

Who we Investigated...Close-in Competitors



College of the Atlantic - Bar Harbor, ME



Hampshire College - Amherst, MA



Evergreen State College - Olympia, WA



Paul Smith's College – Paul Smiths, NY



Green Mountain College - Poultney, VT



Prescott College - Prescott, AZ



Warren Wilson - Swannanoa, NC

MANY OF UNITY'S UNIQUE ATTRIBUTES ARE ALSO CLAIMED BY COMPETITORS

MESSAGING THEMES ACROSS THE COMPETITIVE SET

	UNITY COLLEGE	COLLEGE OF THE ATLANTIC	EVERGREEN STATE COLLEGE	GREEN MOUNTAIN COLLEGE	HAMPSHIRE COLLEGE	PAUL SMITH'S COLLEGE	PRESCOTT COLLEGE	WARREN WILSON COLLEGE
CUSTOMIZABLE CURRICULUM		✓	✓		✓		✓	
REQUIRED CAPSTONE PROJECT		✓			✓		✓	
INTERDISCIPLINARY EMPHASIS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			
STRONG STUDENT-PROFESSOR RELATIONSHIPS	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
EXPERIMENTAL	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	✓
SENSE OF COMMUNITY	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓
SUSTAINABLE PRACTICES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
SUSTAINABILITY COURSES	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
NATURAL SETTING	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

HOWEVER, UNITY COMPETITORS ARE SUCCESSFUL AT FOCUSING AROUND A SINGULAR, DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC



Unity College's distinct curriculum provides a liberal arts education through the lens of sustainability science to prepare students for environmental careers



College of the Atlantic is uniquely centered around Human Ecology as the lens through which they approach sustainability



One of Evergreen State College's most differentiating factors is its affordability, as the only state school within this competitive set



Warren Wilson College is set apart by centering student requirements around the Triad—academics, work and community service



A point of differentiation for Prescott College is their emphasis on experiential learning, starting in student orientation and seen in an array of course and research opportunities



Paul Smith's College stands out for their natural setting—the only four year school in the Adirondacks



One of Green Mountain College's unique aspects is the specialized lens of sustainability through which all courses and majors across disciplines are viewed



Hampshire College stands out for its customizable curriculum, which allows students to define and carry out their own academic curriculum and coursework

COMPETITORS EMPHASIZE RESEARCH TO VARYING DEGREES...

College of the Atlantic



Prescott



Warren Wilson



Evergreen State



Unity College



Paul Smith's



Hampshire



Green Mountain



research
to know

research
to impact

While press for COA's research and accolades only circulate locally, students have won various scholarships and research grants and faculty have been recognized as thought leaders in their respective fields of study. COA also offers internal programs—including the Allied Whale and The Hatchery—that encourage collaborative research between students and professors.

Prescott is known for its field stations, particularly, its Kino Bay Center, located on the gulf of Mexico. It serves as a hub for experiential learning and research for Prescott students, researchers, fellows, and community members—however, it seems that the research is internally education-focused and has not gained national attention.

While WWC students have received more awards and grants from the North Carolina Academy of Science for their original research than students from any other college or university, the college's other research endeavors are not strongly emphasized and tend to only circulate in local North Carolina news, if at all.

While ESC publishes an open-access, peer-reviewed journal—Learning Communities Research and Practice (LCRP)—much of the research it features is conducted by faculty from other universities. Besides the LCRP, ESC does not emphasize its research efforts.

The importance of student research is emphasized across Unity's website; notable studies and research opportunities are heavily featured and students are encouraged to reach out to faculty about becoming involved. In addition to the website, there is frequent local coverage of recent studies, awards, and grants. Unity also hosts a biannual Student Conference to celebrate academic and professional achievements.

Paul Smith's does not seem to prioritize research or gain much recognition in this area. However, the school is home to the Adirondack Watershed Institute, a program to monitor water quality and manage invasive species, and research plays an important role in their work on a local level.

Hampshire garners local press for student research, which is highlighted and publicized by the school and is often tied to a community-driven issue or topic; students must complete a yearlong advanced study project in their senior year. Professors publish books and conduct noteworthy research within their disciplines, often funded by prominent foundations.

Green Mountain College does not emphasize its research efforts, but it does offer undergrad and grad students opportunities to conduct research using its vast campus lands as a resource, and in particular, research in agriculture and sustainability through its Food and Farm program.

