and Conducting a Scope 3 Greenhouse Gas Inventory • Helicopter Transport Sustainability • Sustainable Transportation at UPMC <p>There is a Center for Healthy Environments and Communities at the School of Public Health. There is also a Center for Climate and Global Change which is a multidisciplinary center for researchers which is based in the School of Arts & Sciences. Finally there is the Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation which provides interdisciplinary research, education and engagement opportunities.</p>	

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 point)	
There is no process, and no efforts to create such a process. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> 1) Pitt's Clinical and Translational Science Institute (CTSI) has a program called The Community PARTners Core which links researchers and the community by partnering with diverse community members and organizations to build on a community's strengths, as well as learn about health topics. For researchers, the Core's team helps develop studies that address the complex health questions which community partners state are most concerning. It provides training as well as funding opportunities for research development and partnered data collection.</p>	

For community organizations, the Core assists with providing evidence-based research interventions and practices. It supports communities with “getting the word out” on health research awareness and education.

2) The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has a Social Medicine Fellowship program that links students with local communities. These students seek input from the community on projects that can be started to improve health outcomes.

<https://www.universityofpittsburghsmf.org/>

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:

3

Score explanation: [The Office of Sustainability for the Health Sciences](#) is an office that works to ensure that health science students learn how to care for the planet.

[Environmental Health & Safety Home](#) provides access to safety protocols and guidelines for the campus. It covers topics such as chemical waste disposal and sustainability initiatives, our platform serves as a central hub to access important safety protocols and guidelines, ensuring a secure campus environment.

The [Pitt Sustainability website](#) helps spread the word about sustainability efforts on campus and to update students/community about ongoing events and how to be involved:

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
<i>Score explanation:</i> The institution hosted the 17 th annual sustainability symposium last April. The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences hosted Pitt's second One Health Day in November 2025, with student research poster sessions, a plenary speaker, presentations, and student awards. One Health Day explored topics of planetary health and the role of sustainability in advancing global health.	

2.6. Is your <u>institution</u> 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 point)	
No, the institution is not a member of such an organisation. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	0
<i>Score explanation</i> The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine has been a member of the Global Consortium on Climate and Health Education since 2008, but University of Pittsburgh as a whole is not part of a national or international planetary health or ESH/ESV organization.	

Section Total (15 out of 17)	88%
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Community Outreach and Advocacy

Section Overview: *This section evaluates a school's 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 participates 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>Score explanation:</i> The broader University of Pittsburgh institution partners with several community organizations in the city of Pittsburgh on research projects, advocacy, and outreach. Sub-Offices and research labs like the Pitt Center for Health, Environment, and Engaged Research (CHEER) work with a broad range of community collaborators in the city to promote planetary and environmental health such as 3 Rivers Wet Weather, Water Resources Education Network (WREN) - project of League of Women Voters of PA, and Western PA Conservancy. Additionally, at UPSOM specifically, MS1 students attend required neighborhood tours in underserved areas experiencing climate injustice and meet community leaders of local nonprofits. Nonprofits visited include community gardens, and volunteer opportunities were discussed. In addition, Pitt Students for One Health is a student organization that focuses on improving health by acknowledging the complex intersection between people, animals, plants, and their shared environments. It has partnered with community organizations such as Tree Pittsburgh, Repair the World Pittsburgh, City of Pittsburgh Volunteer Clean Up, and the Pittsburgh East End Cooperative Garden in the past. This past academic year, Pitt Students for OneHealth has collaborated with the Group Against Smog and Pollution. The student sustainability leaders in the Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences have volunteered at the Plant 2 Plate Garden.</p>	

3.2. Does your institution 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** has not offered such community-facing courses or events. (0 points)

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: The University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine supports a group called Clinicians for Climate Action that is open to clinicians in the area (with or without university affiliation). This group has participated in community facing events such as Children’s Environmental Health Day and Earth Day in partnership with other community organizations. They also host regular book clubs and online lectures.

