



PLU Report for 2014-2015

Submitted May 29, 2015

Thank you for choosing to work with Earth Deeds to onset CO₂ emissions for your Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 study away programs. As a start-up social venture, it continues to be a wonderful opportunity to further develop our systems in ways that can also offer unique value to the PLU community. It was also very gratifying that this collaboration was selected as a finalist for the [Second Nature Climate Leadership Awards](#) and that we were able to co-present this initiative at the 2014 AASHE Conference in Portland.

Onsetting encourages us to be conscious of the actual costs of our emissions and support solutions that address the causes as well as the impacts of global warming. Similar to offsetting, we believe it is vital to measure, reduce, and price our carbon pollution. Where onsetting differs is that we drop the controversial claim of carbon neutrality, price emissions based on the U.S. Government's Social Cost of Carbon, and enable funding to support local and meaningful sustainability projects that are responding to climate change. To learn more, please read our [What is Onsetting?](#) page and/or watch our [5-minute overview](#) video.

Measuring Emissions

Earth Deeds created the following pages for PLU 2014-2015 study away students to calculate the CO₂ emissions associated with their international travel:

- [PLU Fall 2014 Team Page](#)
- [PLU Fall 2014 Calculator](#)
- [PLU Spring 2015 Team Page](#)
- [PLU Spring 2015 Calculator](#)

CO₂ emissions for the Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 semesters were as follows:

Semester	mT CO ₂	# Students
Fall 2014	169.84	51
Spring 2015	299.84	57
Totals	469.68	108

Individual emissions can be viewed on the Team Pages (under the Emissions tab) or on this [consolidated spreadsheet](#). Emissions for January '15 programs were also calculated by PLU staff and can be viewed via the [PLU Organization Page](#), but they were not included in the overall accounting. Calculator methodology can be viewed [here](#). It estimates typical aircraft used for short, medium, and long-haul flights.

In addition, Earth Deeds created and made available a 4-part video series ([Part 1](#), [Part 2](#), [Part 3](#), [Part 4](#)) and a [multiple choice quiz](#) that PLU used to help their students understand the larger context of climate change and the value of measuring and accounting for their emissions.

Accounting for Emissions

Carbon offsetting prices carbon based on market forces and what project holders are willing to sell the rights to claim the mitigation benefits of their projects for. Earth Deeds believes pricing carbon in this way is volatile, confusing, and not connected to their true impacts. Onsetting chooses rather to price carbon based on the best scientific estimate of the actual costs of these emissions (i.e. through sea level rise, extreme weather events, increased disease rates, declining agricultural yields, etc.). We rely on the [Social Cost of Carbon](#), which in 2014-2015 was estimated at \$37/mT CO₂e. To learn more, please read Earth Deeds' rationale on [Pricing Carbon](#).

PLU originally estimated the cost of 2014-2015 semester study away emissions at \$17,100. This figure was amazingly close to the final total of \$17,378.16 (469.68mT x \$37/mT). PLU paid this amount in full, Earth Deeds retained 15% of these funds (\$2,606.72) for its ongoing development, and \$14,771.44 was available for PLU to support meaningful sustainability projects.

Supporting Projects

PLU engaged a student committee to determine which project(s) would be supported by this onsetting fund and it was decided that the first year, it would go towards ecological retrofits of the Wang Center, which houses PLU's global education program offices.

Description
Advanced Botanical Resources
Ecoinsulate Northwest
Ecoinsulate Northwest
Complete Office

