



February 17, 2016

Dear AASHE STARS Reviewers,

Since UC Merced's inception in 2005, the campus established its Triple Zero goal commitment to include zero net energy, zero landfill waste, and zero net carbon emissions. To accomplish the goal of zero landfill waste, in 2014 UC Merced implemented a waste sorting line, a key component of the waste management strategy at UC Merced.

The waste sorting line team incorporates a group of sixteen students who collect recycle, compost, and landfill waste from all campus buildings excluding dining and housing facilities. Waste from each building is then transported to the UC Merced recycling center. It is loaded onto a hopper in which a conveyor transports the materials onto the sorting line. The students separate waste material into 15 or more categories. After the separation the recyclable materials are sold. Any compostable materials are sent to a local compost facility. Non-recyclable or compostable material is sent to the landfill.

The measurable outcomes associated with the program include a waste diversion rate of 80% for the upper part of campus, which excludes dining and housing. This is more than a 30% percentage point increase from 2014-2015 diversion rates.

The waste sorting line is innovative because:

1. It is a new and unique practice that is uncommon to universities.
2. The campus is able to provide actual weight measurements of all waste material collected.

Sincerely

Matt Hirota
Waste Management Coordinator