

**Call for Submissions (Proposals and Chapters) on:
Sustainable Universities and Colleges:
Leading or Following Society Toward Resilience?**

As long-time advocates, scholars, and practitioners of the advancement of sustainability in higher education, **Mark Starik**, Ph.D., Senior Lecturer in the University of Wisconsin Extended Campus Sustainability Management Program, and **Paul Shrivastava**, Ph.D., former Chief Sustainability Officer, Institute Director, and currently Professor of Management & Organizations, at Pennsylvania State University, invite all academics and practitioners interested in that same goal of advancing sustainability in and through higher education to consider joining them in forwarding that global imperative with an informative, insightful, and inspiring written contribution. We welcome submissions from multiple fields, sectors, and world regions and from a wide breadth of perspectives and generations.

The Need for Higher Education Sustainability. As one of us indicated in a co-authored journal article twenty years ago (Starik, Schaeffer, Berman, and Hazelwood, 2002, p. 335), “Universities and colleges, as institutions of knowledge acquisition, development, utilization, and dissemination, are uniquely positioned to advance the important values of their respective societies. . .” Some of the world’s thousands of universities and colleges are apparently beginning to recognize their key role as leading societal institutions in the movement of the human species and societies to preserve, in a multi-faceted healthy condition, both planet Earth and the human species itself for the decades centuries, and millennia ahead. That such sustainability efforts are imperative for human society is not in doubt. We are living in the Anthropocene era, characterized by climate and related water crises, species extinction, deteriorating oceans and forests, continuing global poverty, hunger, and inequality, excessive resource extraction and toxic emissions, and omnipresent armed violence, from the international to the individual levels. The inexorable worsening combination of overconsumption and overpopulation beckons societies (and their institutions of higher learning), to simultaneously address these crucial environmental and socio-economic issues as soon and as much as possible.

Universities and colleges are typically expected to fulfill the main societal functions of discovering new knowledge and passing that knowledge along in an understandable, organized fashion from one generation to the next, so, at minimum, their **educational** and **research** functions need to include all due attention to sustainability. However, in addition to those important functions, universities and colleges are also often major real estate and other **investment owners**, significant members of their respective **communities**, large **purchasers** and consumers of goods and services, and prodigious **generators of waste**. Finally, universities and colleges also are repositories, cultivators, and promoters of a wide range of societal **values, behaviors, and initial careers**, especially those involving people in their early adult years. Through their respective educational missions, universities and colleges inform and shape the carbon habits of students, including the leaders of their generations. These organizations have both moral and economic interests in preparing student citizens to live low carbon lifestyles. Each of these aspects of universities and colleges can be seen to have one or more connections to sustainability, which we consider to be the ability to meet the economic, social (including justice), and environmental needs of current generations without jeopardizing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

The Aim of This Volume. This co-edited, co-curated volume will be published by Edward Elgar Publishing (based in the U.S. and U.K) in mid-2024 (print and digital) and will be double-blind reviewed. The book is intended to prompt sustainability and higher education experts and stakeholders to assess the sustainability imperatives, efforts, and results of universities and colleges across the planet. We seek to clarify how individually and/or collectively, some are helping to lead society's sustainability plans, practices, and performance. We also want to highlight the gaps and opportunities, and inspirational leadership of other organizations and individuals in society, both locally and globally. There is no question that, as principal societal institutions across the planet, both public and private universities and colleges, including technical, community, virtual, and other specialized colleges, need to advance sustainability values, decisions, and practices as soon as possible. To the extent that some are leading that critical effort, this book intends to promote and disseminate their sustainability practices and impacts; to the extent that others are following in that effort, this book is intended to encourage those institutions to consider adopting some of the

leaders' practices and other suggestions to increase their sustainability performance as soon as possible.

The primary markets for this book are university and college sustainability advocates, both within universities and colleges (such as academic libraries, and both current and future administrators, faculty, researchers, staff, alumni, and students) and outside those institutions (such as sustainability consultants, sustainability suppliers, and sustainability-oriented students and their potential employers).

Previous Research on the Topic. A number of other recent publications have focused on the sustainable universities and colleges topic, including *Universities and the Sustainable Development Future*, 2017, Routledge; *Sustainability in Higher Education*, 2015, Elsevier; *Sustainability on University Campuses*, 2019, Elsevier; *Towards Green Campus Operations*, 2018, Springer; *The Sustainable University: Progress and Prospects*; 2013 Routledge; and *Sustainable Futures for Higher Education*, 2018, Springer. As distinguishing features, we intend for our book to be sustainability advocacy-oriented and comprehensive in scope, including attention to higher education organizations around the world and to the sustainability profiles of different types of universities and colleges and their stakeholders.

