

MONTEVALLO SUSTAINABILITY PLAN (updated 2022)

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University of Montevallo
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UNIVERSITY of MONTEVALLO
SUSTAINABILITY



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UM: Leading the way toward a sustainable future

Executive Summary

The University of Montevallo has been a leader in the region in modeling sustainable principles in higher education. We were honored as a 2016 U.S. Department of Education Green Ribbon School, and in 2019 we received a bronze rating from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (AASHE-STARs). We have taken many notable steps towards greening our campus, but in order to provide measurable sustainability benefits, we need a strategic vision.

Sustainability is one of the core values stated in UM's 2021-2026 Strategic Plan, with specific goals including leadership in sustainability and an annual sustainability report. This strategic plan serves as the baseline upon which to build further sustainability efforts, and the annual sustainability plan will highlight our progress toward short-, medium-, and long-term goals.

We organize our goals around the AASHE-STARs reporting system, as STARs provides an effective roadmap towards increased sustainability; we also hope to improve our STARs rating as part of this effort. We have rated all of the potential actions in the STARs program as one of 4 levels:

- 1) We already succeed in this area, so we must continue to support this work.
- 2) Top priority for near-term expansion; goal would be to complete tasks in advance of 2022 submission to STARs.
- 3) Second priority for expansion, complete in time for the 2025 submission.
- 4) Not a current priority, either because the work is outside of our scope or because the work requires a sustainability coordinator or other dedicated resources.

“We take pride in seeing our entire campus community contribute to the University’s sustainability efforts.”

-DeAnna Smith, SCOB

Current initiatives

UM already does a lot for sustainability, so as part of our efforts to expand our programs, we must continue to invest in our current work.

1. Offer faculty sustainability workshop once every 3 years.
2. Offer one sustainability-themed study-away experience every year.
3. Offer sustainability incentives through Undergraduate Research.
4. Include sustainability information in orientation/welcome events.
5. Continue to support Environmental Club, Green Fund, Sustainability Events, ES student worker, RA partnerships, UM Organic Community Garden, Recycling on campus.
6. Conduct one sustainability behavior campaign per year.
7. Continue to engage with AASHE and the state level sustainability in higher ed group.
8. Provide and promote vegetarian and vegan options through Falcon Foods.
9. Manage and protect Ebenezer Swamp Ecological Preserve.
10. Utilize 3rd party waste remover for hazardous waste, electronic waste.
11. Re-administer campus diversity & inclusion survey.
12. Support Montevallo MADE, TRIO SSS, McNair, and minority recruitment efforts.
13. Maintain expanded psychiatric and substance abuse options through BCBS.
14. Support Environmental Studies Program.
15. Conduct campus sustainability survey at least once every three years. This includes literacy, behavior, and engagement, which fulfills multiple elements of the STARS program.

Near-term priorities

In addition to supporting current sustainability initiatives, we propose these actions to grow our sustainability efforts in advance of the next STARS submission:

- 1) Implement sustainability training as part of employee orientation programs.
- 2) Pursue membership with fair trade organizations.
- 3) Adopt sustainable purchasing policies for paper, cleaning/janitorial products, and general purchasing.
- 4) Adopt policies and programs to support sustainable commuting (telework policies, carpool incentives, etc.).
- 5) Adopt sustainable water use policies and procedures to reduce campus water use.
- 6) Improve waste minimization and diversion efforts – recycling education, compost expansion.
- 7) Increase proportion of students who engage in cultural competency training.
- 8) Adopt Integrated Pest Management policy.
- 9) Review report to receive points under Reporting Assurance (new credit)
- 10) Disclose investments to the public

Mid-term priorities

Our next set of goals we plan to accomplish between 2022 and 2025, when we again submit to AASHE STARS.

1. Offer faculty incentives for sustainability research.
2. Establish peer educator program.
3. Adopt EPEAT technology purchasing policies.
4. Adopt sustainable investment policies.
5. Establish sustainability learning requirement for graduation.
6. Establish employee peer educator program.
7. Develop and offer staff sustainability workshop.
8. Support legislation for sustainability.
9. Adopt vehicle purchasing policy.
10. Adopt policy formalizing community engagement in decision-making.
11. Establish investor responsibility committee.
12. Conduct employee satisfaction survey.
13. Hire Sustainability Coordinator.
14. Purchase Renewable Energy Credits to offset energy use.
15. Conduct GHG inventory and reduce emissions against baseline.
16. Expand ValloCycle program/space to create a more robust city/university partnership.

Long-term priorities

The priorities will require either a sustainability coordinator or other resources allocated to their implementation, and/or participation at higher levels of institutional governance.

1. Develop and utilize energy and water use dashboards and reduce resource use against baseline.
2. Certify new buildings under LEED or other green building code.
3. Conduct food purchasing audit.
4. Divert construction waste from landfill on future projects.
5. Reduce number of aid-eligible students who take loans to attend UM.
6. Commit to providing all employees with a living wage.
7. Provide open access to UM-produced research.

