

October 1, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

On behalf of all of us at Western, I am pleased to submit the fourth campus-wide *Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System* (STARS) assessment of our university's sustainability programs and operations.

I affirm that this report is an accurate appraisal of Western's comprehensive efforts to become a sustainability leader in the postsecondary sector. And I am proud that our latest assessment has resulted in Western maintaining a Gold rating.

Western is one of Canada's largest research-intensive universities, covering 480 hectares of land¹, of which 386.5 hectares were analyzed for this report. In the 2020/21 academic year, our total enrolment was just under 42,000 undergraduate and graduate students, including nearly 6,700 from our affiliated university colleges². In support of our students, we employ up to 12,000 part-time and full-time staff and faculty members³ during our busiest times of year.

With approximately 370 faculty members (25% of all members) engaged in sustainability research, Western has tremendous intellectual capacity to help address the world's social, economic, and environmental issues. Our researchers embrace interdisciplinary collaboration, across campus and with external stakeholders, as a key means to tackling complex problems.

At Western, we make it a priority to integrate sustainability into every aspect of our campus operations. Since our last STARS assessment in 2018, two additional campus buildings have received LEED® certification, bringing our total to thirteen. We have also developed a low-carbon strategy for the district heating and cooling systems on campus, and we've begun transforming this mission-critical infrastructure through a Deep Energy Retrofit Program.

Our sustainability performance has been celebrated by several third-party award programs in recent years, including:

¹ Western University (2021). Facts & Figures 2019-2020. Retrieved from: <https://www.uwo.ca/about/whoweare/facts.html>

² Western University (2021). Five Year Enrolment Comparison. Retrieved from: https://www.ipb.uwo.ca/documents/2021_five_year_enrolment_comparison.pdf

³ Western University (2021). Working at Western. Retrieved from: <https://www.uwo.ca/hr/working/index.html>

- **2020 Skål Sustainable Tourism Award in the Educational Programmes and Media Category**—recognizing work led by Western’s Hospitality Services Division with a focus on responsible sourcing; sustainable dining; education, awareness & collaboration; and waste reduction & diversion; .../2
- **2019 Provincial and National Green Building Excellence Awards**—recognizing Western’s Amit Chakma Engineering Building for efficient, effective, and impactful design and construction;
- **2020 *Times Higher Education* Impact Rankings**—recognizing Western as 52nd among global universities on performance measured relative to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

As a Charter participant in the *Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education’s* (AASHE) STARS program, Western is continuously looking for new and innovative ways to become a more sustainable institution. In our new strategic plan, [*Towards Western at 150*](#), sustainability is explicitly named as an imperative for the university. And as part of that commitment, we are developing a new Climate & Sustainability Strategy to advance our efforts.

We are proud of this report and look forward to strengthening our sustainability efforts in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,



Alan Shepard