...AND ORIENT THEIR RESEARCH ON A SPECTRUM FROM 'RESEARCH TO KNOW' TO 'RESEARCH TO IMPACT'

College of the Atlantic



Prescott



Warren Wilson



Evergreen State



Unity College



Paul Smith's



Hampshire



Green Mountain



research to know

research to impact

- Allied Whale Program: has been using photographic identification techniques to study humpback and finback whales for almost 40 years.
- Burrow Distribution and Habitat Parameters in Leach's Storm Petrel: To increase the accuracy of future census efforts on Great Duck Island, this study sought to refine a model that would account for the distribution of petrel burrows on the island.
- Preferential Utilization of Rocky Coastline Habitat by Herring Gulls: This study analyzed the effects of territoriality concerns, presence of nesting Great Blackbacked Gulls, and chick survivorship as a function of habitat choice.
- Derelict Fishing Gear: A Buoy Island Map: An ongoing study of drift patterns of lobster buoys and other marine flotsam in order to determine the distribution and origin of marine debris in the Acadia region.

- Waterbird Monitoring Program: Projects include the study of regional islands and estuarine ecosystems, and the abundant migratory and resident waterbirds that use them.
- Cetacean photo-identification: The goal of the photo-ID project is to apply this technique to the cetacean species observed in the region and expand upon the photographic catalog which includes data on: Fin Whales, Sperm Whales, Bottlenose Dolphins and Short-finned Pilot Whale.
- Spatial and Temporal Cetacean Distribution: Since 1997 the MMP has kept a registry of all cetacean species sighted in the Gulf of California, Kino Bay area.
- Shrimp Trawler By-catch Monitoring: Over the course of the study, photographs have been taken of every species of shrimp in the Kino Bay region.

- Metabolism of Chlpyrifos Via CYP-450 enzymes: Pig Livers were obtained from the WWWW Farm in order to determine the variation in metabolite concentrations that occurred between individuals and cell membranes were isolated.
- Oyster Mushroom Mycelium filter to Degrade Bacteria and Atrazine in Water: In order to help degrade the PLA plastic cups produced at WWC, oyster mushrooms were grown on a substrate consisting of the PLA plastic cups and straw.
- Observational Learning and Social Interactions in Gallus domesticus: An attempt to test whether there was a correlation between social learning and prior existing social relationships in week-old chicks.
- Isolating Anaerobic Equine Gut Flora at WWC: An investigation on the effects of anti-microbial alpha and beta hop acids on animal gut microbiomes.

- The Evergreen Ecological Observation Network: This project is a long term-monitoring effort involving students and faculty tracking changes in lowland Puget sound ecosystems and the Evergreen State College forests over time.
- The Ndebele Wall Painting Project: Three Ndebele artists from South Africa lived in the Hilltop community for a month, teaching, sharing their influences, demonstrating their techniques, and showing students, staff, faculty, youth, and community members how they can most effectively communicate their own aspirations and values through symbol.
- Teaching Gardens: Since 1995, The Evergreen State College has been creating teaching gardens to foster environmental and cultural education and support sustainability initiatives in the South Puget Sound region.

- Unity College Bear Study: In cooperation with the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife, the Unity College Bear Study team does hands-on research to provide information on a recolonizing bear population in south-central Maine.
- Sandy Stream Geomorphology: Geomorphology is the scientific study of how landscapes change over time, and the processes that shape them. Using this as their premise for research, Kevin Spigel and his student team conducted an environmental learning assessment of Unity's nearby Sandy Stream.
- Hemlock Ecosystem Management System: A multi-year study of how the loss of eastern hemlock trees affects ecosystems and people in Maine. Integrated across multiple biological disciplines, and across broader disciplinary boundaries, the study looks at influences in ecosystem function and socioeconomic parameters.

- Water Quality Program:
 - Determining the regional effects of road salting on watershed nutrient export and soil base cation depletion.
 - Determining the regional effects of road networks and road runoff on stream water quality and associated aquatic ecosystems.
- Invasive Species Program:
 - Investigating the effects of water temperature on growth rates of native and invasive milfoil species in laboratory mesocosms in an effort to understand how climate change may affect aquatic plant communities.
 - Developing environmental DNA methods (both field sampling technique and laboratory bench work) for surveillance of Asian clam and Zebra mussel.

