

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS  
AT URBANA - CHAMPAIGN

Office of the Chancellor  
Swanlund Administration Building  
601 East John Street  
Champaign, IL 61820



March 9, 2015

AASHE—STARS Steering Committee  
1536 Wynkoop St., Suite 100  
Denver, CO 80202

Dear STARS Steering Committee,

On behalf of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, I am pleased to affirm our submission in the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). The STARS report was coordinated by our Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE), which collected data from all across the Illinois campus. Achieving a Gold STARS rating reflects a campus-wide commitment to sustainability in learning, discovery, and engagement.

Illinois is committed to excellence in sustainability, energy conservation, and environmental stewardship. In our recent campus strategic planning exercise, Visioning Future Excellence, sustainability was identified as a high priority, leading to the establishment of iSEE. The mission of the Institute is to foster actionable interdisciplinary research to address fundamental challenges in sustainability, energy and environment; to provide national and international leadership in these areas through interdisciplinary education and outreach activities; and to develop and implement strategies for a sustainable environment on campus and beyond.

One of iSEE's first major steps was to create a process for developing and implementing campus sustainability policies and initiatives. This process was prepared in collaboration with Facilities & Services, the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, and the Office of the Provost. I approved this process in June 2014. At the heart of it are three levels of review.

- Six topical Sustainability Working Advisory Teams (SWATeams) have been constituted, each of which consists of two members of our faculty, two staff members, and two students, surrounded by topical Consultation Groups of experts and stakeholders from around the campus and community. The SWATeams are charged with proposing new sustainability procedures and initiatives. Their recommendations are transmitted to the Illinois Climate Action Plan Working Group (iWG).
- The iWG, composed of midlevel administrators as well as faculty and student representatives, is charged with evaluating SWATeam recommendations, transmitting those with small or medium budgetary or policy impact to the appropriate campus units, and forwarding high-impact recommendations to the Sustainability Council.
- I chair the Sustainability Council which consists of the highest-level decision makers on our campus and includes faculty, staff, and student representation.

A revision to our 2010 Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) is being prepared through this process as well. We expect to submit the 2015 iCAP to the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment in May.

Our campus has made great progress in reaching the goals set out in the 2010 iCAP, for example, by reducing energy consumption by 24% and water consumption by 23%. Although we are proud of our early successes in cultivating a culture of sustainability, we realize there is much more to be done. As an institution of higher education, we have the ability—and indeed, the obligation—to educate both our students and the general public about these issues and to devote resources to accelerate innovative discoveries for addressing them.

Illinois remains deeply committed to becoming a model of sustainability for all universities and communities. I truly believe a cleaner sustainable environment not only protects our health but also fuels our passions and inspires our dreams.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phyllis M. Wise", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Phyllis M. Wise  
Chancellor