[The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences hosts public sustainability events](#), such as workshops and public lectures on climate change, sustainability, and planetary health, which are open to broader audiences beyond Pitt students and staff. They host an annual [One Health Day](#) event open to the community that includes speakers, poster sessions, and presentations. [The Climate and Global Change Center](#) at Pitt has organized events like mobile science labs and lectures, specifically directed to children in grades K-12.

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:

2

Score explanation: Frequent communications from the Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences often include promotions for the recurring planetary health journal club and upcoming events. The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences has a Teams site where announcements related to planetary health are posted. Pitt Sustainability and the Student Office of Sustainability have newsletters that are sent out once a month and these occasionally include sustainable healthcare events/topics.

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 providers. (1 point)

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

Score Assigned:

2

Score explanation: On October 30, 2025, Dr. Noe Woods and Lola Conti from the Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences held a [Faculty and Staff Development Program \(FSDP\)](#) workshop session titled "Introduction to Sustainable Healthcare" aimed at professionals in health science careers at Pitt looking to further their knowledge on planetary health in their profession. Additionally, Magee-Womens hosts an annual [Environmental Health Literacy Symposium](#) for health care providers. The purpose of the symposium is to educate health care providers around current research in the field of environmental health and to supply tools to assist them in counseling patients.

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

Yes, the **institution** 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:

1

Score explanation: Magee Women's Hospital includes environmental education in its programming for new parents. The free environmental health classes for child-bearing families includes education about environmental hazard reduction, although these classes do not seem to be frequently offered. This information is also included in their prenatal/postnatal online newsletter.

Not all hospitals have accessible patient education materials and the medical school does not have any accessible patient education materials on environmental health exposures. Additionally UPMC

as a whole offers a Health Library which includes an article on Environmental Illness which addresses pollutants and their effect on health.

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 **institution** 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

Score explanation: All UPMC hospitals share the same UPMC website. As such, the patient facing UPMC “Healthbeat blog” covers the health impacts of climate change in a few articles that are written primarily for the education of their patients. Examples include an article written in late 2024 regarding an increase in incidence of tickborne illnesses due to climate change, and another article written in 2021 about more extreme allergy seasons due to climate change. However, these articles are few and far between, and additionally are not widely distributed to patients. As such, I would not call this type of educational material accessible.

Section Total (10 out of 14)

71%

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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 <u>institution</u> offer support for students interested in enacting a sustainability initiative/QI project?	
Yes, the institution <i>either</i> offers grants for students to enact sustainability initiatives/QI projects <i>or</i> 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, the institution does not offer opportunities or support for sustainability initiatives or QI projects. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> The University of Pittsburgh provides sufficient financial and institutional support for students pursuing sustainability projects. Through a collaborative network led by the Office of Sustainability for the Health Sciences (OSHS), these grants are available for individual initiatives (Pitt Green Fund and Dietrich School Curiosity Grants), student groups (MCSI Student Group Sustainability Grants), and global research (Global Studies Center). For students with entrepreneurial interest, the Big Idea Center and Pitt SPARK provide significant prize pools and investment. The Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation and other departments offer summer research support and specialized scholarships such as the John C. “Jack” Mascaro Scholarship for M.S. in Sustainable Engineering. The office’s website highlights existing projects and details about how sustainable practices have been achieved across campus.</p>	

4.2. Does your <u>institution</u> 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 them 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:

2

Score explanation: There are opportunities for students to get involved with research in planetary health and sustainable healthcare sponsored by the Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences. The Mascaro Center for Sustainable Innovation (MCSI) sponsors multiple summer research projects each year. Previous research projects included:

- Alternative Energy Opportunities for UPMC Hospitals
- Life Cycle Analysis of Metered Dose Inhalers in the UPMC System
- Climate Inventory and Targets for the UPMC System
- Environmental Impact and Patient Outcomes in Helicopter Transport Transfers
- Environmental Impact of Disposable Medical Supplies
- Surveying the Woody Vegetation across Powdermill Nature Reserve to Track Change Over Time

Ongoing projects:

- Global LCA of Cesarean Section
- LCA of Disposable Stethoscopes
- Infection rates with reduced draping for cystoscopy
- Eco-Engineering the Future: Sustainable Prosthetics for Sustainable Healthcare

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 institution, 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:

2

Score explanation: The School of Medicine has a website for the [Clinicians for Climate Action](#) group introducing leaders in healthcare sustainability. This website includes faculty mentors, their contact information and specific advocacy and research interests. There is up to date information about ongoing projects, events, conferences, and achievements. Additionally, the [Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences website](#) describes health science directors and faculty, as well as details about research and upcoming events.

