STARS 2.2 Data Quality Series:

Part I: Navigating Submission Review

Presented by Monika Urbanski, AASHE
19 January, 2022

About AASHE

- An international association of **colleges & universities** working to create a sustainable future.

- **Mission:** To inspire and catalyze higher education to lead the global sustainability transformation

- Professional home for campus sustainability staff.
  - We offer resources for everyone in higher education: faculty, students, staff, administrators and businesses and nonprofits

AASHE Resources

- STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System): https://stars.aashe.org/

- Campus Sustainability Hub: http://hub.aashe.org

- Online Community: https://community.aashe.org/

- Education & Professional Learning opportunities: http://www.aashe.org/education/

- AASHE's Annual Conference (GCSHE): http://www.aashe.org/conference

2022 Webinars

- Jan. 26 - Learned Lessons and Tips for Grits and Green Revolving Funds
- Feb. 2 - Nature Rx: Using Collaborations and the Healing Power of Nature
- Feb. 3 - STARS 2.2 Data Quality Series: Deep Dive into Report Review
- Feb. 9 - Community Engagement Through Earth Day Celebrations
- Feb. 16 - EPA P3 Funded Project to Address Food Waste and Insecurity
- Mar. 23 - Declaring a Climate Emergency and Path to Implementation
- Apr. 27 - Zero Waste Goal Setting and the Challenges with Diversion
- May 4 - Thinking Ahead: A Tale of Joining Environmental & Social Justice Forces
- May 18 - Sustainability in Real and Imagined Spaces
- May 25 - Engaging Hearts, Minds and Hands: Tracking Sustainability Drivers
- Jun. 1 - Using Climate Change Games in the Classroom

2022 Workshops

- Feb. 10   From Climate Anxiety to Action: Cultivating a Radical Imagination
- Feb. 17   Building a Curriculum Development Program for Your Institution
- Mar. 3   Integrating Sustainability Literacy Across Your Curricula
- Mar. 31   From Start to Finish: How to Complete a STARS Report
- Apr. 7   Facilitating Student-Driven Interventions for Behavior Change

2022 Educational Programs
http://aashe.events/Education-Programs

March 8 – Aug. 23: Sustainability Change Leadership Development Program

- Peer-to-peer collaborative program that provides a diverse set of frameworks, tools, and models for leading organizational change. (Application deadline 2/25)

June 27 – 30: Sustainability Leaders Impact Accelerator

- Immersive, interactive program designed to equip you with change management tools to engage diverse campus stakeholders in today's fast-paced, hybrid work environment.

Today's Presenter

Monika Urbanski, Resources & Data Quality Senior Manager, AASHE

Goals & Agenda

Goals

- Help you submit a high quality STARS report!
- Provide overall and credit-specific tips across STARS

Agenda

- Overview of the collaborative review and revision process
- 2022 data sharing updates
- Data quality resources
- Issues across all credits
- Commonly misinterpreted credits
- Peer review matching
- Q&A

Collaborative Review & Revision

About the Process:

- Standard for all reports with a provisional rating (paid benefit)

- About one-third of credits reviewed (those with highest error rates)

- Reports are reviewed on a first-come, first-served basis

- Our Goal: Send review results within 30 days of submission date

- All identified issues must be addressed before reports are published

NEW Help Center article:
- The AASHE Staff Review Process

2022 Data Sharing Updates

- Sierra Cool Schools discontinued

- Princeton Review accepting:
  - Published reports with a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze rating;
  - Published reports with a Reporter designation; or
  - Data through a standalone survey

- Sustainable Campus Index
  - Published reports with a Platinum, Gold, Silver or Bronze rating are considered and recognized as Top Performers

- Deadlines:
  - **March 4, 2022**: Submit a report (2022 Princeton Review Green Guide and/or 2022 SCI)
  - **May 13, 2022**: Address review results, finalize and publish a report (SCI only)

