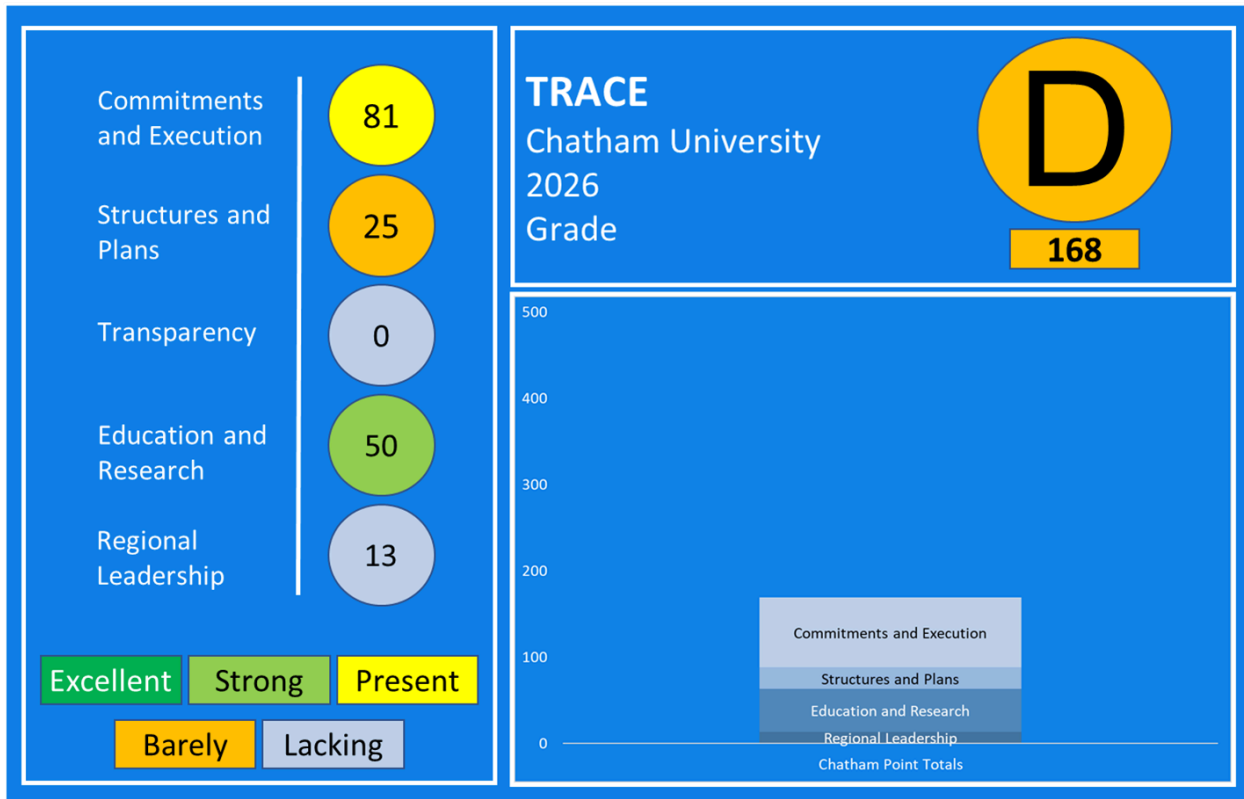




Chatham University

TRACE REPORT

April 2026



Executive Summary

Chatham University is a private university in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. In 2024–25, Chatham had 1,550 undergraduate and 759 graduate students enrolled across three campuses. Chatham’s Eden Hall campus, established in 2014, features over 400 large solar panels and is a fully sustainable campus and community, for which it has received acclaim. Chatham alumna Rachel Carson is a major source of Chatham’s inclination towards sustainability.



In 2008, Chatham committed to becoming carbon neutral by 2025, but there is no indication they have reached this goal. In fact, Chatham is no longer reporting its emissions scores, and we do not know if any progress is being made. Their commitment to being a model for other universities no longer seems to be an institutional priority.

Highs

Commitments, Goals, and Objectives

- In 2008, Chatham University committed to becoming **carbon-neutral by 2025**. In 2018, Chatham became net-zero in their Scope 2 electric emissions.
- In 2018, Chatham was following the **AASHE STARS** reporting framework, had a Gold rating, and was in the top ten of all schools following STARS (800 schools). However, in 2025, it is not even listed as a STARS institution.