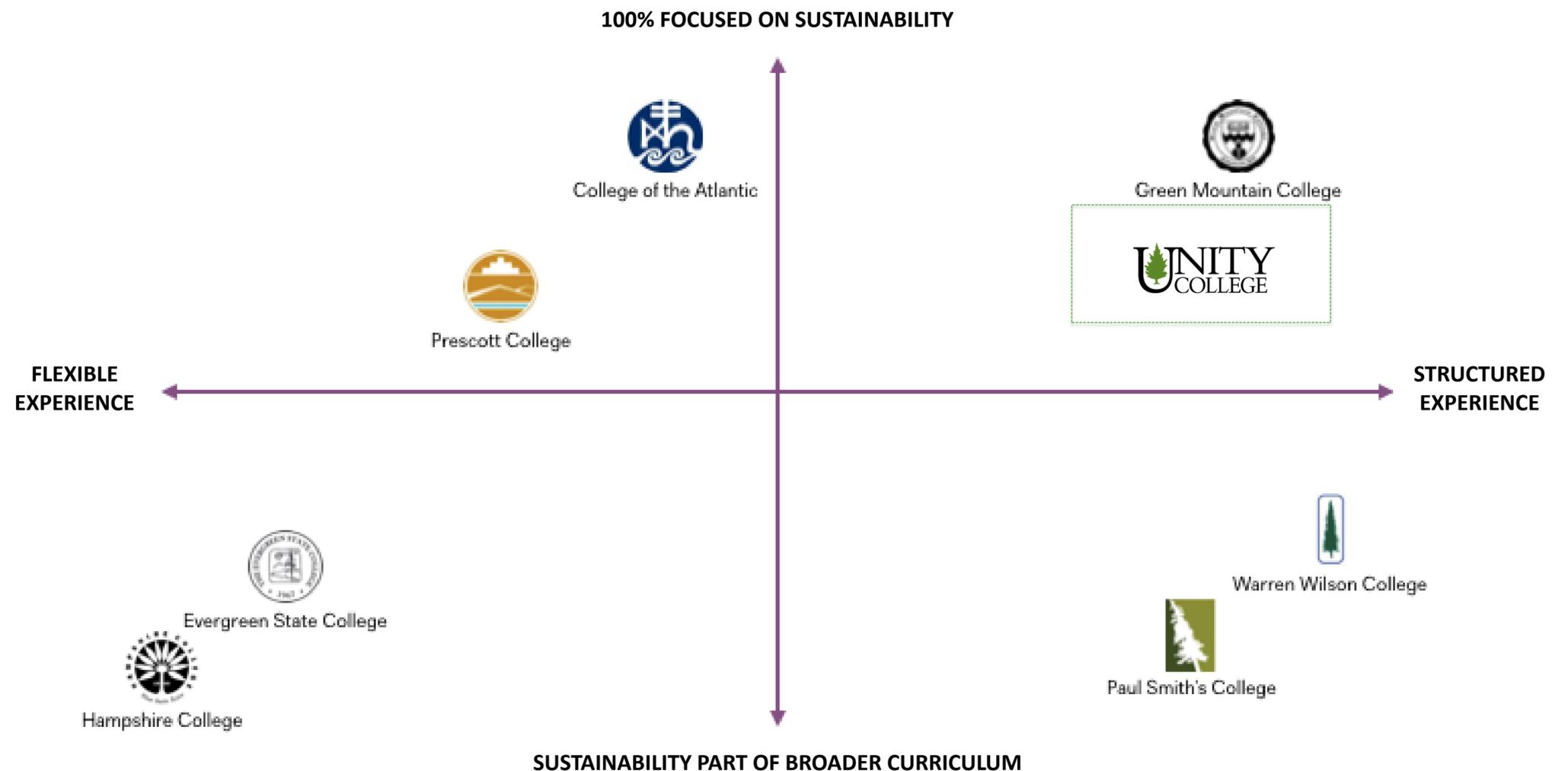
- Student's Division III Projects:
 - Student studied the environmental impact of a plastic water bottle, led workshops at public schools, and convinced her high school to install seven new water re-fill stations.
 - Student studied the relationship between the diet of bees and immunity; her research was published in the international journal Public Library of Science.
- Professor Publications:
 - Professor D'avano's debut novel, an Eco-Mystery—Cold Blood, Hot Sea—uses fiction to engage readers in climate-change science and politics.
 - Professor Kay Ann Johnson's publishes a book on China's One-Child Policy, documenting the effects of china's one-child policy on the country and its people.