Help Center:
- [How can my institution be included in The Princeton Review's Guide to Green Colleges?](#)
- [How can my institution be included in the Sustainable Campus Index (SCI)?](#)
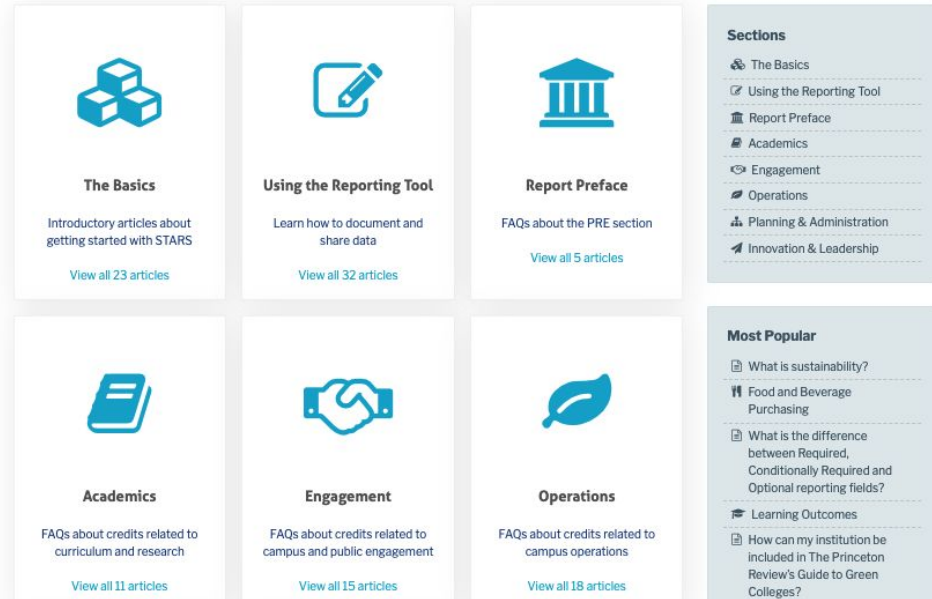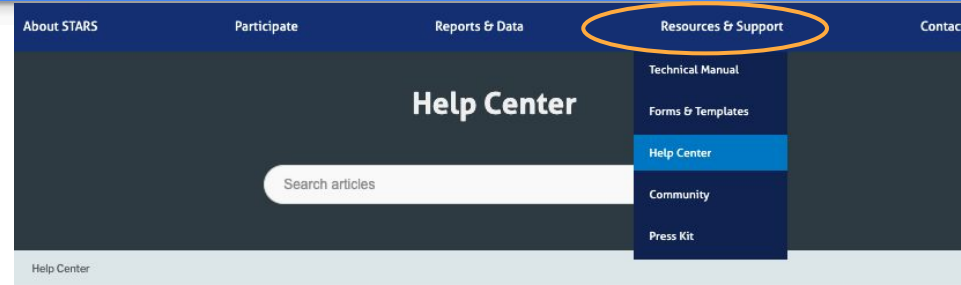
Data Quality Resources - The Help Center

STARS Help Center

- Credit articles have been **added/updated** for every standard credit.
- Access to:
  - Current credit language
  - FAQs
  - Reporting examples from 2020/2021 reports
  - Common issues to watch out for
  - Data quality videos

Other Data Quality Resources

- Online Communities
  - STARS Community - Accessible to anyone
  - **New**! STARS 2022 Cohort - Accessible to any institution with a full access subscription that has never submitted a report.

- STARS Benchmarking Tool
  - Comparative tool for scores & numeric fields
  - Identifying outliers

- STARS Review Template

Issues Across All Credits

- Supporting affirmative responses

- Aligning with credit timeframes

- Addressing data outliers

- Data consistency across credits

- Valid & working URLs

TIP: Don't forget about checking spelling and grammar! Consider using Grammarly or other online tools in your final checks.

PA 7: Support for Underrepresented Groups

Recruitment programs

* Does the institution have programs specifically designed to recruit students from underrepresented groups?

Yes ▾

* Does the institution have programs specifically designed to recruit academic staff from underrepresented groups?

Yes ▾

* Does the institution have programs designed specifically to recruit non-academic staff from underrepresented groups?

Yes ▾

* A brief description of the institution's programs to recruit students, academic staff, and/or non-academic staff from underrepresented groups

AVOID:

