



National Wildlife Federation®  
**CAMPUS**  
ecology®

**Ball State University  
Muncie, Indiana  
Spring 2008, Assessment**

## **BACKGROUND**

### **Campus Profile**

Ball State University, situated on 940 acres in Muncie, Indiana, serves approximately 19,000 students (45 percent male, 55 percent female). Seven academic colleges offer 120 undergraduate programs, 80 master's programs and 20 doctoral programs in 46 departments and schools. Some 750 faculty, 550 professional staff and 1,500 support personnel comprise the employee base.

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## **GOALS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

### **Goals**

Our goals are to sample attitudes, understandings and abilities of incoming freshman students with regard to environmental/eco-literacy; and to get a high percentage return on the surveys and use this as a platform for "tweaking" versions to be issued to future freshman classes.

### **Accomplishments**

The initial survey was promulgated with a good return rate. With the upcoming academic year and the use of the freshman common reader, *Field Notes from a Catastrophe*, by Elizabeth Kolbert, we anticipate that we will be able to leverage more significantly the use of this survey instrument.

### **Challenges and Responses**

The major challenge encountered was to identify content for the survey. Differing faculty members serving as advisors noted the challenge of distinguishing attitudes and beliefs from fundamental working knowledge. We relied on the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research to prepare the instrument and report the findings. They provided effective assistance and completed the work on time. We are of the opinion that the survey instrument needs to be modified and expanded, but this first pass was useful.

## **ENGAGEMENT AND SUPPORT**

### **Leaders and Supporters**

This effort was led by members of the university-level Council on the Environment and will continue to be shepherded by that group.

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**Funding and Resources**

There were no significant costs for the effort since the questionnaire was made integral to the routine annual sampling conducted by the Office of Academic Assessment and Institutional Research.

**Community Outreach and Education**

We intend to share this information more broadly and to expand the questionnaire to include topics addressing the university's outreach to East Central Indiana.

**Campus Climate Action: Your School's Carbon Footprint**

This assessment did not directly address the carbon load, but the institution is running a carbon count that is scheduled for completion at the end of summer.

**National Wildlife Federation's Campus Ecology® Program**

We continue to rely on the NWF Campus Ecology Program resources, as well as materials produced by other universities that we acquired through the Campus Ecology network.

**CLOSING COMMENT**

We anticipate sharing this more fully at the close of the next academic year when we have completed a second data sampling. A summary of findings has been shared with the BSU Council on the Environment, and it is anticipated that in the future the material will be shared in national conference venues or through articles submitted to appropriate publications.