The AASHE Goals (detailed list)

CR	Title	Points available	2019 score	un-claimed points	current status/points	goal	priority level
AC 1	Academic Courses	14	8.32	5.68	We can only improve this score by increasing the % of classes that include sustainability.	continue to offer faculty workshop every 3 years. Hire new ES prof.	1
AC 5	Immersive Experience*	2	2	0	Need to regularly offer sustainability study-away lasting one week or more.	one sustainability-themed experience per year.	1
AC 7	Incentives for Developing Courses	2	2	0	We received full credit for offering Sustainability Across the Curriculum workshop	offer workshop once every 3 years.	1
AC 9	Research and Scholarship*	12	8.54	3.46	We received points for the percentage of faculty/students engaged in sustainability research	continue to offer sustainability incentive through UR	1
AC 10	Support for Research*	4	1	3	We received one point for our library budget	Continue to offer UR support - could that get us some here too.	1
EN 2	Student Orientation*	2	2	0	offer bike tour of campus, open to all	continue to offer orientation program	1
EN 3	Student Life	2	2	0	E Club, Garden, Green Fund, Events, Outdoor Scholars, RA collaborations, student worker	Continue these varied initiatives	1
EN 4	Outreach Materials and Publications	2	2	0	Sustainability website, social media, green fund signs, brochure, bike tour, bike registration, RA events, orientation flyers (walking tour hadn't been invented yet but will count)	Continue these varied initiatives	1
EN 5	Outreach Campaign	4	4	0	Campus eco-challenge, Take back the tap	One campaign every 3 years, must target both students and employees	1
EN 11	Inter-Campus Collaboration	3	2	1	Presentations at conferences, membership to AASHE and the state level sustainability group	continue to support these relationships	1
EN 13	Community Service*	5	2.56	2.44	This is for the number of students engaging in service - increase score by increasing %	Support community service initiatives	1
OP 5	Building Energy Efficiency	6	2.53	3.47	Some points from low energy usage? Some points from lights on sensors, efforts to reduce use? Unclear.	continue to encourage energy efficiency in campus spaces	1

OP 8	Sustainable Dining*	2	1.75	0.25	sustainable dining policy, vegetarian/vegan options, meatless Mondays, signage, outreach, eliminating single use items, no trays, composting	continue to support these efforts	1
OP 10	Biodiversity*	1-2	2	0	Managing Ebenezer Swamp and conducting plant inventory	continue to manage and monitor Ebenezer Swamp	1
OP 20	Hazardous Waste Management	1	0.5	0.5	use third party waste remover, minimize hazards, e-waste recycling	continue to support this	1
PA 1	Sustainability Coordination	1	1	0	Full points for sustainability committee/officer (Dr. Caplow)	continue to support sustainability committee & Dr. Caplow	1
PA 5	Assessing Diversity and Equity	1	0.88	0.12	D&I Campus Survey in 2019	continue to administer this survey	1
PA 7	Support for Underrepresented Groups	3	1.75	1.25	ND statement, minority recruitment, TRIO SSS/McNair,	Montevallo MADE will likely improve score here - support MADE	1
PA 14	Wellness Program	1	1	0	Expanded BCBS with psychiatric/substance abuse services	maintain current healthcare options	1
AC 3	Undergraduate Program*	3	3	0	We received full credit for having one program (ES)	none	1
AC 6	Sustainability Literacy Assessment	4	0	4	Administered joint survey Fall 2021	Conduct sustainability survey at least once every 3 years.	1
EN 6	Assessing Sustainability Culture	1	0	1	Administered joint survey Fall 2021	administer sustainability survey at least once every 3 years	1
EN 8	Employee Orientation	1	0	1	cover sustainability in new employee orientation	Establish protocol for new employee orientation that mentions sustainability	2
EN 10	Community Partnerships	3	2	1	ValloCycle, Mural Camp, Earth & Sky Camp	continue partnerships, expand ValloCycle space, add capstone	2
EN 15	Trademark Licensing*	2		2	Would need to join the Fair Labor Association and/or Workers' Rights Consortium	Pursue memberships with these organizations	2
OP 6	Clean and Renewable Energy	4	0	4	Renewable energy	purchase RECs or invest in renewable project	2
OP 11	Sustainable Procurement	3	0	3	need written policies on sustainability, LCA, criteria for purchasing	Adopt sustainable purchasing policy	2

