

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
MANUAL OF ADMINISTRATIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

SECTION: Campus Sustainability
AREA: Sustainability - General

Number: 14.01.01

SUBJECT: Campus Sustainability

I. PURPOSE AND SCOPE

Universities are charged with educating the next generation of decision makers and finding solutions to complex issues through research. The University of Houston commits to defining sustainability, measuring sustainability performance, and translating these measurements into a comprehensive strategy for university sustainability improvements. This document outlines the framework, roles, responsibilities, and priorities for sustainability at the University of Houston.

II. POLICY

The University of Houston is committed to providing a campus that proactively and effectively manages its impact on natural resources and fosters an inclusive and equitable environment while considering long-term cost reduction. Acting with the support of the President and the Board of Regents, the Office of Sustainability will develop and implement policies and practices to create a sustainability culture that is integrated campus-wide.

III. DEFINITIONS

- A. Sustainability: Sustainability is the capacity to meet the interconnected social, environmental, and economic challenges of the present and enable future generations to thrive.
- B. Office of Sustainability: The [University of Houston Office of Sustainability](#) serves as the hub for campus sustainability efforts. Engaging the campus and community, the office fosters collaboration and educates individuals about social, economic, and environmental factors that impact today's society and generations to come. The office is composed of full-time employees and part-time student staff and housed in the University Services department of the Division of Administration and Finance.
- C. Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE): The [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education \(AASHE\)](#) provides administrators, faculty, staff, and students, as well as the businesses that serve them, with thought leadership and essential knowledge resources; opportunities for professional development; and a unique framework for demonstrating the value and competitive edge created by sustainability initiatives in higher education.
- D. Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS): The [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System \(STARS\)](#) is a transparent, self-reporting framework administered by AASHE for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.
- E. Princeton Review Green Guide: The [Princeton Review's Green Guide to Green Colleges](#) profiles colleges and universities with the most exceptional commitments to sustainability based on their academic offerings and career preparation for students, campus policies, initiatives, and activities. The profiles in the guide give college applicants information

about each school's admission requirements, cost and financial aid, and student body facts and stats.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES

A. Roles and responsibilities of the Office of Sustainability include, but are not limited to:

1. Facilitating collaboration between faculty, staff, students, and community organizations to advance sustainability on campus and in the region.
2. Collecting institutional sustainability data through recognized campus sustainability reporting tools, like [AASHE STARS](#) and the [Princeton Review Green Guide](#).
3. Leading sustainability communications, outreach, and events.
4. Directing the student sustainability team.
5. Serving as the point of contact for UH sustainability to campus and community members.
6. Supporting the campus sustainability advisory committee, composed of voting members from Faculty Senate, Staff Council, and Student Government, with additional non-voting members from various departments on campus.
7. Proposing sustainability initiatives proposed by campus and community members to the sustainability governing bodies.
8. Serving as an authoritative body to advise campus departments on sustainability issues.

B. Roles and responsibilities of the Office of Sustainability include, but are not limited to:

1. Establishing campus sustainability priorities based on assessments of institutional sustainability performance.
2. Managing priority programs and projects to improve campus sustainability performance.
3. Recommending campus-wide strategies that will improve sustainability performance to university administration and leadership.
4. Advising campus staff, faculty, and leadership about sustainability projects that will improve sustainability performance in their departments.

V. REPORTING AND PRIORITIES

A. The University, through the guidance of the Office of Sustainability, commits to assessing institutional performance through sustainability priorities. These priorities are determined through indicators included in the current industry standard for higher education sustainability assessments. The Office of Sustainability staff will determine the mandatory reporting mechanism for the University based on standards in the campus sustainability community. Current industry standards used by the University include [AASHE STARS](#) and the [Princeton Review Green Guide](#).

- B. Members of the campus community who work in the following sustainability priority areas are expected to work with the Office of Sustainability to report accurate information for institutional sustainability assessments and reports.
- C. The University, through the guidance of the Office of Sustainability, commits to improving sustainability performance for the institution based on the sustainability assessment results. Members of the campus community who work in the following sustainability priority areas are expected to make improvements to their practices once the campus sustainability assessment is complete and the Office of Sustainability have identified areas of improvement.
- D. Sustainability priorities based on the current reporting mechanisms, include but are not limited to:
 - 1. Academics and curriculum;
 - 2. Research;
 - 3. Campus engagement;
 - 4. Public engagement;
 - 5. Air and climate;
 - 6. Buildings;
 - 7. Energy;
 - 8. Food and dining;
 - 9. Grounds;
 - 10. Purchasing;
 - 11. Transportation;
 - 12. Waste;
 - 13. Water;
 - 14. Sustainability coordination and planning;
 - 15. Diversity and affordability;
 - 16. Investment;
 - 17. Wellbeing and work; and
 - 18. Innovation and Leadership.

VI. REVIEW AND RESPONSIBILITY

Responsible Party: Associate Vice President for Administration

Review: Every three years on or before June 1

VII. APPROVAL

Emily A. Messa

Associate Vice President for Administration

Jim McShan

Senior Vice President for Administration and Finance

Renu Khator

President

Date of President's Approval: March 30, 2018

REVISION LOG

Revision Number	Approved Date	Description of Changes
1	01/13/2010	Initial edition
2	06/20/2016	Applied revised MAPP template and added new Revision Log to meet current documentation standards. Rewrote entire procedure to reflect current operating practices. Added Associate Vice President for Administration to approval cycle
3	03/30/2018	Removed the Campus Sustainability Committee from all text, including Section III.C and Section IV.B. Added information to Section IV.A.6 about the composition of the campus sustainability advisory committee