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 institution dedicated to planetary health or sustainability in healthcare. (2 points)

Yes, there is a student organisation at my institution 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:

2

Score explanation: Each Health Science School (Dental Medicine, Medicine, Pharmacy, Health & Rehabilitation Sciences, Nursing, Public Health) has a student group focused on sustainability led by a faculty member. The School of Medicine also leads a Global Health & Underserved Populations Interest Group as well as Pitt Students for One Health (PSOH). Other graduate student organizations include the Corporate Sustainability Club affiliated with the Katz Graduate School of Business and the Energy & Environmental Law Society affiliated with the School of Law.

Additionally, the campus offers undergraduate student organizations focused on sustainability such as Food Recovery Heroes, Students for Sustainability, Engineers for a Sustainable World, Free the Planet, and Conservation Club.

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 who serves on a department or institutional decision-making council/committee. (1 point)

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

Score Assigned:

1

Score explanation: The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences (OSHS) has established a student advisory committee with representatives from each Health Science school at Pitt. Additionally, four health science students currently serve on the office's steering committee (2 Medicine, 1 Dental Medicine, 1 Pharmacy).

4.6. In the past year, has the <u>institution</u> 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.	1
Cultural arts events, installations or performances related to planetary health that have students as an intended audience.	1
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
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> Plant2Plate Student Garden is a student organization at Pitt that manages an urban student garden near campus that provides fresh, organic produce for students and local food pantries.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> In November 2025, OSHS hosted Pitt’s first One Health Day, focused on planetary health and sustainable healthcare. The event included student poster presentations, planetary speakers, student awards, and an interactive demonstration. OSHS also hosts regular Planetary Health Journal Clubs focused on describing an issue related to environmental health and is open to all undergraduate students, graduate students, staff, and faculty. Additionally, students in the School of Medicine host regular “lunch and learns” where physicians and community members are open to share their sustainability journeys. The School of Public Health hosted an Environmental Justice Summit to address environmental health disparities. Multiple panels and activities throughout the day engaged attendees during the three day summit. The School of Public Health and the Community Empowerment Association also held the Homewood Community Health and Wellness Summit to discuss asthma and air pollution. This spring, students can participate in the national “Climate Change Quilt” project (February 10th). Students can also submit sustainable artwork to the EcoArtisans Exhibition (April 8th), and short films to the Health Sciences Sustainability Film Festival (April 3rd). The purpose of these events is to promote environmental awareness through art and film on Pitt's campus. Pitt Sustainability partners with Tree Pittsburgh to organize the Tree Tender program. Pitt’s Tree Tender course is taught by Tree Pittsburgh and covers urban forestry practices, tree biology and health, basic tree identification, proper pruning and maintenance, and how to lead your community in organizing tree plantings and tree care. All Pitt students and employees are eligible to become a tree tender for free. The campus also houses the University of Thriftburgh, which is a student run thrift store modeling sustainability and 	

encouraging students to buy clothing secondhand to reduce textile waste, cut carbon, and encourage re-use.

5. Through the [Outdoor and Adventure Pursuits program](#) at Pitt, students can get involved in activities such as urban hikes, local park hikes, bike rides, and stand up paddleboarding. The new campus recreation center also offers a climbing wall, where students can learn new climbing routes, and get involved in outdoor climb programs and partnerships

Section Total (15 out of 15)

100%

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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 institutions, 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
<p><i>Score explanation::</i> The Office of Sustainability in the Health Sciences opened in 2023 including an associate, assistant dean, program manager, and project coordinator to work alongside the The University of Pittsburgh Office of Sustainability directed by Dr. Aurora Sharrard. The University office of Sustainability employs 19 other staff members in addition to interns, campus leaders, green ambassadors, and affiliated faculty dedicated to university-wide, strategies, policies, collaborations and partnerships to advance the Pitt Sustainability Plan.</p>	

