

OP 16: Commute Modal Split

5 points available

Rationale

This credit recognizes institutions where students and employees use alternatives to conventional single-occupancy vehicles to travel to and from the institution. Commute modal split is a common measure used to evaluate the sustainability performance of a transportation system. Using more sustainable modes of transport helps reduce local air pollution, traffic congestion, and GHG emissions, as well as helping to facilitate more sustainable land use patterns. Walking and cycling offer health benefits as well.

Applicability

This credit applies to all institutions.

Criteria

Part 1. Student commute modal split

Institution's students commute to and from campus using *more sustainable commuting options* such as walking, cycling, vanpooling or carpooling, taking public transportation or a campus shuttle, riding motorcycles or scooters, using a *zero-emissions vehicle*, availing of *distance education*, or a combination of these options.

Students who live on campus should be included in the calculation based on how they get to and from their classes.

Part 2. Employee commute modal split

Institution's *employees* commute to and from campus using more sustainable commuting options such as walking, cycling, vanpooling or carpooling, taking public transportation or a campus shuttle, riding motorcycles or scooters, using a zero-emissions vehicle, telecommuting, or a combination of these options.

Employees who live on campus should be included in the calculation based on how they get to and from their worksites.

Scoring

Each part is scored independently. The number of points available for each part of this credit varies based on the ratio of the full-time equivalent of students to the full-time equivalent of employees, as follows:

$$\text{Points available for Part 1} = 5 \times [(A / (A + B))]$$

$$\text{Points available for Part 2} = 5 \times [(B / (A + B))]$$

A = Total full-time equivalent student enrollment

B = Full-time equivalent of employees

Part 1

An institution earns the maximum points available for Part 1 when all students use more sustainable modes of transportation (i.e., alternatives to conventional *single-occupancy vehicles*) as their primary mode of transportation for getting to and from campus. Incremental points are awarded based on the percentage of students that use more sustainable modes as their primary means of transportation. For example, an institution for which 50 percent of students use more sustainable modes and the other 50 percent drive alone would earn half of the available points for Part 1.

Points earned for Part 1 are calculated automatically in the STARS Reporting Tool as follows:

$$\text{Points earned} = A \times (B / 100)$$

A = Total percentage of students that use a more sustainable commuting option (0-100)

B = Points available for Part 1

Part 2

An institution earns the maximum points available for Part 2 when all employees use more sustainable modes of transportation as their primary means of transportation for getting to and from campus. Incremental points are awarded based on the percentage of employees that use more sustainable modes as their primary means of transportation. For example, an institution for which 50 percent of employees use more sustainable modes and the other 50 percent drive alone would earn half of the available points for Part 2.

Points earned for Part 2 are calculated automatically in the STARS Reporting Tool as follows:

$$\text{Points earned} = A \times (B / 100)$$

A = Total percentage of employees that use a more sustainable commuting option (0-100)

B = Points available for Part 2

Reporting Fields

Required

- ☐ Total full-time equivalent student enrollment (undergraduate and graduate)
- ☐ Full-time equivalent of employees (academic and non-academic staff)

Part 1

- ☐ Has the institution gathered data about student commuting behavior?

If yes, provide:

- ☐ Total percentage of students that use more sustainable commuting options as their primary mode of transportation (0-100)
- ☐ A brief description of the method(s) used to gather data about student commuting (Include the timeframe for when the analysis was conducted and how a representative sample was reached, if applicable.)

Part 2

- Has the institution gathered data about employee commuting behavior?

If yes, provide:

- Total percentage of employees that use more sustainable commuting options as their primary mode of transportation (0-100)
- A brief description of the method(s) used to gather data about employee commuting (Include the timeframe for when the analysis was conducted and how a representative sample was reached, if applicable.)

Optional

- Percentage of students that use the following as their primary mode of transportation (0-100):
 - Single-occupancy vehicle (i.e., a conventional, hybrid, or low emissions car, truck, or van)
 - Zero-emissions vehicle
 - Walk, cycle, or other non-motorized mode (may include on-campus residents)
 - Vanpool or carpool
 - Public transport or campus shuttle
 - Motorcycle, motorized scooter/bike, or moped
 - Distance education (i.e., do not commute)
- Percentage of employees that use the following as their primary mode of transportation (0-100):
 - Single-occupancy vehicle (i.e., a conventional, hybrid, or low emissions car, truck, or van)
 - Zero-emissions vehicle
 - Walk, cycle, or other non-motorized mode (may include on-campus residents)
 - Vanpool or carpool
 - Public transport or campus shuttle
 - Motorcycle, motorized scooter/bike, or moped
 - Telecommuting for 50 percent or more of regular work hours
- Website URL where information about student or employee commuting 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 the most recent data available from within the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission.

Sampling and Data Standards

Institutions may use *representative samples* to gather data about commuting behavior. For information about how to measure commuting behavior, see the guidance provided by the [Massachusetts Rideshare Program](#) and the [South Coast Air Quality Management District](#).

Standards and Terms

Distance education

Consistent with U.S. IPEDS, distance education is education that “uses one or more technologies to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor and to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor synchronously or asynchronously”.

A distance education course is one in which “the instructional content is delivered exclusively via distance education. Requirements for coming to campus for orientation, testing, or academic support services do not exclude a course from being classified as distance education.”

A distance education program is one for which “all the required coursework for program completion is able to be completed via distance education courses”. Distance education students are students who are enrolled in distance education programs, or else exclusively in distance education courses.

Employees

Employees are defined as personnel paid by the institution and include full-time and part-time workers (as defined by the institution), and both academic staff (i.e., faculty members) and non-academic staff.

More sustainable commuting options

More sustainable commuting options include transportation modes that do not involve single-occupancy vehicles (i.e., conventional, hybrid, or low emissions cars, trucks, vans, sport utility vehicles, or the equivalent with only the driver in the vehicle). Thus, the following commuting options are classified as more sustainable for purposes of STARS reporting: walking, cycling, vanpooling or carpooling, taking public transportation, riding motorcycles or scooters, riding a campus shuttle, using zero-emissions vehicles, telecommuting, distance education, or any combination of these options.

Representative sample

A representative sample is a subset of a statistical population that accurately reflects the members of the entire population. A representative sample should be an unbiased indication of what the entire population is like. For example, in a student population of 1000 students in which 25 percent of the students are enrolled in a business school, 50 percent are enrolled in humanities programs, and 25 percent are enrolled in science programs, a representative sample might include 200 students: 50 business students, 100 humanities students, and 50 science students. Likewise, a representative sample of purchases should accurately reflect the institution’s total purchases, accounting for seasonal and other variations in product availability and purchasing.

Single-occupancy vehicle

A single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) is defined as a conventional, hybrid, or low emissions car, truck, van, sport utility vehicle, or the equivalent whose only occupant is the driver.

Zero-emissions vehicle

Consistent with the California Air Resources Board (CARB), zero-emissions vehicles (ZEVs) are defined as “vehicles which produce no emissions from the on-board source of power (e.g., an electric vehicle)”.