



Majority of Canadian engineering programs geared toward preaching principles of sustainability

(Toronto, Canada, July 2, 2008) Today, Corporate Knights Magazine unveils the fifth-annual Knight Schools ranking. The ranking analyzes how Canadian universities fare in integrating sustainability into the school experience.

In reviewing engineering programs, the researchers adopted a broad definition of sustainability that encompassed environmental and social concerns. Issues of social justice, human rights, professional ethics, cultural diversity, climate change, and conservation were considered.

The survey, modelled after the US-based Beyond Grey Pinstripes Survey, scored the programs in the areas of institutional support, student initiatives, and course work.

As the people who build our society, it is important that engineers are educated early on in socially and environmentally sustainable practices. Having mandatory courses that involve these issues benefited the schools that achieved the top spots in the ranking. Out of the top five schools, four of them had at least one core course with a sustainability focus. Across the 37 schools surveyed, 20 (54%) had at least one core course with a sustainability focus.

The Schulich School of Engineering at the University of Calgary scored the highest overall and also had the highest amount of mandatory courses.

Student life was an important indicator in the survey. Engineering students demonstrated an impressive degree of engagement in sustainability groups on campus. Nearly every university had an Engineers Without Borders society or a Women In Science and Engineering group. Students demonstrated a laudable amount of dedication to greening the campus and reaching out to both the local and global community.

“We noticed a lot of changes in how schools are treating sustainability,” says Monika Warzecha, Chief Researcher of the Knight Schools ranking. “New programs are springing up in many different fields. Students are demanding these courses and starting their own projects outside the classroom.”

The full results and methodology of the Ranking are available at <http://www.corporateknights.ca/special-reports/68-knight-school-guide.html> and are summarized in the Best 50/Education issue (Vol. 7.1) of Corporate Knights, distributed in the Globe and Mail on June 30 in Eastern Canada and July 7 in Western Canada.

Engineering (out of 37 schools)

1. Schulich School of Engineering, University of Calgary: 77.5%
2. University of Toronto: 74.8%
3. University of Waterloo: 73.4%
4. Ecole Polytechnique: 67.3%
5. University of Western Ontario: 65.0%

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To schedule interviews with Melissa Shin, the Managing Editor of Corporate Knights, or Monika Warzecha, Editorial Assistant, contact:

Jonathan Laderoute, elclo, 416-972-7401, [laderoutej\(a\)huffstrategy.com](mailto:laderoutej(a)huffstrategy.com)

About Corporate Knights: Founded in 2002, Corporate Knights Inc. is an independent Canadian-based media company focused on promoting and reinforcing sustainable development in Canada.