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 does not meet any of the requirements listed above (0 points)	

Score Assigned:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> In February 2020, the University of Pittsburgh's Board of Trustees, committed to carbon neutrality by 2037 and this encompasses the dental school. It has a clear climate action plan updated yearly that outlines the work needed to meet this goal and the progress so far. More information on the Climate Action Plan can be found here. Pitt is also actively tracking their progress through the sustainability dashboard.</p>	

<p>5.3. Do buildings/infrastructure used by the institution for teaching (not including the hospital) utilize renewable energy?</p>	
<p>Yes, institution buildings are 100% powered by renewable energy. (3 points)</p>	
<p>Institution buildings source >80% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (2 points)</p>	
<p>Institution buildings source >20% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (1 point)</p>	
<p>Institution buildings source <20% of energy needs from off-site and/or on-site renewable energy. (0 points)</p>	
Score Assigned:	0
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> In calendar year 2021, 16.5% of Pitt's electricity was attributed to renewables, down from a pre-pandemic high of 23% in FY19. In calendar year 2022, 22.7% of Pitt's electricity was attributed to renewables; in calendar year 2023, 28.3% of the University's electricity originated from renewable energy sources. In Fiscal Year 2025, 39.2% of the University's electricity originated from renewable energy sources. Energy and Emissions - Pitt Sustainability</p>	

<p>5.4. Are sustainable building practices utilised for new and old buildings on the <u>institution's</u> campus, with design and construction of new buildings and remodelling of old buildings conforming to a published sustainability rating system or building code/guideline?</p>	
<p>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)</p>	
<p>Sustainable building practices are utilised for new buildings on the institution's campus, but most old buildings have not been retrofitted. (2 points)</p>	
<p>Sustainable building practices are inadequately or incompletely implemented for new buildings. (1 point)</p>	

Sustainability is not considered in the construction of new buildings. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	3
<i>Score explanation:</i> All major renovation and new construction building projects at Pitt pursue LEED certification or better as part of the Pitt Sustainability Plan. There are 18 LEED certified spaces covering nearly 1.4 million square feet of space. Buildings - Pitt Sustainability	

5.5. Has the <u>institution</u> 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
<i>Score explanation:</i> The University of Pittsburgh allows students, faculty and staff to avoid car commuting by offering fare-free service on all forms of Pittsburgh Regional Transit (PRT) throughout Allegheny County. Additionally, students and staff can utilize POGO bike share network through unlimited free 30-minute rides. Additionally, Pitt holds a Gold Bicycle Friendly Designation from the League of American Bicyclists and has recently renovated Bigelow Boulevard on campus to be a complete street with separated bike lanes. This information was sent to all students in an email and mentioned at new student orientation, and on the schools website. The fare-free service on PRT is highly utilized by students as parking on campus is expensive and limited..	

5.6. Does your <u>institution</u> 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 institution. (0 points)	
Score Assigned:	2
<i>Score explanation:</i> 16 buildings are collecting compostables in bathrooms and kitchenettes and Pitt Sustainability is working to expand on these locations. Pitt offers battery recycling, textile recycling, tone & ink cartridge recycling, and single stream recycling across campus.	

5.7. Does the <u>institution</u> 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:	3
<p><i>Score explanation:</i> Real Food Challenge at Pitt: In March 2015, the University of Pittsburgh committed to serving 20% local, fair, ecologically sound, and humane foods by 2020. At the time, only 9% of food served at Pitt’s primary dining hall (now The Eatery, formerly “Market Central”) fit the criteria of meeting at least one of the four requirements.</p> <p>In early 2018, Pitt Dining announced it met its 20% Real Food goal at Market Central, Pitt’s main dining hall, two years early. At the same time, as part of the Pitt Sustainability Plan, the University strengthened its overall commitment to serve 25% Real Food campus-wide.</p> <p>CoolFood Pledge: In 2019, the University of Pittsburgh was among the first signatories — and one of the first universities worldwide — to join in the CoolFood Pledge, a global initiative led by the World Resources Institute (WRI) to cut food-related greenhouse gas emissions by 25% by 2030.</p> <p>6 of the Pitt Eats dining locations are recognized as Live Well Allegheny Restaurants, which have a mission to improve the overall health and wellness of Allegheny County residents. There are several requirements that these restaurants must meet, such as offering vegan/vegetarian menu items and using plant-based oils for cooking.</p> <p>2 of the dining halls (The Eatery and The Perch) now offer sustainable stainless steel to-go containers (USEFULL brand) which replace the reusable plastic ones that were previously used. Because of the QR code you scan to check out a container, these have a return rate of 99%.</p>	

