

U of S Sustainability Literacy Assessment Questions

Introduction

This survey is intended to assess the sustainability literacy and cultural behaviours of the University of Saskatchewan community. It is being conducted as part of the university's Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Ratings System (STARS) submission in 2020 and will help inform the university's actions as related to sustainability in the coming years. First-year students who complete the sustainability literacy assessment will be followed up with in subsequent years to address year-over-year changes in sustainability literacy. For any comments or questions regarding this survey, please do not hesitate to reach out to sustainability@usask.ca.

Breakdown:

- Sustainability definitions: 2 questions
- Social/financial aspects: 2 questions
- Science concepts: 2 questions (1 GHGs, 1 Waste)
- Local considerations: 2 question (1GHG, 1 Waste)
- Climate impact: 2 questions (1 enviro/1 social)
- Solutions: 2 questions (1 personal/1 global)

Sustainability Literacy

This section of the survey asks you about your existing knowledge on sustainability. Please note that this is NOT intended to be a quiz. There is no need to feel you need to study or look anything up for this section of the survey. Please just select the option you think is correct. All answers are valid. If you are really stuck on a question, feel free to select "Don't know".

1. The most widely used concept of sustainability includes three dimensions of sustainability. Which one of the following is NOT one of the three dimensions?
 - a. Society
 - b. Democracy
 - c. Environment
 - d. Economy
 - e. Don't know
2. Which of the following is the most commonly used definition of sustainable development?
 - a. Creating a government welfare system that ensures universal access to education, healthcare, and social services.
 - b. Building a neighborhood that is both socio-demographically and economically diverse.
 - c. Meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
 - d. Setting aside resources for preservation, never to be used.
 - e. Don't know
3. Pollution and toxic industries are examples of environmental burdens. Clean water and air are examples of environmental benefits. Environmental justice tries to more fairly distribute burdens and benefits. Is this true or false?

- a. True
 - b. False
 - c. Don't know
4. The term, "Corporate Social Responsibility" is a business model that guides companies to be committed to the "triple bottom line". Which of the following does the triple bottom line focus on?
- a. Three forms of financial reporting
 - b. A balance of environmental, social, and financial wellbeing
 - c. Offering health, dental, and vision care to employees
 - d. Incorporating community, labor, and government representatives on the board of directors
 - e. Don't know
5. Which of the following statements about greenhouse gases is TRUE?
- a. Greenhouse gases allow solar radiation to escape from the Earth's atmosphere.
 - b. Methane is not considered a greenhouse gas.
 - c. Greenhouse gases help cool the Earth.
 - d. Carbon dioxide is the most prevalent greenhouse gas.
 - e. Don't know
6. Which of the following statements about waste is FALSE?
- a. Organic waste will decompose under the right conditions.
 - b. Manure, leaves and grass clippings are all types of organic waste.
 - c. Organic waste generates methane when it decomposes in a landfill.
 - d. Composting organic waste reduces the amount of plastics being landfilled.
 - e. Don't know
7. Which of the following items does the City of Saskatoon and the U of S campus accept in its single-stream recycling system? (Please check all that apply)
- a. Plastic pop bottles
 - b. Glass jars
 - c. Styrofoam container
 - d. Aluminum foil
 - e. Plastic grocery bags
 - f. Cardboard box
 - g. Metal cans
 - h. Don't know
8. Which of the following energy sources primarily powers electricity in Saskatchewan?
- a. Natural gas
 - b. Coal
 - c. Wind
 - d. Solar

