

STARS Advisory Committees Focus Call

Topic: Sustainability Officers

Thursday, December 13, 2007

Instructions

9:00 – 10:00 Pacific Time (12:00 – 1:00 Eastern Time)

Dial-in: (712) 451-6000

Access code: 532393#

Goals of Call

- Move past what's wrong with indicators and toward best possible solutions
- Resolve lingering questions about existing indicators and identify potential new indicators

Conversational Rules

- Identify yourself before speaking each time
- Offer constructive ideas and stay focused on the question
- Avoid dominating conversation, i.e., speaking too long or too often

Agenda

1. GF-Prerequisite 1: Sustainability Committee
 - Is having some sort of formal body devoted to sustainability such an important first step that it should be a required to achieve a STARS rating?
 - Should we be more flexible about the exact form such a body takes, or should we be more specific about the composition of the body, how frequently it should meet, and who it reports to?
2. GF Credit 2: Sustainability Implementation Plan
 - Should formal adoption of the sustainability implementation plan be required? Given the potential risk that formal adoption may lead to a "weakened, compromise version" of the plan, is it more effective for the plan not to be formally adopted? (Which is likely to have the most impact?)
3. GF Credit 3: Sustainability Officer
 - How should we define "sustainability officer"? There is wide diversity in the functions and reporting structures of existing sustainability officers. Which structures and functions demonstrate greater commitment to sustainability?
 - How should we use the point structure to encourage the structures and functions that represent greater commitment?
4. GF Credit 5: Shared Governance
 - What are the best practices for shared governance?
 - What specific criteria would you require for earning this credit?
5. GF Credit 6: Reinvestment Mechanism
 - Is a reinvestment mechanism only valuable for the funding it provides or are there other important benefits of having such a mechanism in place? What are the other benefits?
6. GF Credit 7: Dedicated Sustainability Funding
 - What are the distinct types of "dedicated sustainability funding" that an institution can provide?
 - Are some types more important than others (e.g., more secure source; higher growth potential; bigger impact)?
 - Should we only give a credit to a particular type of dedicated funding, or should we offer additional credit opportunities for each type of funding?
7. New Credits
 - Should we add a new credit based on the "percentage of staff who have sustainability functions written into their job descriptions"? Do you have suggestions for defining "sustainability functions"? Who would

you include as “staff”? What percentage of staff should have sustainability functions in their job descriptions in order to earn a point?

- Should we create a credit for having a sustainability awards or other sustainability public recognition program? If so, how should we define the credit to ensure that such programs are meaningful and significant?
- Are there any other credits related to sustainability funding that should be considered for inclusion in STARS?

Governance & Finance Credits

GF Prerequisite 1: Sustainability Committee

Institution must have a formal, standing sustainability committee, council, taskforce, team, or other body with representation from students, staff, and faculty that meets routinely on an ongoing basis and advises on and/or implements policies and programs related to sustainability. The Committee's mission or charge must include social, economic, and environmental sustainability.

INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT

GF Credit 1: Guiding Documents

Institution must demonstrate a commitment to sustainability in its mission statement, strategic plan or equivalent guiding document. The guiding document must be at the institution level - a document at the department, school or college level is not sufficient to earn this credit. In a strategic plan (or equivalent), sustainability must be incorporated as a high-level goal, strategy, principle, or equivalent; a minor reference to sustainability in the strategic plan is not sufficient to earn this credit. A stand alone policy on sustainability does not count as an equivalent guiding document, nor does a campus master plan (which is addressed elsewhere in this checklist).

GF Credit 2: Sustainability Implementation Plan

Institution must have a formally adopted sustainability implementation plan.

GF Credit 3: Sustainability Officer

This indicator has two levels: Sustainability Officer I and II. Sustainability Officer I is a campus sustainability officer (e.g., coordinator or director) with campus-wide responsibility for sustainability – but who is working part-time or whose job description assigns less than 100% time to campus-wide sustainability. Sustainability Officer II is a full-time dedicated sustainability professional with permanent funding and campus-wide responsibility for sustainability.

GF Credit 4: American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment

Institution must be a signatory in good standing to the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment.

GF Credit 5: Shared Governance

Institution must provide opportunities for faculty, students and employees to participate meaningfully in campus governance. The existence of a student government, faculty assembly, and staff council—and campus leadership’s regular solicitation of their opinions on important campus issues is a minimum requirement for this credit.

FUNDING

GF Credit 6: Reinvestment Mechanism

Institution must have in place a revolving loan fund or similar internal mechanism for reinvesting the savings from sustainability projects into further sustainability projects. The fund may be of any size, it is the mechanism that is important for earning this credit.

GF Credit 7: Dedicated Sustainability Funding

Institution must have recurring funding whose use is restricted to sustainability projects (not including faculty research). This could take the form of a formal grant program that provides funding for internal sustainability projects.