

**Petition to
President Nancy Dye
and
Oberlin College Trustees**

At their March 2004 meeting Oberlin College's Board of Trustees approved the most comprehensive and visionary environmental policy adopted by any college or university in the United States. Oberlin College Environmental Policy* (EP) was developed over the past several years by the Environmental Policy Advisory Committee (appointed by President Nancy Dye). Although the Trustees unanimously approved EP, they made no financial provisions for its implementation. EP positions Oberlin to be the preeminent leader in environmental education, if Oberlin expeditiously implements EP. However, this opportunity will soon vanish, since many other colleges and universities are rapidly moving on ambitious environmental policies. In the end a comprehensive, visionary policy on paper means little unless executed. Indeed, inaction could serve Oberlin poorly.

The adoption of EP is an important step forward in making Oberlin the most environmentally responsible campus in the country. The bold vision articulated in EP is the right path to follow in a world beset by a level and pattern of consumption of Earth's natural capital that leaves several billion people without basic necessities, by climate change and by the sixth mass extinction of biodiversity that are likely to alter profoundly the fabric of life that permits civilization.

Oberlin's national visibility in environmental education stems from the stature of its environmental studies faculty, the excellent programs Oberlin has developed, and the prominence of the Lewis Center. Oberlin can use this visibility to secure the funds—10 to 20 million dollars—to boldly implement EP. The first priority is to hire a competent and seasoned person with support staff to coordinate implementation. The Lewis Center success, along with campus greening initiatives across the country, indicate that funds for innovative environmental initiatives—money that would not otherwise come to Oberlin—are waiting for the asking. If Oberlin wholeheartedly embraces the visionary agenda of EP, it will lead and acquire resources in excess of those for EP.

I respectfully request that President Nancy Dye speak, as a priority, for funds to implement EP and that the Trustees approve a priority fund raising campaign for implementation of EP at their December 2004 meeting.

Signature _____ Class _____ Printed Name _____ Date _____

Please mail or fax to: Alumni Association, 50 West Lorain St., Oberlin, OH 44074-1089;
fax: 440 775 6748

* <http://www.oberlin.edu/presidnt/environment.html>

EnviroAlums Steering Committee, 29Sept04