- e. Hydropower
 - f. Nuclear power
 - g. Don't know
9. According to a majority of scientists, which of the following conditions is a predicted effect of climate change?
- a. Less severe weather
 - b. Expansion of deserts
 - c. Increased food security
 - d. Decrease in sea level
 - e. Don't know
10. The following statements describe the relationship between environmental issues and socioeconomic issues. Which one of them is true?
- a. Poorer people are disproportionately impacted by climate change because they are more likely to be geographically restricted into areas threatened by water scarcity, vector-borne disease, and/or potential damage from storms and floods.
 - b. Wealthier people are disproportionately impacted by climate change because they are more likely to own properties and business that can be negatively influenced by water scarcity, vector-borne disease, and/or potential damage from storms and floods.
 - c. People of all socioeconomic classes are equally impacted by climate change, but for different reasons.
 - d. Environmental issues and socioeconomic issues are unrelated.
 - e. Don't know
11. According to experts, which one of the following actions would **MOST** reduce your environmental footprint?
- a. Recycling all recyclable packaging
 - b. Reducing consumption of all products
 - c. Buying products labeled "eco" or "green"
 - d. Buying the newest products available
 - e. Don't know
12. The 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP-21) resulted in the famous "Paris Agreement". Which of the following is the Paris Agreement?
- a. To protect biodiversity and end the deforestation of the world's rainforests
 - b. To keep global temperature rise well below 2°C pre-industrial levels and to pursue a path to limit warming to 1.5°C
 - c. To limit sea level rise to 3 feet above current levels
 - d. To pursue a goal of 100% clean, renewable energy

13. Which of the following energy sources are considered renewable? (Check all that apply)
- Gasoline
 - Geothermal
 - Nuclear
 - Wood
 - Solar
 - Coal
 - Hydropower
 - Wind
14. What is the largest source of global greenhouse gas emissions?
- Agriculture and forestry
 - Transportation
 - Electricity and heat production
 - Buildings
 - Don't know
15. What is meant by the term "carbon footprint"?
- The age of an item found at an archaeological site
 - The carbon left on the ground each time you take a step
 - The size of the carbon chain in a given quantity of gasoline
 - The greenhouse gases released in burning fossil fuels due to a person's or organization's activities
 - Don't know
16. Ozone forms a protective layer in the earth's upper atmosphere. What does ozone protect us from?
- Acid rain
 - Climate change
 - Sudden changes in temperature
 - UV rays
 - Don't know
17. Which of the following is an example of sustainable forest management?
- Setting aside forests to be off limits to the public
 - Never harvesting more than what the forest produces in new growth
 - Producing lumber for nearby communities to build affordable housing
 - Putting the local communities in charge of forest resources
 - Don't know
 -
18. Many economists argue that electricity prices in North America are too low because:
- They do not reflect the costs of pollution from generating the electricity
 - Too many suppliers go out of business

- c. Electrical companies have a monopoly in their service area
 - d. Consumers spend only a small part of their income on energy
 - e. Don't know
19. Which of the following is the most commonly used definition of economic sustainability?
- a. Maximizing the share price of a company's stock
 - b. Long-term profitability
 - c. When costs equal revenue
 - d. Continually expanding market share
 - e. Don't know
20. Fair Trade means
- a. Synonymous with free trade
 - b. Requiring market clearing or equilibrium price set by market forces
 - c. A dynamic of the law of comparative advantage in which countries produce with their strengths
 - d. The result of lowering barriers to trade and eliminate tariffs
 - e. An approach to global trade aiming to ensure that producers in developing countries receive a fair price for their products.
21. Many economists argue that electricity prices in the U.S. are too low because:
- a. They do not reflect the cost of pollution and other social effects from generating the electricity.
 - b. Too many suppliers go out of business.
 - c. Electric companies have a monopoly in their service area.
 - d. Consumers spend only a small part of their income on energy.
 - e. Don't know

U of S Sustainability Culture Assessment Questions

This section of the survey asks you about your current attitudes and personal practices related to sustainability. There are no right or wrong answers for any of the questions in this section. We are only interested in your opinions.