DO:

```
Students:
The Alliance for Minority Participation program is dedicated to increasing the number of
traditionally underrepresented students successfully completing STEM baccalaureate degree
programs. Programming includes a residential bridge program for incoming freshman and the Second-
year & Transfer Experience Program. The program also offers financial scholarships to make
college more attainable for low income and minority groups.

Non-Academic Staff:
The institution has initiated a new cluster-hiring program that has been launched to support the
hire of BIPOC faculty members to address underrepresentation of these groups among faculty:
website.link

Academic Staff:
The institution has established a post-graduate recruitment program for BIPOC faculty members
entering academia: website.link
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TIP: For all affirmative claims that result in a score boost, be sure to provide supportive text or documentation.

PA 9: Committee on Investor Responsibility

Timeframe

Report on current committee composition and practices at the time of submission.

OP 16: Commute Modal Split

Timeframe

Report the most recent data available from within the three years prior to the anticipated date of submission.

TIPS:

- Consider establishing a staggered 3-year assessment schedule for credits that require assessments.

- Some exceptions to timeframe requirements can be made for certain plans, assessments and inventories due to COVID-19 considerations. See STARS Reporting & COVID-19 Help Center article for more info.

Common Issue: Addressing Data Outliers

- Score Outliers

- Numeric Outliers

- Comparative Outliers

TIPS:
- The [STARS Benchmarking Tool](#) can help in comparing numeric responses and scores, and identifying typical and outlier scores and numbers.
- Double-check all numeric responses to ensure that criteria are met and there are no data entry errors.
- If you are reporting a valid outlier (sometimes due to exemplary performance or change in operations), be sure to clarify this in the descriptive fields and/or Notes field.

OP 6: Clean & Renewable Energy

Status	Last Updated	Possible Points	Points Earned
✔ Complete	12/19/18 12:01PM	4.00	4.00

- According to the <u>STARS Benchmarking Tool</u> and <u>STARS Score Display</u>, the average score for this credit is less than one-half point.

- A high score is subject to greater scrutiny during review.

TIP: A recent analysis of Average Percentile Points by STARS Credit can be used to check for score outliers, and can be accessed in the <u>AASHE Staff Review Help Center article</u>.

OP 7: Food & Beverage Purchasing

* Percentage of total annual food and beverage expenditures on products that are sustainably or ethically produced ❓

49.2

(0-100)

- A response above 20 percent is a numeric outlier, which may indicate data inconsistencies or poor sampling, or an exemplary practice.
  - Descriptive responses should clarify
- A close review of the inventory is warranted when a high number is reported.

OP 5: Building Energy Efficiency

Performance year energy consumption

Stationary fuels and thermal energy, performance year (report MMBtu) ❓

	MMBtu
Stationary fuels used on-site to generate electricity and/or thermal energy	1,000.0
	MMBtu ❓

Baseline year energy consumption

Stationary fuels and thermal energy, baseline year (report MMBtu) ❓

	MMBtu
Stationary fuels used on-site to generate electricity and/or thermal energy	10,000.0
	MMBtu ❓

- A **ten-fold decrease** in energy consumption between Performance Year and Baseline Year is unlikely.

- Significant decreases between years are likely to result in inquiries.

- Comparative outliers can also be found for scores and numeric responses between reports (e.g., 2019 and 2022)

Common Issue: Consistency across Credits

Academic Departments

- PRE 5: Academics & Demographics
- AC 1: Academic Courses

Weighted Campus Users

- PRE 5: Academics & Demographics
- EN 1: Student Educators Program
- EN 7: Employee Educators Program
- EN 13: Community Service
- OP 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- OP 16: Commute Modal Split
- OP 18: Waste Minimization & Diversion
- OP 21: Water Use
- PA 15: Workplace Health & Safety

Emissions Figures

- OP 1: Emissions Inventory & Disclosure
- OP 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Building Space Figures

- PRE 4: Operational Characteristics
- OP 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- OP 4: Building Operations & Maintenance
- OP 5: Building Energy Efficiency
- OP 21: Water Use

Total Campus Area

- PRE 4: Operational Characteristics
- OP 9: Landscape Management

Total Energy

- OP 5: Building Energy Efficiency
- OP 6: Clean & Renewable Energy

TIP: Complete PRE 4 and PRE 5 EARLY so you can copy contents into other credits as you complete your report.

Common Issue: Consistency across Credits - Weighted Campus Users

Weighted Campus Users

PRE 5: Academics & Demographics
EN 1: Student Educators Program
EN 7: Employee Educators Program
EN 13: Community Service
OP 2: Greenhouse Gas Emissions
OP 16: Commute Modal Split
OP 18: Waste Minimization & Diversion
OP 21: Water Use
PA 15: Workplace Health & Safety

PRE 5: Academics & Demographics

* **Number of students enrolled for credit** ❓

1,000.0

EN 1: Student Educators Program

* **Number of students enrolled for credit** ❓

1,000.0

➔ copy from PRE-5

Common Issues: URLs

Required URL:

AC 3: Undergraduate Program

* Does the institution offer at least one sustainability-focused major, degree program, or the equivalent for undergraduate students (I.e. an interdisciplinary academic program that concentrates on sustainability as an integrated concept)? ❓

| Yes |

If yes, provide:

* Name of the sustainability-focused undergraduate degree program

* A brief description of the undergraduate degree program