OP 13	Cleaning and Janitorial Purchasing	1	0.01	0.99	need to purchase sustainable cleaning and paper products	expand sustainable product purchasing - esp paper	2
OP 14	Office Paper Purchasing	1	0	1	need to purchase paper with recycled or FSC content	adopt sustainable paper policy	2
OP 16	Commute Modal Split* (combined two goals from last submission)	5	0.41	4.59	receive points for percentage of student body/employees engaging in sustainable commuting	conduct survey again, increase number of sustainable commuters	2
OP 17	Support for Sustainable Transportation	2	0.6	1.4	bike racks, showers, bike share	support policies for telecommuting, EV charging, vanpool program	2
OP 18	Waste Minimization and Diversion	8	4.29	3.71	amount of waste diverted by campus users, take tables, surplus	increase waste diverted - improve recycling rates, reusing from residence halls	2
OP 21	Water Use	5	0.51	4.49	reduced water use relative to baseline	reduce water usage more - need policies and infrastructure	2
OP 22	Rainwater Management	2	0	2	treat rainwater as resource	wouldn't we get credit for using the old well for landscaping?	2
PA 2	Sustainability Planning	4	0	4	Need to finish this plan	Adopt sustainability strategic plan	2
PA 6	Diversity and Equity Coordination	2	1.44	0.56	Chief DI Officer, Diversity Task Force, Black Heritage Committee, Safe Zone,	Increase proportion of students who participate in cultural competence/training activities	2
OP 9	Landscape Management*	2	0	2	Need full IPM commitment	adopt IPM policy	2
PA 11	Investment Disclosure*	1	0	1	make snapshot of investments public	disclose investments	2
PA 4	Reporting Assurance	1	0	1	A new credit opportunity – independent review of application	Will do this before submission	2
AC 8	Campus as a Living Laboratory*	4	2.8	1.2	AASHE STARS and capstone projects addressing various areas counted.	more systematic project-based learning on campus. Offer incentives to faculty?	3
EN 1	Student Educators Program*	4	0	4	Peer educator program - needs funding and training	Establish peer educator program	3
OP 12	Electronics Purchasing	1	0	1	need to purchase EPEAT equipment	explore feasibility of EPEAT commitment	3
PA 10	Sustainable Investment*	4	0	4	Sustainable investments and investor engagement policies	Adopt sustainable investment policies	3

AC 2	Learning Outcomes*	8	1.01	6.99	this number will go up a little as we have more ES graduates - it would also increase if we had institution-level commitments to sustainability education, so say, a gen ed requirement.	explore sustainability requirement for graduation	3
EN 7	Employee Educators Program	3	0	3	Peer educator program - needs funding and training	Establish employee educators program	3
EN 9	Staff Professional Development	2	0	2	sustainability workshop/training	need to look at examples online - maybe could adopt something	3
EN 14	Participation in Public Policy	2	0	2	need to support legislation for sustainability, lobbying must be formally supported by admin and not on free time	Engage in lobbying for sustainability policies, get administrative support for these efforts	3
OP 15	Campus Fleet*	1	0.02	0.98	receive points for sustainable vehicles in fleet	adopt purchasing policy for vehicles	3
PA 3	Participatory Governance	3	1	2	Points for student on BoT, Staff/Faculty Senate	Adopt written policies about community stakeholder engagement	3
OP 1	Emissions Inventory and Disclosure (goal split from OP2 last submission)	10	0	10	GHG emissions inventory	We need to purchase software for this.	3
PA 9	Committee on Investor Responsibility*	2	0	2	Need to establish investor responsibility committee	Establish investor responsibility committee	3
PA 13	Assessing Employee Satisfaction	1	0	1	Employee satisfaction and engagement survey	conduct satisfaction survey	3
AC 11	Open Access to Research*	2	0	2	Open access commitment.	Not going to pursue.	4
OP 02	Greenhouse Gas Emissions (goal split from OP1 last submission)	8	0	8	Reduction of GHG emissions from baseline year	Need to establish inventory first	4
OP 4	Building Operations and Maintenance*	5	0	5	Operating buildings under LEED type certification, using some kind of management like energy or water dashboard	This cannot be done without a sustainability coordinator.	4
OP 3	Building Design and Construction*	3	0	3	certify new buildings under LEED, LBC, other green codes	This cannot be done without a sustainability coordinator.	4
OP 7	Food and Beverage Purchasing*	6	0	6	Third party verified, local and community based. Minimize conventional animal products.	This cannot be done without a sustainability coordinator.	4

OP 19	Construction and Demolition Waste Diversion*	1	0	1	need to divert waste from construction from landfill	not worth pursuing given the amount of construction/lack of sustainability coordinator.	4
PA 8	Affordability and Access	4	2.31	1.69	financial support for low-income students, representation on SGA	lower percentage of students who require loans - without sustainability coordinator, not pursuing.	4
PA 12	Employee Compensation	3	0.06	2.94	higher percentage of employees need to make living wage	living wage commitments	4
PA 15	Workplace Health and Safety	2	0.77	1.23	number/% of workers with workplace injuries	reduce number of workplace injuries	4