About TRACE
Given the importance of higher educational institutions to the southwestern Pennsylvania region, we have created the *350 Pittsburgh Three Rivers Assessment of Carbon Emissions (TRACE)*. This scorecard is intended to be a simple and understandable assessment of each institution's progress

Institution Structures and Plan

- Chatham has had an **Office of Sustainability** since 2007, although it is currently undergoing staffing changes.

Transparency

- Prior to 2019, Chatham published **annual reports** on progress towards climate targets, carbon neutrality, and divestment. At that point, reporting stopped.

Education and Research

- **Environmental Science and Sustainability** studies are staples of Chatham University, both being offered as undergraduate degrees. Within the Sustainability degree, there are several different track options: Natural Resource Management, Sustainable Energy and Urban systems, and Sustainable Business. All of these Sustainability tracks can be pursued further into a master's degree. The University offers over 20 courses relating to sustainability and the environment, as well as 5 minor programs. Chatham University has 4 active organizations dedicated to the environment and sustainability.
- Generally speaking, research is also noted as a top priority by the University; it launched **The Office of Research & Sponsored Programs** in 2023.



Regional Leadership

- Chatham has had a strong role in regional sustainability leadership in the past. Chatham won Gold rankings through AASHE Stars for 2012, 2015, and 2018. Chatham is a member of the Higher Education Climate Consortium (HECC). In 2018, Chatham was named a Pittsburgh 2030 District Affiliate Partner.
- Up to 2019, Chatham ran a Sustainable Leadership Academy, a program for high school students interested in careers in sustainability. Starting 2007, Chatham had a weekly sustainability column in their student newsletter called “Small Change.” Chatham has several sustainability student organizations including the Sustainability Explorer Post, Chatham GO, Society for Ecological Restoration, and Tiny Forest Coalition.

Areas for Improvement

Commitments, Goals, and Objectives

- Chatham University has not updated its progress toward its goal of carbon-neutrality by 2025 since 2019.
- It has not updated its emissions scope scores since 2019.
- There are no records of any target dates for divestment from fossil fuel interests available on the University website(s) as public information.

Institution Structures and Plan

- The Office of Sustainability is currently undergoing staffing changes, leaving most of the responsibilities of the office to fall upon the student EcoReps. The Office is no longer present on the university website, and its most recent Facebook entry is from 2020.
- The President’s office is currently looking for students to start collecting data to report to STARS again—a process that has not been completed since 2018.

Transparency

- There have not been any major updates to Chatham University’s carbon- and climate-related reports since 2018. Officials within the university have stated that they are restarting the self-reporting process again in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic, but the gathered information is not yet available to the public. As such, the University’s current transparency score is quite low.



Education and Research

- There are no certificates (interdisciplinary minor degrees) involving sustainability or environmental science offered at Chatham University.
- The Office of Sustainability mentions five sustainability-related clubs listed on the website as ways to get involved on campus that are no longer running/active.
- There have been no updates on the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs (ORSP) since it was announced in 2023. There is no information available on a signatory to the fossil free research letter (or equivalent) on the university websites, as well as no information about receiving significant grants for climate action research in the past.

Regional Leadership

- Chatham has had little public presence on sustainability in recent years. Chatham's AASHE rankings expired in 2021, and there are no public plans to begin submitting data again. Chatham does not have a leadership position in HECC. Chatham is not listed as a [Pittsburgh 2030 District](#) partner. Whether or not Chatham's Sustainability Leadership Academy is still running is not publicly available. Small Changes is no longer an active segment of the Chatham newsletter. Chatham's student organizations are its most visible current efforts at sustainable regional leadership, but they are student-led without official Chatham direction, and some organizations such as the Green Team have become inactive.

Process

Because of the high priority that TRACE places on transparency, the scoring process starts with a survey of publicly available information provided by the University and other public data sources. This approach helps ensure that the general public and other institutions can see the individual school's approach and progress. The public data search is supplemented with an opportunity for the school to respond to the initial scoring by providing additional information not found in the public data search. The final score is adjusted with the additional information and the school is encouraged to make this information available to the public.



For the 2025 Chatham scoring, the process was conducted by Chatham University student officers of the Sustainability Explorer Post, with guidance from 350 Pittsburgh. Input from the school was provided by the Chatham Office of Sustainability. Final scoring was jointly established by [350 Pittsburgh](#) (see below) and the Chatham students. 350 Pittsburgh is solely responsible for the result.