* The website URL for the undergraduate degree program

Optional URL:

PA 9: Committee on Investor Responsibility

Optional Fields

Website URL where information about the institution's committee on investor responsibility is available

TIP: Before submitting, check required and optional URLs to validate that they still work and are not behind a firewall (especially in cases where a URL is required).

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits

Standard credits

- AC 1: Academic Courses
- AC 2: Learning Outcomes
- AC 9: Research & Scholarship
- EN 1: Student Educator's Program
- EN 11: Inter-Campus Collaboration
- EN 14: Participation in Public Policy
- OP 4: Buildings Operations & Maintenance
- OP 7: Food & Bev Purchasing
- OP 11: Sustainable Purchasing
- PA 2: Sustainability Planning
- PA 3: Inclusive & Participatory Governance
- PA 7: Support for Underrepresented Groups
- PA 10: Sustainable Investment

Exemplary Practice credits

- 1. Academy & Industry Connections
- 2. Anchor Institution Network
- 17. Green Cleaning Certification
- 23. Laboratory Animal Welfare
- 38. Sustainability Course Designation
- 39. Sustainability Office Diversity Program
- 45. Work College

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits - Academics

- ## Multiple Academics Credits
  AVOID: Include courses, programs, and/or outcomes that don't meet the definition of sustainability focused/inclusive courses, programs and outcomes
  DO: Assess SDGs along with sustainability content

- ## AC 1: Academic Courses
  AVOID: Counts between inventory and amount reported in credit do not align
  DO: Course descriptions align with definition of "sustainability-focused/inclusive".

- ## AC 2: Learning Outcomes
  AVOID: Part 1 Misinterpretation of "sustainability-focused" learning outcomes
  DO: Clear justification as to why a course was included

- ## AC 9: Research & Scholarship
  AVOID: Omitting researchers' research topic/justification of inclusion from inventory

STARS Help Center: [Academics Credit Articles](#)

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits - Engagement

- **EN 1: Student Educator's Program** and **EN 7: Employee Educators Program**
  AVOID: Counting programs or hours that do not have a sustainability peer education focus
  DO: Describe clearly the peer-to-peer education aspects of program(s)

- **EN 11: Inter-Campus Collaboration**
  AVOID: Listing informal mentoring and review under "Ongoing mentoring relationship" and "Peer review" sections
  DO: Focus on *higher education* partnerships and collaboratives

- **EN 14: Participation in Public Policy**
  AVOID: Referencing programs or commitments without a policy advocacy focus
  DO: Clarify implicit/explicit support by top administration

STARS Help Center: Engagement Credit Articles

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits - Operations

- ### OP 4: Buildings Operations & Maintenance
  AVOID: Counting buildings that align with LEED BD+C certification and other design-focused certifications
  DO: Fully support responses for single-attribute and multi-attribute programs (see guiding language)

- ### OP 7: Food & Bev Purchasing
  AVOID: Referencing standards or certifications that don't qualify
  DO: Check your responses against the STARS 2.2 list of approved certifications

- ### OP 11: Sustainable Purchasing
  AVOID: Referencing purchasing practices and commitments
  DO: Include a link or upload of the written policy or standard, as well as the policy language

STARS Help Center: Operations Credit Articles.

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits - Planning & Administration

- ## PA 2: Sustainability Planning
  AVOID: Part 2: Misclassifying sustainability as "major theme" in the highest guiding document
  DO: Part 1: Cite the measurable objectives AND the formal plans where they are found

- ## PA 3: Inclusive & Participatory Governance
  AVOID: Counting President's cabinet or similar committee of high-level administrators as representative of "non-academic staff"
  DO: Part 4: Reference regular efforts to provide avenues for *typical community members* to give feedback

- ## PA 7: Support for Underrepresented Groups
  DO: Support all affirmative responses in the descriptive fields

- ## PA 10: Sustainable Investment
  AVOID: Double-counting under Part 1
  DO: Reference *publicly available* sustainable investment policies with *positive screens*

STARS Help Center: Planning & Administration Credit Articles

Commonly Misinterpreted Credits - Innovation & Leadership

- ## Academy & Industry Connections
  DO: Support all affirmative responses in the descriptive fields

- ## Anchor Institution Network
  DO: Pursue only if the program meets the definition of "anchor institution"

- ## Green Cleaning Certification
  DO: Reference a cleaning service certification (rather than purchase of certified products)

- ## Laboratory Animal Welfare
  DO: Pursue only if there is a written standard in place that *explicitly prohibits* pain and distress

- ## Sustainability Course Designation
  DO: Pursue only if there is an updated course catalog listing of sustainability courses across disciplines

- ## Sustainability Office Diversity Program
  DO: Support all affirmative responses in the descriptive fields

STARS Help Center: [Innovation & Leadership Credit Articles](#)

Data Quality Opportunities

- Save the Date!
  - [Part II of the STARS Data Quality Series: Deep Dive into Report Review](#)
  - Thursday, February 3 at 3:00 pm - 4:00 pm EST
  - Presenters:
    - Monika Urbanski, AASHE
    - Alex Davis, Arizona State University

- Peer review matching opportunity!

Q&A

Thank you!

Monika Urbanski

Senior Manager, Resources & Data Quality

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE)

19 January, 2022

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