



VirginiaTech®

College of Natural Resources
and Environment

Office of the Dean (MC0324)

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Dear AASHE STARS Steering Committee and Program Staff,

It is my pleasure to affirm that the Sustainability Boot Camp training program meets the intention of and criteria for the AASHE STARS Innovation Credit.

The College of Natural Resources and Environment at Virginia Tech prepares the future generation of leaders to deal with the complex natural resources issues facing our planet. Our focus is on advancing the science of sustainability. USA Today College recently ranked our natural resources and conservation programs No. 1 in the nation for the third year in a row.

The Sustainability Boot Camp's innovative "pre-onboarding" approach connects classroom learning to the workplace unlike any other sustainability education program: we let employers drive the content by asking them what they look for in new hires; teach students how to discover sustainable solutions within their disciplines; immerse students in a professional environment to prepare them for the working world; and partner across sectors to create new internship and employment pipelines.

Teaching sustainability as a lens for problem-solving, rather than as an academic major, is unique to our Boot Camp. Extensive market research has shown that there are no other non-credit trainings that combine sustainability and workplace preparedness at the undergraduate level. Additionally, facilitating Think Tank Challenges that lead into internship positions is a creative and innovative way to teach problem-solving, sustainability concepts, and professional skills at the same time.

Virginia Tech is a leader in campus sustainability efforts and the higher education community. Our Boot Camp training model is an excellent example of the continued innovation and creativity that is needed to reach our goals.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Winistorfer
Dean, College of Natural Resources and Environment

Invent the Future