The Eatery and The Perch are also gold tier Sustainable Pittsburgh Restaurants, meaning they have implemented almost all of the listed 149 sustainable actions “based on preventing waste, conserving water, becoming more energy efficient, food and product sourcing, and promoting equity within the restaurant industry, food system, and communities.

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

Score explanation: The University of Pittsburgh has optional guidelines for sustainable supply procurement. The Pitt Surplus program facilitates material reuse by coordinating pickup/dropoffs of gently used supplies/furniture to exchange between departments, offices, and individuals for repurposing. The University Stores and online purchasing tool provide designations for "sustainable picks" and "green program" endorsements. These criteria include local sourcing, use of sustainable materials, and climate neutral certifications. Materials & Waste Progress, 2018-22 - Pitt Sustainability LEED certification or better on all new construction and major renovations plans UPMC purchasing with the goal of sustainability.

Overall there is a lot of information on Pitt’s website for suggestions and information regarding sustainable purchasing methods but there is no exact requirements. However, Pitt is under contract with suppliers that are picked based on their adherence to sustainable measures.

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:

1

Score explanation: The Office of Sustainability maintains zero waste practices at all events, using reusable plates and cutlery, reusable napkins, and composting food waste. They encourage and help make affiliated group's events zero waste as well.

Pitt also has a [Green Host program](#) that provides resources for hosting sustainable events, but it is not required..

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

Score explanation: The University of Pittsburgh Office of Sustainability has a Pitt Green Labs designation. The [criteria](#) for this designation is based on Chemicals & Safety, Culture of Sustainability, Energy Consumption & Maintenance, Innovation Actions, Lab Recycling, Purchasing, and Water Conservation. There is a program where labs can fill out a self-assessment to receive points for a laboratory designation. The University of Pittsburgh currently has over 50 Green Labs.

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:	2
<p><i>Score explanation::</i> According to the May 2024 Consolidated Endowment Fund: Environmental, Social, and Governance Report, 2023-24, the University’s endowment fund has 7.8% exposure to fossil fuel holdings. This is a slight decrease from 8.2% in 2022-23.</p>	

Section Total (24 out of 32)	75%
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Back to Summary Page [here](#)

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 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 University of Pittsburgh School of Nutrition and Dietetics. The following table presents the individual section grades and overall institutional grade for the University of Pittsburgh School of Nutrition and Dietetics on this Planetary Health Report Card.

Section	Raw Score %	Letter Grade
Planetary Health Curriculum (30%)	$(52/78) \times 100 = 67\%$	B
Interdisciplinary Research (17.5%)	$(15/17) \times 100 = 88\%$	A
Community Outreach and Advocacy (17.5%)	$(10/14) \times 100 = 71\%$	B+
Support for Student-led Planetary Health Initiatives (17.5%)	$(15/15) \times 100 = 100\%$	A+
Campus Sustainability (17.5%)	$(25/32) \times 100 = 75\%$	B+
Institutional Grade	$(67 \times 0.3 + 88 \times 0.175 + 71 \times 0.175 + 100 \times 0.175 + 75 \times 0.175) = 78.55\%$	B+

Report Card Trends

Section Overview

This graph demonstrates trends in overall and section grades for the years in which University of Pittsburgh School of Nutrition and Dietetics has participated in the Planetary Health Report Card initiative.

Planetary Health Report Card Trends for [SCHOOL NAME]

