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The University of Georgia  
Office of Sustainability

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April 23, 2014

STARS Innovation Credit 4: Campus Sustainability Grants Program

Dear AASHE STARS Committee:

I, Kevin Kirsche, verify that the following description of the Campus Sustainability Grants program at UGA is accurate to the best of my knowledge:

The University of Georgia Campus Sustainability Grants Program administered by the UGA Office of Sustainability provides competitive funding for student-proposed projects and initiatives designed to advance sustainability through education, research, service and campus operations. Awarded projects address priorities outlined in UGA's 2020 Strategic Plan to actively conserve resources, educate the campus community, influence positive action for people and the environment, and provide useful research data to inform future campus sustainability efforts. Interdisciplinary projects designed to inspire, beautify and uplift - as well as to inform and conserve - are encouraged. A campus-wide call for grant proposals is initiated each fall and awarded projects receive up to \$5,000 for implementation by student-led teams during the spring semester.

To date, 26 Campus Sustainability Grants have been awarded for a total of \$87,000 over the last four academic years; 4 grants totaling \$13,000 in 2011, 6 grants totaling \$20,000 in 2012, 7 grants totaling \$26,000 in 2013, and 9 grants totaling \$28,000 in 2014. Through implementing Campus Sustainability Grant projects, UGA's students continue to provide innovative solutions to current challenges in sustainability. Awarded grants, carried out by students with leadership and guidance from UGA faculty and staff mentors, have institutionalized into ongoing academic and research programs, new campus standards for facility design and construction, standard operating procedures, as well as increasing awareness of – and solutions to - sustainability challenges.

Development, submission, selection and implementation of Campus Sustainability Grant proposals provide invaluable learning opportunities for UGA students. For many students, the Campus Sustainability Grant submission is their first experience in grant proposal writing. Navigating this process is educational, even when – and perhaps especially when – the proposal is not selected for funding. The annually formed Campus Sustainability Grants Selection Committee is comprised of 50% students, providing an often unseen look at grants selection from the side of the grantor. Implementation of Campus Sustainability Grant projects provides students with real-world experiences in managing schedules and project budgets; coordinating with multiple individuals, departments and organizations; adaptive leadership and problem-solving; and evaluation of the effectiveness of their actions. These experiences have led to personal growth and professional opportunities, affirmed

through student feedback regarding the value of the Campus Sustainability Grant process in their acceptance into graduate programs and securing of jobs after graduation.

Please visit [http://sustainability.uga.edu/get-involved/students/sustainability\\_grants/](http://sustainability.uga.edu/get-involved/students/sustainability_grants/) or feel free to contact me at [kkirsche@uga.edu](mailto:kkirsche@uga.edu) or 706-542-0588 for further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'K. Kirsche', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Kevin Kirsche  
Director of Sustainability  
University of Georgia