



## United States Health Promoting Campuses Network

# How does my campus adopt the **Okanagan Charter**?

## 1. Overview

Institutions of Higher Education in the US and its territories are invited to formally adopt the *Okanagan Charter: An International Charter for Health Promoting Campuses*.

In the US the adoption process is facilitated by the US Health Promoting Campuses Network as a way for campus leaders to strengthen and formalize their commitment to activating the Okanagan Charter's Vision, Calls to Action, and Principles. Our shared adoption process demonstrates our commitment to the aspirations outlined in the Okanagan Charter.

We recognize that the specific activation and commitments around the Okanagan Charter will differ according to unique campus contexts.

## 2. How was the Okanagan Charter developed?

The Okanagan Charter was a key outcome of the *2015 International Conference on Health Promoting Universities and Colleges*. The Okanagan Charter provides a framework with a vision, two calls to action with key action areas, and overall principles that together guide the development of Health Promoting Campuses across the globe.

The Okanagan Charter was developed in collaboration with researchers, practitioners, administrators, students, and policy makers from 45 countries representing both educational institutions and health organizations. These included the World Health Organization (WHO), Pan American Health Organization (PAHO) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO).

At the conference, 380 higher education leaders and delegates, signed a pledge to bring the Okanagan Charter “back to their settings to inspire and catalyze further action towards the creation of health promoting universities and colleges.”

The Okanagan Charter has inspired universities around the world to take action in embedding well-being into their everyday operations, business practices and academic mandates.

Learn more about the Okanagan – [link to the charter on our USHPCN website](#)

### 3. What are some benefits of “adopting” the Okanagan Charter and becoming a health promoting institution?

Universities, colleges, and other higher education institutions are in a unique position to inform health and well-being knowledge, education, and research. Adopting the Okanagan Charter has many benefits:

**Demonstrate leadership:** Formal adoption of the Okanagan Charter by senior leadership reaffirms your institutions commitment to furthering health, well-being, and sustainability and sends a powerful signal to the broader community.

**Engage your community:** Use the Okanagan Charter as a way to generate dialogue and research to inform health and well-being initiatives on campus and in the broader community and nation.

**Support the well-being of your community:** Guide and inspire action to help your faculty, staff and students achieve their full potential in teaching, learning, research, and engagement. Evidence shows that people who are well are more productive, better able to engage in deeper learning, have a greater sense of belonging, and a stronger sense of community.

**Join the movement:** Become an active participant in the US Health Promoting Campuses Network, a network of institutions actively promoting health and well-being in higher education across the United States and internationally.

### 4. What are the required steps for formally “adopting” the Okanagan Charter?

Adopting the Okanagan Charter and taking a systems and settings-based approach to embedding well-being requires collaboration from a diverse range of campus leaders. Higher education institutions that would like to formally adopt the Okanagan Charter should consider undertaking the following steps:

**Engage:** Begin conversations with colleagues, senior leadership, and the broader community about adopting the Okanagan Charter.

**Commit:** Join the USHPCN signifying your intent to adopt. Work with senior leadership on your campus to create campus-specific Okanagan Charter commitments and decide if your university adoption timeline fits with a fall or spring cohort adoption date. You can formally adopt outside of a fall or spring cohort or share resources, processes and timelines with other institutions within a particular cohort.

**Adopt:** Work with your institution Chancellor, University President, or similar position of leadership to formally adopt the charter by signing the USHPCN [“Statement of Adoption.”](#)

**Submit:** Send the Statement of Adoption and institution-specific commitments to the US Health Promoting Campus Network Chair (see item #8). The USHPCN Chair will review the above documents and confirm Okanagan Charter adoption. Following approval, your institution’s logo will be listed on the USHPCN website as formally adopting the charter.

**Celebrate:** We highly recommend organizing an event/announcement to celebrate the Okanagan Charter adoption!

## 5. Is my campus eligible to adopt the Okanagan Charter?

If you are an institution of Higher Education in the United States and its territories (university, college or community college) you are eligible.

For international campuses, refer to the [International Health Promoting Universities and Campuses Network Steering Group](#) to find out who to connect to in your geographic region.

## 6. Who do I contact for more information?

For more information about the United States Health Promoting Campuses Network or adopting the Okanagan Charter, please visit the website or contact the Network Chair:

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