

PA 2: Sustainability Planning

4 points available

Rationale

This credit recognizes institutions that have developed comprehensive plans to move toward sustainability. Sustainability planning affords an institution the opportunity to clarify its vision of a sustainable future and provides a roadmap to help guide decision-making. Establishing measurable goals and objectives allows an institution to track its future progress, identify and document its successes, and manage the levels of resources devoted to (and required for) the attainment of its sustainability goals. Including sustainability at a high level in the institution's strategic plan and other guiding documents also signals an institution's commitment to sustainability and may help infuse an ethic of environmental, fiscal and social responsibility throughout the campus community.

Applicability

This credit applies to all institutions.

Criteria

Part 1. Measurable sustainability objectives

Institution has a published plan or plans that include *measurable sustainability objectives* that address one or more of the following:

- Academics - sustainability in curriculum and/or research
- Engagement - student, employee, or community engagement for sustainability
- Operations (e.g., sustainable resource use, emissions, groundskeeping, procurement)
- Administration (e.g., diversity, equity, and inclusion; sustainable investment/finance; wellbeing)

The criteria for Part 1 may be met by any combination of published plans, for example:

- *Sustainability plan*
- Campus master plan or physical campus plan
- *Climate action plan*
- Diversity and inclusion plan
- Human resources strategic plan
- Strategic plan or equivalent guiding document

Part 2. Sustainability in institution's highest guiding document

Institution includes the integrated concept of sustainability (as opposed to one or more aspects of sustainability) in its highest guiding document, e.g., a published, institution-wide *strategic plan* or the equivalent.

Sustainability may be included in the highest guiding document as a major theme (e.g., in a section on sustainability, as a major institutional goal, or through multiple sustainability-focused objectives) or as a minor theme (e.g., in passing, as part of a vision or values statement, or in objectives that are related to rather than focused on sustainability). A strategic plan that addresses aspects of sustainability,

sustainability issues/concepts, and/or sustainability challenges, but not the integrated concept of sustainability does not qualify.

For institutions that are a part of a larger system, plans developed at the system level are eligible for this credit.

Scoring

Each part is scored independently.

Part 1

An institution earns the maximum of 2 points available for Part 1 of this credit for having a published plan or plans that include measurable sustainability objectives related to Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Administration. Partial points are available based on the number of categories addressed. For example, a institution with published plans that include measurable objectives related to two of the four categories would earn 1 point (half of the points available for Part 1).

Part 2

An institution earns the maximum of 2 points available for Part 2 of this credit for including the integrated concept of sustainability as a major theme in its highest guiding document. Partial points are awarded for guiding documents that include the integrated concept of sustainability, but not as major theme. An institution with a guiding document that includes sustainability in a less prominent way earns 1 point for Part 2.

Reporting Fields

Required

Part 1

- ☐ Does the institution have a published plan or plans that include measurable sustainability objectives that address the following?
 - Sustainability in curriculum and/or research
 - If yes, provide:
 - A list or sample of the measurable sustainability objectives related to academics and the plan(s) in which they are published
 - Student, employee, or community engagement for sustainability
 - If yes, provide:
 - A list or sample of the measurable sustainability objectives related to engagement and the plan(s) in which they are published
 - Sustainability in operations
 - If yes, provide:
 - A list or sample of the measurable sustainability objectives related to operations and the plan(s) in which they are published
 - Diversity, equity, and inclusion; sustainable investment/finance; or wellbeing
 - If yes, provide:

- A list or sample of the measurable sustainability objectives related to administration and the plan(s) in which they are published

Part 2

- Is the integrated concept of sustainability (as opposed to just one aspect of sustainability) included in the institution's highest guiding document (e.g., published, institution-wide strategic plan or the equivalent)?

If yes:

- The institution's highest guiding document (upload or website URL)
- Which of the following best describes the inclusion of sustainability in the highest guiding document?
 - Sustainability is included as a major theme (e.g., in a section on sustainability, as a major institutional goal, or through multiple sustainability-focused objectives)
 - Sustainability is included as a minor theme (e.g., in passing, as part of a vision or values statement, or in objectives that are related to rather than focused on sustainability)

Optional

- The institution's sustainability plan (upload or URL)
- Does the institution have a formal statement in support of sustainability endorsed by its governing body (e.g., a mission statement that specifically includes sustainability and is endorsed by the Board of Trustees)?

