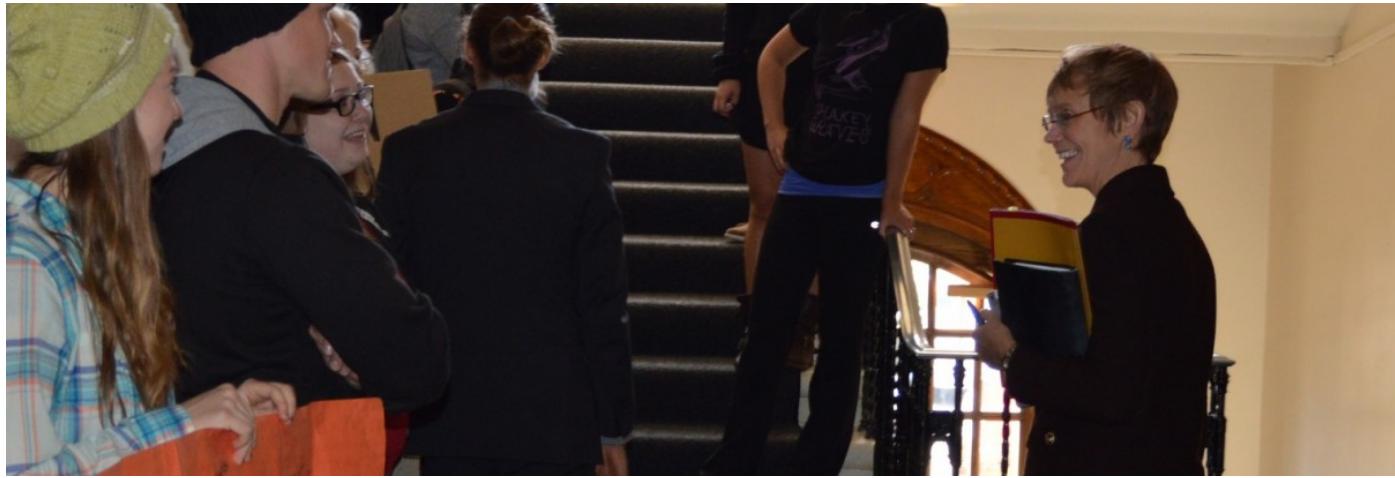


Divest DU meets with administration



On Nov. 11, [Divest DU](#), a student-run group working to combat climate change, met with Chancellor Chopp, Vice Chancellor Craig Woody, Board of Trustees Chair Doug Scrivner and Board of Trustees Finance Committee Chair KC Gallagher to discuss the possibility of DU divesting from fossil fuels. The meeting took place from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Moffat Conference room, housed in Mary Reed.

Before the meeting began, the administration was greeted by about 25 students holding banners that contained phrases such as "Chancellor Chopp, what side are you on?" and "We > Fossil Fuels." According to Divest DU, this gathering was intended to be "peaceful and loving" to show Chancellor Chopp and company in a professional manner how much the student body cares about climate change. This demonstration was received with smiles from those who walked by, including Chopp. Scrivner, however, kept his head down and did not acknowledge the demonstrators.



Photo by Connor W. Davis / Clarion

Four members of Divest DU attended the meeting: Nick Stubler, senior international studies major minoring in sustainability and business administration from Grand Junction, Colorado; Evan Swaak, senior environmental science major from Atlanta; Erin Smith, senior strategic communication major from Lacrosse, Wisconsin; Kengo Nagaoka, sophomore jazz major from Fairbanks, Alaska. Other members of Divest DU waited outside for the duration of the meeting to show their support and wait to hear the results.

After the meeting concluded and the four representatives exited the conference room, those waiting sang a song that echoed through the hallway in hopes of further showing the administration that the group will continue to push for divestment at DU. For several minutes, the students repeatedly sang the lyrics, "Which side are you on my people? Which side are you on?"



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The meeting was not as successful as Divest DU had hoped for a variety of reasons.

"At the last meeting, we provided a big report on Divest DU—why we're doing it, how much support we have and what the national movement is like. Today, what the administration's argument about the report was that they believe divestment is not the best tactic the university can take right now to combat climate change," said Nagaoka. "Another thing they kept repeating was that the board of trustees investment committee is in a huge transition right now. Apparently everything is really messed up, and they're using that as an excuse to not really consider us presenting to their committee right now because it's a logistical mess right now."

Stubler added onto Nagaoka's statement, saying that Chancellor Chopp has been inconsistent with her arguments against climate change.

"Last time we met with the chancellor, she said that divestment would hurt our endowment and that was her biggest reason for saying 'no.' She did not bring that point up once this time, and I think that's largely because that has been proven to be inaccurate since our last meeting," said Stubler. "Now, the rhetoric has largely changed to two points: one, they don't think divestment is an appropriate strategy nor an effective strategy to

combat climate change, and two, they think it's a slippery slope, and that if they divest, what next?"

Stubler explained that DU is also invested in other questionable industries, such as the chemical industry. This is something that the administration admitted to during the meeting, but they have not provided Divest DU with a detailed report of what exactly DU is invested in despite consistent requests from the group.

Moving forward, Divest DU says that the administration wants the group to submit more research and reports, so their plan is to do just that through cooperation with other universities that have divested. They also plan to continue to grow their following.

Stubler said that the administration wants to continue the conversation, and that Chopp has agreed to publish a statement about her opinion on divestment and climate change come spring quarter, but that, overall, the results of the meeting were disappointing.

"When any group with power meets with individuals with less power, generally, one of the main tactics is to stall and push the conversation out longer, which is what they've done for the last two years and what they did today."



From left to right: Kengo Nagaoka, Nick Stubler, Erin Smith and Evan Swaak.

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