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STARS Evaluation Committee  
AASHE

Ref: Innovative aspects of Penstemon 2.0

In Penstemon 2.0 we have pioneered a new approach to sustainability across the curriculum, based on our success over the years with the Penstemon Project for Sustainability Across the Curriculum. The heart of this approach is to deal with academic departments throughout our schools and colleges, asking them to set their own goals for how many courses should include a sustainability component.

The results have been remarkable. We piloted the program with a handful of departments, who discussed their own curricula and set their own goals. Political Science decided that 50% of their courses should include a sustainability component. The Economics department committed to a goal of 35%, while Civil Engineering and Anthropology both committed to a goal of 75%.

As evidence of the innovative character of Penstemon 2.0, AASHE highlighted our approach during the Educating for Sustainability Webinar Series. We were also asked to provide workshops on the Penstemon 2.0 approach at the AASHE and CHESC conferences this past year. Additionally, I have been asked to train leaders at an increasing number of universities, such as the University of California system, where I conducted a “train the trainers” workshop in December for two faculty from each of their system’s ten campuses.

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