If yes, provide:

- The formal statement in support of sustainability
- The institution's definition of sustainability (e.g., as included in a published statement or plan)
- Is the institution an endorser or signatory of the following?
 - The Earth Charter
 - The Higher Education Sustainability Initiative (HESI)
 - ISCN-GULF Sustainable Campus Charter
 - Pan-Canadian Protocol for Sustainability
 - SDG Accord
 - Second Nature's Carbon Commitment (formerly known as the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment), Resilience Commitment, and/or integrated Climate Commitment
 - The Talloires Declaration (TD)
 - UN Global Compact
 - Other multi-dimensional sustainability commitments (please specify below)

If yes to any of the above, provide:

- A brief description of the institution's formal sustainability commitments, including the specific initiatives selected above
- Website URL where information about the institution's sustainability planning efforts is available
- Additional documentation to support the submission (upload)
- Data source(s) and notes about the submission

- Contact information for a responsible party (an employee who can respond to questions regarding the data once it is submitted and available to the public)

Measurement

Timeframe

Report on the institution's published plan(s) at the time of submission. Draft documents are not eligible for this credit.

Sampling and Data Standards

Not applicable.

Standards and Terms

Climate action plan

A climate action plan outlines targets and strategies to reduce an institution's greenhouse gas emissions and improve campus resiliency in the face of global climate change.

Governing body

Governing body is defined as the highest governing body with ultimate authority at the site defined by the institutional boundary. This body might be called the board of trustees, board of governors, board of overseers, board of visitors or some other nomenclature. Institutions that are part of larger systems may have several boards that are involved in the institution's operation. The term governing body is intended to describe the board with the most direct involvement in campus governance and with the highest authority at that particular location.

Measurable sustainability objectives

Measurable sustainability objectives are concrete criteria used to assess progress toward the attainment of a sustainability goal or target (e.g. emissions reductions, reductions in resource use or waste, the establishment of new sustainability programs or initiatives, increases in the number of people impacted by sustainability programs and initiatives, and financial savings attributable to sustainability initiatives). In addition to being measurable, such objectives should be specific, achievable, relevant and time-bound (i.e., SMART criteria). Examples include:

- The institution will reduce its greenhouse gas emissions 30 percent by 2025."
- "100 percent of graduates will be able to demonstrate sustainability literacy by 2020 as measured by a standard sustainability literacy survey."
- "By 2020, all students and staff will be required to participate in cultural competence training" or "By 2020, the diversity and inclusion grant program will double the percentage of graduate students from underrepresented groups."
- "In 2018, the institution will roll out a student eco-reps program in all residence halls" or "By 2018, the sustainability committee will adopt a green office certification program."
- "The institution will save in excess of \$1 million over the next 10 years due to energy efficiency improvements."

Strategic plan

A strategic plan is the highest guiding document for an institution. Strategic planning is the process of defining a strategy or direction and making decisions on allocating resources to pursue the strategy. A

strategic plan thus serves as a statement of where the institution wants to go and how it plans to get there. Strategic plans often establish goals, objectives, strategies, and/or performance measures. An equivalent guiding document may be known under a different name.

Sustainability plan

A sustainability plan is a published document that outlines how an institution intends to advance its environmental, social, and economic performance. A sustainability plan may focus on targets and strategies to reduce an institution's greenhouse gas emissions or improve campus resiliency in the face of global climate change, or it may be more comprehensive in nature, as long as it includes measurable sustainability objectives.

Credit Example: Inclusion of sustainability in the institution's highest guiding document

A. Sustainability is included as a major theme:

- Institution A's strategic plan includes a chapter dedicated to "Sustainability" that explores in depth the institution's commitment to and plans to pursue sustainability.
- Institution B's strategic plan includes sustainability as one of 16 high-level goals: "Sustainable Campus. Institution B aspires to be a global leader in campus sustainability. We will achieve this objective by...".
- Institution C's strategic plan includes the concept of sustainability as a measurable objective, e.g., "We will measure our progress towards sustainability using metrics derived from STARS and achieve a STARS Platinum rating by 2025."
- Institution D integrates multiple sustainability-focused objectives throughout its strategic plan, e.g.:
 - "We will increase research into, and teaching on, sustainability challenges, and promote the campus as a living laboratory."
 - "We will achieve zero waste by 2030."
 - "With strong leadership and sustainability as a high priority in everything we do, the university will achieve carbon neutrality by 2030."

B. Sustainability is included as a minor theme:

- Institution E's strategic plan mentions the word "sustainability" several times, but does not explore in depth how the institution intends to pursue sustainability, e.g., through a high-level goal or sustainability-focused objectives.
- Institution F's strategic plan includes sustainability as one of the institution's values ("Sustainability, reflected in our shared commitment to preserve and protect our natural resources..."), but the plan does not include sustainability as a high-level goal or include sustainability-focused objectives.

- Institution G's strategic plan includes multiple sustainability-related goals and objectives (e.g., related to energy efficiency, biodiversity, and diversity and inclusion), but the plan does not articulate how they relate to the integrated concept of sustainability.