

## **Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS): Curriculum (ER Credits 4-15) Call Notes**

September 25, 2008

### **General Questions**

**Q: Can you elaborate on the differences between “sustainability-focused” and “sustainability-related”?**

A: A sustainability focused course is *about* sustainability. Sustainability-related is a much wider category and includes courses in which sustainability is a component. Measuring and comparing sustainability in the curriculum is a relatively new area of measurement and assessment (compared to measuring operational sustainability), so the distinction between related and focused courses and the measurement methodology are new.

**Q: Should we use our own sustainability definitions to determine the sustainability value of a course?**

A: If you find that the definitions we have provided are not sufficient, please indicate that in the notes area of the credit/credits, and include how you elaborated on the definition or implemented it on your campus. The feedback you provide on our distinctions between “sustainability-focused” and “sustainability-related” will be very useful for us as we move forward with the next version of STARS.

### **Credit Specific Questions**

#### **ER Credit 4: Sustainability Course Identification**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

#### **ER Credit 5: Sustainability-Focused Academic Programs**

**AASHE asked: Do these percentages seem reasonable/achievable?**

A: Callers say that sustainability-related courses are much more common than sustainability-focused courses, but that they have not yet done enough research to know whether the percentages included in this credit are good.

#### **ER Credit 6: Sustainability-Related Academic Courses**

**AASHE asked: Do these percentages seem reasonable?**

A: Callers thought the percentages seemed reasonable. Analyzing data submitted through the pilot process will be helpful in understanding whether they should be adjusted.

#### **ER Credit 7: Sustainability Courses by Academic Department**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

#### **ER Credit 8: Sustainability Courses by Credit Hours**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

#### **ER Credit 9: Sustainability Learning Outcomes**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

#### **ER Credit 10: Sustainability Focused Undergraduate Academic Program**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

**ER Credit 11: Sustainability Focused Graduate Academic Program**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

**ER Credit 12: Sustainability Immersive Program**

**Q: Do major on campus events, such as earth week, count for this credit?**

A: No. This credit is meant to recognize programs that are immersive in a similar way to traditional study abroad programs. The program must be an official academic program and must meet the minimum time requirement of three weeks. We'll clarify the language in the credit to emphasize that the immersive experience must be an academic program for this credit.

**ER Credit 13: Non-Credit Sustainability Courses**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

**ER Credit 14: Non-Credit Sustainability-Focused Certificate Program**

A caller asked about sustainability-related certificate programs, which are more popular than sustainability-focused programs. If your institution has a non-academic sustainability-related certificate program, please indicate this in the notes section of the credit. It may be added to this credit or a new credit may be created around this topic for future versions of STARS.

**ER Credit 15: Sustainability Literacy Assessment**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

***Curriculum Tier Two Credits***

**1. Institution's Common Book is Sustainability-Related**

There were no questions or comments on this credit.

**2. Institution's First Year Experience is Sustainability-Related**

**Q: Would a sustainability dorm for first-year students count for this credit?**

A: No. The intention of this credit is to recognize common educational programs, such as first year seminars or common courses that are required for first year students. We'll change the language of the credit to clarify for future versions.