

University of Arkansas Sustainability Plan

The University of Arkansas Sustainability Plan is composed of three primary elements: Commitments, Initiatives, and Academic Programs.

1. Commitments: The UA community is participating in national organizations that are providing leadership in sustainability frameworks for academic institutions. These programs include:

A. The American College and University President's Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). The UA Climate Action Plan was developed in 2009 to benchmark and set goals for campus greenhouse gas emission reductions over the next 30 years. The Office for Sustainability and the UA Sustainability Council are revising the Climate Action Plan to include Current Status, Revised Goals, and Opportunities for Innovation. The revised and updated Climate Action Plan will be completed January 2014.

B. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The University of Arkansas participates in AASHE's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS) Program with a five tiered rating system (Reporter, Bronze, Silver, Gold, and Platinum). The University of Arkansas is currently rated as a Silver campus. The Office for Sustainability will be submitting a revised STARS 2.0 Report in February 2014 with the goal of achieving a Gold Rating.

C. The US Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification system. The LEED certification system uses a five step rating process (Certified, Bronze, Silver, Gold and Platinum) to evaluate buildings based upon a set of sustainability criteria. Since 2004 the University of Arkansas has constructed 1 LEED Certified (2004 – first project in state), 2 LEED Silver and 2 LEED Gold buildings. The University currently also has 13 registered LEED buildings in the active rating process and 19 buildings constructed utilizing LEED Silver precepts.

D. Green Building Initiative's (GBI) Green Globes assessment system. The Green Globes assessment system was codified as an American National Standards Institute (ANSI) standard in 2010. The University of Arkansas has two Green Globes-certified buildings, one One Globe and one Two Globe.

2. Initiatives: The UA community has engaged in six primary sustainability initiatives:

- A. Greenhouse gas emissions reduction;
- B. Energy conservation;
- C. Water conservation;
- D. Solid waste reduction;
- E. Food waste reduction;
- F. Campus ecosystem services.

Each initiative includes metrics development, benchmarking the metrics, setting goals for improvement, implementing strategies to meet the goals, and reporting the results of efforts across each initiative on an annual basis.

3. Academic Programs: Current sustainability academic programs include an undergraduate minor and a graduate certificate. As of August 2013 a total of 39 students have graduated with the undergraduate minor, and 110 students are currently enrolled. One student has graduated with the graduate certificate as of August 2013, and 10 are currently enrolled. A Bachelor of Science undergraduate degree and Master of Science graduate degree in sustainability are under development. These programs will be submitted for review for approval in Spring 2014.

Next Steps.

The University of Arkansas Sustainability Plan will be revised in the Spring 2014 semester using a stakeholder-driven process. The stakeholders will be represented by the UA Sustainability Council, composed of students, staff, faculty and City of Fayetteville representatives. The Council is also open to participation from stakeholders at large. The University of Arkansas Office for Sustainability will facilitate this process based upon the Sustainability Council Working Group framework. The Working Groups are organized under five focus areas:

1. Natural Systems;
2. Built Systems;
3. Managed Systems;
4. Social Systems; and
5. Academic Systems.

Each Working Group will identify key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics based on their focus areas. The Working Group will establish goals for each KPI and develop a strategy for implementing programs to reach those goals. The Office for Sustainability will develop an assessment and reporting program based on the outcomes of this stakeholder process.