The University of North Carolina Wilmington, the state’s coastal university, takes great pride in highlighting the natural beauty and assets of our institution’s unique location and the greater Cape Fear region. UNCW recognizes that individual efforts made by the community can ensure that the resources and benefits of today will remain for future generations. We strive to weave these ideals into the university’s mission of teaching, scholarship and service in a way that supports economic vitality, social equity and environmental stewardship.

UNCW’s sustainability strategic plan demonstrates the university’s commitment to conserve resources, and challenges the campus community to do even more to advance sustainability. The plan also reflects the priorities outlined in the university’s 2016-21 Strategic Plan.
VISION

UNCW will align its policies and practices with the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – in order to support innovation and efficiency throughout the campus, and garner student and community pride that will lead to a more sustainable campus.

MISSION

Sustainability will be considered in every aspect of the university experience. The UNCW sustainability team will support and facilitate a culture that fosters individual, group-based and global experiences for sustainable growth within the campus community.

VALUES

• Economic vitality
• Social equity
• Environmental stewardship
PRIORITIES

INFRASTRUCTURE AND NATURAL AREAS: Develop, construct and maintain campus buildings and grounds with best management practices in water savings, energy reduction, natural areas preservation, alternative transportation and waste diversion.

- Achieve climate neutrality and increase climate resilience by supporting the development and use of energy from clean and renewable resources
- Improve the comfort and convenience of commuting options like walking, bicycling and carpooling to reduce the impacts of driving
- Preserve and enhance high-value, university-owned natural areas for educational purposes and ecosystem health
- Implement "zero-waste" practices by expanding processes and infrastructure that will reduce materials going to the landfill

MEASURABLE SUCCESS
- Greenhouse gas inventories
- Bikeshare and Wave Transit ridership
- Building energy use intensity
- Waste diversion and waste characterization studies

EDUCATION AND RESEARCH: Build financial and academic support to encourage research in the field of sustainability.

- Expand the number of course offerings that focus on or include sustainability
- Create a culture where sustainability exists as a point of pride for UNCW faculty and student researchers
- Increase equal opportunity among students by providing grant opportunities for low-income students with academic promise

MEASURABLE SUCCESS
- Increase number of courses that include a sustainability study or research component
- Increase dollar amounts and total number of sustainability-related grants
- Increased number of sustainability pledge signatures
- Grow diverse and healthy communities by increasing the enrollment of low-income students
ENGAGEMENT: Create enduring, symbiotic relationships on campus and in the community that further a culture of sustainability in our region.

- Incorporate sustainable practices in all aspects and decision-making processes of the institution
- Foster a culture of sustainability that creates positive habits and encourages responsible decisions
- Foster the synergistic relationship between sustainability and diversity into core operations while increasing the diversity among students, faculty and staff

MEASURABLE SUCCESS
- Increase number of Gold Talon events held on campus
- Increase number of sustainability pledge signatures
- Meet goals of the Sustainability Action Plan

HONORS AND RANKINGS: Attract like-minded students and employees and promote UNCW’s relevant ranking scores, which represent the university’s commitment to sustainability.

- Provide financial resources necessary to support a sustainability program that is recognized as a leader in the UNC System
- Ensure UNCW is recognized as a leader and innovator in sustainability in higher education through awards, rankings and affiliations
- Use AASHE STARS framework to perform a comprehensive sustainability assessment

MEASURABLE SUCCESS
- Increase sustainability tracking, assessment and rating system scores
- Improve upon previous UNC System sustainability metrics
- Meet goals of the Sustainability Action Plan

SUSTAINABILITY PLEDGE

As a part of the UNCW community, I pledge to take action to reduce my environmental impact, create a more socially responsible community and support economically sound decisions. I will use my time and experience here to learn how I can make a positive impact in these areas in regards to daily habits, work, extracurricular activities, and decision making. I will share this knowledge with others so that they can also make a difference in the lives of Seahawks today, and for future generations.
EVIDENCE OF EXCELLENCE

STARS
UNCW was awarded a silver ranking by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS).

PRINCETON REVIEW
UNCW was listed among “Green Universities” for 2016 and 2017 by The Princeton Review.

SIERRA CLUB COOL SCHOOLS
The university was listed as one of Sierra Magazine’s “Cool Schools” for 2016 and 2017.

THE LEAGUE OF AMERICAN BICYCLISTS
The League of American Bicyclists awarded UNCW a bronze ranking for being a “Bicycle-Friendly University” in 2015.