1. How important are environmental issues to you personally?
 - a. Extremely important
 - b. Very important
 - c. Moderately important
 - d. Slightly important
 - e. Not at all important

2. How environmentally sustainable would you consider your lifestyle to be?

- a. Extremely
 - b. Very
 - c. Moderately
 - d. Some
 - e. Not very
 - f. Not at all
 - g. Don't know
3. How environmentally sustainable would you LIKE your lifestyle to be?
- a. Extremely
 - b. Very
 - c. Moderately
 - d. Some
 - e. Not very
 - f. Not at all
 - g. Don't know
4. During the past year, on a scale of 1-5 (1 = never and 5 = always, or N/A) please rank how often you did the following when you had the opportunity:
- a. Adjust thermostats to save energy (cooler in winter, warmer in summer)
 - b. Turn off lights when not used
 - c. Turn off power strip/electronics when not used
 - d. Recycle electronics
 - e. Print double-sided
 - f. Wash clothes in cold water
 - g. Reuse containers/bags
 - h. Walk, skate, bike, bus, van, or carpool
 - i. Carry a reusable drinking mug with you
 - j. Shop with minimal packaging in mind
 - k. Buy used goods (clothes, electronics, etc.)
 - l. Make sustainable food choices (organic, locally grown, humanely treated, etc.)
 - m. Buy products with an eco-label (e.g. office supplies, electronics, clothing, household products)
 - n. Conserve water (turn off faucets, shorter showers)
5. Have you engaged in voluntary service in any areas related to sustainability/environmental/eco-social justice issues in the past year?
6. How engaged are you in sustainability-oriented events and programs on campus?

- a. Extremely
 - b. Very
 - c. Moderately
 - d. Some
 - e. Never
7. How engaged are you in sustainability-oriented events and programs on campus or in the broader community?
- f. Extremely
 - g. Very
 - h. Moderately
 - i. Some
 - j. Never
8. Please indicate all of the following sustainability student events at the U of S that you were aware of or took part in before taking this survey: (check all that apply)
- a. Campus Sustainability Week
 - b. U of S Campus Farmer's Market
 - c. Hike, Bike, and Roll
 - d. Winter Cycling Workshops
 - e. Bike to work day
 - f. Clothing swap events
 - g. EcoHack
 - h. None of the above
9. Before taking this survey, which of the following sustainability student programs at the U of S were you aware of or involved in? (check all that apply)
- i. Green Pack
 - j. McEown Community Garden
 - k. Sustainability Revolving Fund
 - l. USSU Sustainability Committee
 - m. Living Lab
 - n. Campus sustainability tours
 - o. None of the above
10. Before taking this survey, which of the following sustainability services at the U of S were you aware of? (check all that apply)
- a. Reusable mug discount
 - b. Plastic-bag free bookstore

- c. Plant-based options at Marquis
 - d. Local food week at Marquis
 - e. Single-stream recycling service
 - f. Battery and electronics recycling
 - g. Bike lockers
 - h. U-Pass transit pass
 - i. Water-bottle filling stations
 - j. None of the above
11. Before taking this survey, which of the following sustainability projects at the U of S were you aware of? (check all that apply)
- a. John Mitchell Building Solar Panel Array
 - b. Horticulture Building Solar Panel Array
 - c. College of Agriculture and Bioresources Rooftop Garden
 - d. Composting of Marquis Culinary food waste
 - e. LED lighting retrofits
 - f. LEED building Certifications
 - g. Green Globes Building Certification
 - h. None of the above
12. Before taking this survey, which of the following sustainability plans and policies at the U of S were you aware of? (check all that apply)
- a. UofS Sustainability Plan
 - b. UofS Climate Action Plan
 - c. UofS Water and Energy Conservation Policy
 - d. None of the above
13. Please indicate your level of agreement with these statements:
- a. It's important to me that the U of S has a strong commitment to environmental sustainability.
 - b. I try to make environmentally sustainable choices in the way I live.
 - c. I chose the U of S in part because of its reputation for sustainability.
14. Which of the following sources of information informed your answers for this survey? (Check all that apply)
- a. A class
 - b. Television
 - c. Books
 - d. News articles
 - e. Academic journal articles
 - f. Social media

- g. News websites/blogs
- h. I guessed
- i. Other (please specify) [textbox]