Possible Chapter Topics Therefore, in this volume, our intention is to examine the topics mentioned above and related sustainability aspects of universities and community, vocational-technical, virtual, and specialized mission colleges around the world to highlight the sustainability-related practices of these organizations, including their apparent sustainability successes, failures, opportunities, and challenges. These could be compared to both other institutions of higher education and to other societal institutions, such as sustainability consultancies, non-profit organizations, and media, that share some of their characteristics. We will cast a wide net in this assessment, given that sustainability itself covers an extensive variety of topics, approaches, and perspectives, and universities and colleges, as societal institutions, comprise multiple structures, functions, and stakeholders. For instance, an organizational structure perspective on sustainability might focus on various natural or social science-based disciplines of schools or colleges within the university or science departments within a school or college and focus on environmental and/or socio-economic sustainability. An organizational function perspective could include attention to the sustainability aspects of research, teaching, or operations. And, a sustainability stakeholder view might highlight the

sustainability concerns of students, faculty, staff, and/or alumni, employers, and other internal and/or external constituents. While many of these numerous micro perspectives of the sustainability aspects of universities and colleges will likely be included in this assessment, we also intend to highlight a number of macro perspectives to address the question of whether universities and colleges, in general, are leading the societal imperative of advancing sustainability, or alternatively, are lagging behind most of their peers or other societal sectors in doing so. In either case, we are interested in helping to inform the efforts and results of universities and colleges to leverage sustainability opportunities and meet sustainability challenges in the immediate and near-term future.

We project that some of the sections of the book's chapters will involve university and college **sustainability values/goals/strategies, sustainability administrative structure, and/or sustainability-related infrastructure, education, research, transportation, operations, investments, community, stakeholders, and related topics.**

Our intent is to encourage, first, our contributors, and then, our readers, to think broadly but urgently about both what these institutions are doing and what they could or should be doing to meet global sustainability imperatives. **In addition to the subjects mentioned above, among the many possible topics which could be a focus of proposals and chapters are:**

How can and should transdisciplinary, activist, and/or transformative mindsets and results-oriented game-changing strategies be developed and employed, especially by university and college administrators and trustees who are charged with governing these institutions?

How can the higher education curricula, research, and external stakeholder outreach functions be both more sustainability-focused and better integrated to help resolve sustainability crises?

How might large public universities not only collaborate with one another but also with smaller specialized colleges, such as technical, community, and on-line colleges, and/or with other types of organizations, to advance sustainability both internally and externally?

How can these institutions serve as model sustainability organizations, including in their physical operations, to help other societal entities learn how to contribute more to sustainability solutions and less to sustainability problems?

What will the university or college of the future look like, do, and/or achieve if it is to become society's sustainability role model?

What transitional steps would be necessary to achieve that sustainability leadership result and status?

Dates for Submissions of Proposals and Chapters

February 1, 2023: 1-2 page (250-500 words) proposal summaries due to co-editors (submitted to mark.starik@gmail.com in MS Word, 14 font Times Roman with 1-1/2 spacing and 1-inch margins) [Author Information from Edward Elgar Publishing \(e-elgar.com\)](http://www.e-elgar.com)

March 1, 2023: Proposal summaries returned to author(s) with co-editor feedback

April 30, 2023: 7,500-10,000 word submissions due to co-editors (submitted to mark.starik@gmail.com in MS Word, 14 font Times Roman with 1-1/2 spacing and 1-inch margins), including Figures and Tables (using publisher's guidelines)

June 15, 2023: Submissions returned to authors with reviewer feedback

September 30, 2023: Final Post-Review drafts due to co-editors (submitted to mark.starik@gmail.com in MS Word 14 font Times Roman with 1-1/2 spacing and 1-inch margins), including Figures and Tables (using the publisher's guidelines)

Mid-2024: Final Publication (Print and digital)

Please send proposals, questions, and/or reviewer offers to mark.starik@gmail.com

Reference:

Starik, M., Schaeffer, T., Berman, P., & Hazelwood, A. 2002. Initial environmental project characterizations of four U.S. universities. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*. Vol. 3 (4). 335-345

Other Recent and Similar Collaborations with Edward Elgar Publishing:

Starik, M. & Kanashiro, P. (eds.) 2021. *Personal Sustainability Practices: Faculty Approaches to Walking the Sustainability Talk and Living the U.N. S.D.G.s*. Edward Elgar Publishing (Cheltenham, U.K., Northampton, MA, U.S.A.)

Starik, M., Rands, G.P., Deason, J., & Kanashiro, P. (forthcoming) *Handbook of Multi-level Climate Action: Sparking and Sustaining Transformative Approaches*. Edward Elgar Publishing (Cheltenham, U.K., Northampton, MA, U.S.A.)