Statement of Commitment to the Practice of Sustainability

Naropa University’s mission includes embracing “the richness of human diversity with the aim of fostering a more just and equitable society and an expanded awareness of our common humanity.” Realizing the aspiration of that mission must include a clearly stated and fully accepted commitment to sustainability. A core value and educational goal of Naropa University is the practice of sustainability at the individual, institutional, and global level. A critical outcome of a contemplative education is actively to train and educate oneself to build a healthy, bilateral, and sustainable relationship to one’s physical body, immediate environment, and the planet and to then realize and experience their inter-connectedness. Springing from the view that our bodies, other sentient beings, and the world around us are fundamentally sacred, a Naropa education must engender the wisdom and skillful means to put this view into lifelong action. The world around us wakes us up and becomes an ally for our developing awareness, openness, and discriminating intelligence. Sustainable practices are both an outgrowth of, and a catalyst for, mindfulness/awareness and compassion engaged in worldly action, and, thus, an essential element of Naropa University’s mission.

At Naropa, we view the practice of sustainability as essential to the current and future needs of this planet and its inhabitants through the acknowledgement of the deep interrelationship between all beings and phenomena. Attention to the nature of complex living systems is the ground of an authentic path that can assure the Earth’s viability as a home for future generations. This commitment goes beyond specific environmental objectives; the practice of sustainability cuts across all disciplines and fields of study, in that it envisions, and moves us toward, a society founded on respect for nature, universal human rights, economic justice, and a culture of peace.

We recognize that Naropa, as an institution and a community, through its approach to daily resource use, its ongoing relationship to the environment, its harmonious aesthetics, and the ceremonial life of the community, has a significant impact on the students, staff, and faculty who reside on campus, as well as all visitors to the campus. The health of our environment is seen as directly related to, and reflective of, the community’s psychological state and the genuineness and effectiveness of the University’s educational mission. Naropa University aspires to be a leader in the practice of sustainability that promotes the individual and collective integration of ecological, economic, and spiritual well-being.

Naropa University is committed to sustainability-in-action; employing strategic initiatives to move the community towards specific goals, such as, but not limited to, zero waste, climate neutrality, and 100% renewable energy. This practice of sustainability in everyday life educates and prepares each member of the Naropa University community to live and act with awareness and respect for oneself, all other sentient beings, and the natural world.

naropa.edu/sustainability