



June 30, 2021

Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
2401 Walnut Street
Suite 102
Philadelphia, PA 19103

Dear Sustainability Colleagues and AASHE Staff:

On behalf of the University of Montana (UM), I am excited to share our 2021 Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) submission. Our sustainability officers collaborated with administrators, faculty, and staff across campus to build this holistic picture of sustainability efforts at UM and I affirm the accuracy of this report.

In 2017, UM earned a Bronze rating. We are proud to be submitting a more robust report at this time. Thank you for taking the time to review this submission and consider a higher rating to reflect the good work taking place at UM.

The last year has been a challenging one for many reasons, but it has been inspiring to see our campus community use these challenges as opportunities for growth and change. UM has plenty of opportunity to grow, still, in our implementation of sustainability best practices, but we have been able to achieve some real progress despite the obstacles presented by budget constraints and the pandemic. What you'll find in our report is a lot of consistency (steady progress in areas upon which we set our sights in 2017), coupled with some really impressive, unique wins that make UM stand out amongst our peers in the northern Rockies.

Highlights from this report include:

- A strong sustainability-related research portfolio with some impressive distinctions. UM was ranked 8th in the nation for collaborative research (Leiden Ranking 2020), with some of our wildlife biology, conservation biology, and geosciences researchers continuing to be among the top "most cited" researchers in the country.
- The creation of several new sustainability-related degrees and certificates, including a certificate in Indigenous Knowledge and Environmental Sustainability and a degree in Environmental Science and Sustainability.
- Several new professional positions and programs designed to support student success and sustainability simultaneously, like our Food Pantry, the hiring of a Director of Inclusive Excellence, and the hiring of a Tribal Outreach Specialist.
- Strategies to reduce waste and manage materials more responsibly, including the hiring of our first Industrial Materials Manager, the implementation of our first student-facing compost program in our student union, and a pilot "All in the Hall" program that aims to increase diversion rates in one of our largest academic buildings on campus.

Office of the President

- The successful addition of 3 more fully electric buses to our student-owned and operated transit fleet, adding to the 2 electric buses we purchased in time for our 2017 STARS report.

Thank you for your continuing development of STARS, your efforts to hold us to high standards of success in this work, and the opportunity to showcase our progress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Seth Bodnar". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Seth" and last name "Bodnar" clearly distinguishable.

Seth Bodnar
President