- Long Term Ecological Assessment of Low Energy Farming Systems: Assessing the viability of three energy-efficient vegetable production systems.
- Integrating High Tunnel Crop Production & Renewable Energy Systems: Comparing the production, efficiency, costs, and net profits of both cool season and warm season crops in two high tunnels.
- Researching the Viability of Flash-Freezing Technologies for Enhancing Local Foods in the Institutional and Charitable Food Systems: Granted use of the state of Vermont Agency of Agriculture's mobile flash-freeze unit for three growing seasons in order to pilot the flash freezing of products for institutional and food pantry use.

COMPETITORS DISTINGUISH THEMSELVES ON THE DEGREE OF FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY AND THE STRUCTURED NATURE OF THE CURRICULUM

- + Unity appears to be occupying the same space as Green Mountain College, however, although Unity strives to encompass the social and economic spheres of the sustainability science framework, it emphasizes the environment, whereas Green Mountain College offers a true liberal arts spectrum
- + Compared to the customizable curriculums at COA, Prescott, ESC, and Hampshire, Unity provides a structured curriculum with core requirements and courses for each major
- + There's a tension between the depth vs. breadth of the focus on sustainability and flexibility vs. structure of the educational experience
- + As schools like Prescott and COA give students freedom to design their academic experience, Unity must define its POV on the optimal level of structure within a sustainability-focused program
- + Furthermore, as many colleges offer sustainability coursework within broader curriculum, Unity should articulate the advantage of choosing a college that is singularly focused on sustainability

COMPETITIVE LANDSCAPE OVERVIEW



THEIR POSITIONING INFORMS THE WAY THEY FRAME THE VALUE EQUATION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS (+ PARENTS)

'great value for the cost'

'justifies a premium'

Evergreen State	Paul Smith's	Prescott	Unity College	Warren Wilson	Green Mountain	College of the Atlantic	Hampshire
							
<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Flexible academics; students have no requirements and can tailor their studies to their interests and schedules, letting many work while they obtain their degree + Generous financial aid, with 50% of students graduating debt-free 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + The only college located in the natural beauty of the Adirondacks + Majors have a pre-professional orientation and the curriculum is rooted in hands-on experience 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + A number of field stations ranging from the shores of the Gulf of California to the Grand Canyon let students learn outside the classroom + A curriculum centered around 'competency' rather than static majors + A 3 week wilderness orientation that serves as experiential learning and community building 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Operational and academic commitment to sustainability (first to divest) + A range of pre-professional majors designed to prepare students for specific environmental careers + A close-knit community, where students receive the individual attention that helps them succeed 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + WWC's Triad of academics, work and service offers a truly unique and comprehensive college experience + Individualized attention from instructors, with an average class size of 14 and a student to teacher ratio of 10:1 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + GMC's commitment to sustainability enables students to live out their values and primes them for the growing "green economy" + Graduates pursue meaningful careers and report extremely high job satisfaction + Generous financial aid; For the average student, tuition is 20% less than the national average for private school tuition 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + A scenic and educational oceanfront campus + Students are given independence and the responsibility to pick and choose their own courses and direction of learning + Proven success; Within one year of graduation, 22% of COA alumni have gone on to graduate school and 65% are working at a job in their field 	<p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Freedom to personalize your learning experience + Deep faculty support and access to the Five College Consortium + A divisional system that builds competence in four core areas + Strong track record of successful outcomes for graduates
<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$8,682 in-state \$22,752 out-of-state</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$37,521</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$37,593</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$37,670</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$39,156</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$44,438</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$48,810</p>	<p>Cost:</p> <p>\$59,405</p>

HOWEVER, AS UNITY EVALUATES BIG BETS FOR THE FUTURE, WE MUST CONSIDER WHETHER TO ELEVATE OUR ROLE WITHIN THE EDUCATION SPACE OR TRANSCEND THE CATEGORY

International thought leader + partner in sustainability



First name in sustainability education + training



Sustainability NGOs



TODAY Small, alternative, environmentally-focused colleges



Elite small liberal arts colleges



National elite universities



International elite universities

