The STARS Program

AASHE’s Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System

stars.aashe.org
STARS Background

• In 2006, the Higher Education Associations’ Sustainability Consortium (HEASC) called upon AASHE to create a campus sustainability assessment tool.

• STARS versions:
  – STARS 0.4 (Sept. 07)
  – STARS 0.5 (Aug. 08)
  – STARS Pilot (2008)
  – STARS 1.0 (Sept. 09)

• All versions of STARS have been shared with the higher education community for suggestions on how to enhance the tool to better fit the needs of the community.
What is STARS?

• A voluntary, self-reporting framework
• A guide for advancing sustainability in all sectors of higher education.
• A common standard of measurement for sustainability in higher education.
• A tool that promotes a comprehensive understanding of sustainability that includes its social, economic and environmental dimensions.
Collaboration vs. Competition

• STARS is a rating system, NOT a ranking system
• STARS provides a venue to share best practices and learn from other institutions
• STARS was created by the higher education community for the higher education community
a framework for change
Why is STARS Needed?

• “You can only manage what you can measure.”
• Sustainability is a new frontier with few established metrics. A standard framework for measuring success is needed.
• STARS is a broad-based, stakeholder-designed, tested framework.
collaboration, outreach and learning
get a wider, deeper perspective
greater engagement, stronger culture
accelerate progress, measure results
Who can Participate?

• Any higher education institution in the US and Canada
• Do not have to be a member of AASHE
• College districts or university systems
  – If a university system registers, individual campuses within that system may still register for STARS.
Categories

• Education and Research
• Operations
• Planning, Administration, & Engagement
• Innovation
Sub-Categories

• Education & Research
  – Co-Curricular Education; Curriculum; Research

• Operations
  – Buildings; Climate; Dining Services; Energy; Grounds; Purchasing; Transportation; Waste; Water

• Planning, Administration & Engagement
  – Coordination & Planning; Diversity and Affordability; Human Resources; Investment; Public Engagement
Credit Outline

1. Credit Rationale
2. Criteria
3. Applicability
4. Scoring
5. Reporting Fields
6. Measurement
7. Standards & Terms
# STARS Ratings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rating Level</th>
<th>Minimum Score Required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>STARS Bronze</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARS Silver</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARS Gold</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARS Platinum</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>STARS Reporter</td>
<td>For institutions that wish to use STARS and submit data publicly but are not pursuing a rating</td>
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STARS Reporter

• Flexibility
• Recognition
• Incremental progress
Availability of STARS Data

• STARS data will become public upon submission

• Not all credits have to be pursued if an institution does not want to share data publicly, but no points will be earned for these credits
Accuracy of STARS Data

There are three ways to ensure STARS data are accurate:

1. A Responsible Party is required to sign off on each individual credit.
2. The President or Chancellor is required to submit a letter with the STARS submission verifying the accuracy of the information.
3. All information institutions share will be posted publicly on AASHE's website.
STARS Timeline

• Participating institutions have one year to submit their STARS data
• A 6 month extension may be granted upon request
Benefits of Participating

• A documented vision
• Capturing the journey so far
• Collaborate across campus
• Streamline reporting, benchmark with peers
• Save time and money in developing a sustainability plan or report
• Earn recognition