

**STARS Advisory Committees Focus Call  
Friday, November 30, 2007**

**Topic: Transportation**

*Participants:* Dedee DeLongpre (U. Florida), Jim Frierson (Advanced Transportation Technology Institute, Chattanooga), Will Toor (Boulder, CO), Lisa Underwood (Washington U. in St. Louis)

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## **Agenda**

### **1. Operations Credit 20: Fleet GHG Emissions - Trend**

*QUESTION 1: Are there better ways to get at the efficiency of the campus fleet that capture all the alternative fuel and vehicle options?*

Discussed whether or not to keep this credit, or convert it to different question. Arguments for omitting: a) outcome is fully subsumed under GHG emissions reduction credit (so it would be “double-counting” to leave it in, b) trend questions have problems, such as bias against schools that have already done a lot, c) emissions from fleet are minor compared to other campus sources, d) difficult to meaningfully make this an “intensity” question with threshold levels of emissions reductions.

Arguments for keeping: a) recognize individual efforts, b) promote continuous improvement, c) other credits are also subsumed under GHG emissions reduction credit, d) recognize role of university in leading the way; educating others; very visible way of teaching, e) important topic, maybe important enough to single out for special recognition rather than getting lost in “noise” of GHG emissions reduction credit.

Discussed possibly converting to Tier 2 credit, maybe a purchasing question. Participants were torn; could accept leaving it in or converting to Tier 2 credit.

Discussed converting to threshold question, maybe using GHG emissions per capita (but that’s likely biased against rural schools). Decided too difficult to set numerical thresholds in absence of adequate performance data.

### **2. Operations Credit 21: Alternative Transportation**

*QUESTION 1: Is this data available for most campuses?*

Data can be collected through commuter survey, although can be expensive and time-consuming for large schools. However, can get easier and less expensive once tool is developed, and administered maybe once every 3 yrs. Discussed methodology for collecting data. Currently no standard methodology available, but several schools have done surveys, such as U. Penn, U. Washington, CU-Boulder, UNC Chapel Hill, Berkeley, UC Davis UC Santa Cruz, U. IL Urbana-Champaign, UBC, UCLA. For documentation, AASHE can draw on these surveys and recommend certain standards for methodology. Can also talk to consulting firms such as Nelson-Nygaard who have created these surveys.

Discussed separating staff & faculty rate from student rate, making 2 separate credits, but decided better to keep them all together; students can use moral suasion to convince staff & faculty to bring their rate in line with students and increase overall threshold for everyone. Discussed using “transit ridership” data to answer question, but though it’s easier to collect, the data generally refers to trips not individuals (and there are other complications) so it would not work for this credit.

Berkeley among highest rates at present (90%), but 100% may be impossible. Recommended 3 instead of 4 thresholds - 25%, 50%, 90%. This reduces pts. from 4 to 3, which may be enough for this credit.

### **3. New Credits**

*QUESTION 1: Should we create an additional credit about campus air travel? If so, what should it be?*

Yes. Agreed that credit should include both “measuring GHG emissions from university-paid air travel” and “having a plan to reduce air travel-related emissions.” Plan would not require trend analysis; could

be very simple. Information on air travel may be difficult to collect, but should get easier after first time. Can probably capture 80-90% of air travel. Making the data transparent can be educational, eye-opening, and spur change; transparency over accuracy sometimes worthwhile.

*QUESTION 2: Should we create an additional credit about telecommuting? If so, what should it be?*

Discussed difficulty of setting meaningful threshold for such an indicator. Maybe best as Tier 2 credit. Criteria could include availability of telecommuting program, along with management training (requires different type of management). Would probably apply only to staff. Telecommuting not just transportation issue, but also equity and employee well being issue. Helps with childcare issues, etc.

Discussed online teaching as form of telecommuting, but discarded idea (too complex, can of worms).

Best Workplaces for Commuters may include telecommuting, and may have different levels of achievement that we could incorporate in Credit 22 for more points.

*QUESTION 3: Are there any other credits related to Transportation that should be considered for inclusion in STARS?*

Instead of telecommuting, maybe try a higher impact question - mode share or parking ratio. Mode share probably better indicator than parking ratio (ratio = total parking spaces/student & employee population) because it's a performance measure; parking is just one way to get there. But mode share may be biased in favor of urban campuses. In any case, mode share is covered in Credit 21.

Most other potential points for Transportation are Tier 2 – e.g., bike share program, car share program, etc.

Intent is to include points for innovation in final STARS. Volunteer committees for each category will evaluate pertinent innovation points. Several details around innovation points remain to be worked out.