

OBERLIN

COLLEGE & CONSERVATORY

Department of Biology

Dear Trustees,

Faculty members appointed to serve on Oberlin College's Committee on Environmental Sustainability unanimously support the student proposal that Oberlin College divest its holdings in the enumerated corporations whose operations are particularly counter to the College's greenhouse gas emissions goal. In 2004 Oberlin College adopted a comprehensive environmental policy that called for a move towards zero net emissions of greenhouse gasses. The Committee on Environmental Sustainability was created through a motion by the General Faculty of Oberlin in 2006 with the express purpose of overseeing implementation of this environmental policy. In that same year the college was the first of its peer institutions to make its commitment to "carbon neutrality" formal through the American College and University President's Climate Commitment. In 2008 Oberlin College set a date of 2025 for achieving carbon neutrality.

In the view of the faculty who have been appointed to serve on the CES, it is inconsistent for Oberlin College to, on one hand, take the significant steps necessary to reduce campus emissions to zero while, on the other hand, use profits obtained through investments in the largest fossil fuel companies to operate the campus. We acknowledge that Trustees are charged with investment decisions and that adopting the policy that students have proposed warrants careful and thoughtful deliberation. However, in our view divestment from the enumerated companies is the right choice for Oberlin College. We support and applaud Oberlin students for initiating this effort, for raising awareness and stimulating productive discussion, and for moving the college towards creating a more sustainable future.

Although the CES includes student and staff representatives, the committee was created by a vote of the General Faculty as a faculty committee. In deliberating how to support the student proposal, the committee as a whole felt it most appropriate for this letter to exclusively represent the faculty members who serve on the committee.



Roger Laushman, Chair CES