Chatham did not respond to our request for feedback on the initial scoring. As a result, their score represents currently available public information.

Acknowledgement

We would like to thank Sebastian Mull, Fiona Lilly, Megan Poff, and others on the Sustainability Explorer Post team for helping with the scoring and report-writing.



Score Breakdown

Chatham received a final score of 168 for a “D” Grade.

| Commitments, Goals and Objectives | Score | Category Score |
|--|--------------|----------------|
| Has a target date commitment and interim milestones to carbon neutrality for all 3 GHG Protocol scopes | 100% | 81 |
| Has published target dates for divestment from fossil fuel interests | 100% | |
| Is making visible documented progress toward stated goals | 0% | |
| Using recognized approaches for planning and tracking carbon neutrality | 15% | |
| Institution Structures and Plan | Score | |
| Has a formal sustainability office/initiative/director | 50% | 25 |
| Has a formal/public climate action plan with implementation underway | 0% | |
| Transparency | Score | |
| The institution is reporting at least annually via public documentation and presentation | 0% | 0 |
| Education and Research | Score | |
| Curriculum | 100% | 50 |
| Students | 100% | |
| Research (where applicable) | 0% | |
| Regional Leadership | Score | |
| Publicly visible engagement and advocacy with regional higher education and non-education institutions | 0% | 13 |
| Peer Institutions Leadership | 50% | |
| Local Community | 0% | |



Public Source Material

Links in red were removed at some point between July 2024 and June 2025.

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|------------------------------------|--|
| Commitments, Goals, and Objectives | chatham.edu/ documents/sustainability-climate-commitment-presentation.pdf |
| Institution Structures and Plan | sustainability-climate-commitment-presentation.pdf (chatham.edu) |
| Transparency | intentionalendowments.org/chatham_university%20chatham.edu/mission-and-values/sustainability/office-of-sustainability.html reporting.secondnature.org/institution/detail!3270##3270 reports.aashe.org/institutions/chatham-university-pa/report/2018-11-26/PA/investment-finance/PA-8/ |
| Education and Research | chatham.edu/mission-and-values/sustainability/office-of-sustainability.html chatham.edu/about-us/office-of-the-president/campus-communications/september-2023.html chatham.edu/academics/research-and-centers/index.html Lab and Field Research Community-Based Research chatham.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/college-of-arts-and-sciences/science-faculty-research.html |
| Regional Leadership | 2030districts.org/pittsburgh/partners/ chatham.edu/mission-and-values/sustainability/index.html chatham.edu/mission-and-values/sustainability/office-of-sustainability.html chatham.edu/academics/colleges-and-schools/falk-school-of-sustainability-environment/index.html aashe.users.membersuite.com/community/directory |



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| | <p>www.pulse.chatham.edu/blog-announcements/2020/11/11/chatham-earns-top-scores-in-2020-sustainable-campus-index</p> <p>www.pulse.chatham.edu/blog-announcements/2021/11/19/chatham-again-recognized-as-a-top-performer-on-aashes-2021-sustainable-campus-index</p> <p>www.pittsburghparent.com/sustainability-leadership-academy-reports.aashe.org/institutions/chatham-university-pa/report/2012-09-25/ER/co-curricular-education/ER-4/</p> |
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About 350 Pittsburgh

[350 Pittsburgh](#) was founded in Spring 2015 by local environmental activists to build on the momentum of the 2014 People’s Climate March and the success of global movement 350.org to form a Pittsburgh group dedicated to climate issues.

We envision a future where policies and actions at the local, state, federal and international levels will have ensured a stable climate that provides an opportunity for all people to achieve health, prosperity and fulfillment.



Through public education and collaborative civic activism, 350 Pittsburgh:

- Promotes understanding of the devastating impact of climate change on the urban and rural communities in our region and elsewhere.
- Demands that the region's decision makers take all possible steps to help diminish climate disruption by ending our reliance on fossil fuels and investing in good jobs in a renewable energy economy.
- Encourages people in our region to become actively involved in the urgent struggle to reverse catastrophic climate change.

TRACE information, including a white paper, can be found on the [350 Pittsburgh website](#). To contact 350 Pittsburgh, email 350pittsburgh@gmail.com.
