2021 Sustainability & Climate Action Plan

Core Components

Administrative Support
Curriculum
Engagement
Research
Administrative Support
Core

Aspiration: Create a community-driven, award-winning AASHE STARS Gold Sustainability program at OHIO

Goal 1: Achieve recognition for innovative and robust sustainability planning, coordination and governance
(Metric: AASHE STARS rating; Sustainability rankings)

**Potential strategies**
- Transform OHIO Sustainability into model engagement ecosystems utilizing the Sustainability Hubs
- Apply for national sustainability rankings and awards
- Plan and implement compelling sustainability events; encourage green events in campus/community
- Increase marketing of sustainability events; initiatives and achievements to OHIO campuses; communities and alumni
- Track and third-party verify carbon, nitrogen, and air pollutant emissions through internationally accepted reporting protocols
- Maintain reporting for all other internal and external sustainability commitments

**Benefits of Goal #1 Strategies**
- Reputation (Presidential commitment fulfillment)
- Reduction opportunities (emissions, O&M, etc.)
- Social (engagement, D&I, etc.)

**Costs of Goal #1 Strategies**
- Staff time (O&M)

**Notes and Definitions**
1AASHE STARS Gold is a rating from the AASHE Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System(STARS). Gold is the second highest rating; as of 2019 only 4 institutions have the highest rating, Platinum.

Goal 2: Build resiliency into processes and infrastructure (Metric: existence of resiliency plans and procedures)

**Potential strategies**
- Review best practices for resiliency & sustainability integration at other institutions
- Create recommendations for Chief Facilities Officer

**Benefits of Goal #2 Strategies**
- Resiliency/risk reduction
- Emission reductions
- O&M reductions
- Reputational/enrollment benefits

**Costs of Goal #2 Strategies**
- Staff time (O&M)

Goal 3: Create funding mechanisms for sustainability initiatives outside of General Funds (Metric: $/year)

**Potential strategies**
- Collaborate with Advancement to develop a philanthropic case for sustainability; continue to promote sustainability in annual giving materials
- Apply for grant funding
- Create sustainability revolving loan fund

**Benefits of Goal #3 Strategies**
- Source of capital funds
- Carbon emissions reductions
- Reputational/enrollment benefits

**Costs of Goal #3 Strategies**
- Staff time (O&M)

**Fun fact:** Ohio University students, faculty and staff emit an average of 4.35 MTe-CO₂ per full time equivalent (FTE) per year.
Curriculum
Core

Aspiration: Ensure that all OHIO students understand and can appropriately apply the framework of sustainability

Where we are now

- Benchmark 8: Improve sustainability literacy of students, faculty and staff. In progress; literacy is improving, according to surveys.
- Benchmark 9: Increase enrollment in sustainability-themed courses, majors and programs. Target of 5% increase since Dec 2011 easily met.
- Benchmark 11: Provide undergraduate students with a sustainability-focused major, degree program or equivalent. Target achieved.

Moving forward

Goal 1: Increase opportunities for formal, experiential, and community-engaged sustainability learning experiences (Metric: See subgoals)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subgoals and Targets</th>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduates enrolled in sustainability majors¹</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Graduate students enrolled in sustainability majors¹</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students enrolled in sustainability certificate programs¹</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OHIO course offerings including sustainability²</td>
<td>2.3%</td>
<td>7.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students taking course with sustainability learning outcomes³</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Students involved in Sustainability Project Laboratory⁴ curricular and co-curricular projects</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>200</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed strategies for Goal 1:

- Create incentives and training program for sustainability course development
- Develop sustainability learning outcomes to embed in general education, colleges, departments, experiential learning program, community engagement (C-courses) and honors programs
- Showcase and expand sustainability components of existing programs, majors, certificate programs, co- and cross-curricular experiential learning and community engagement experiences
- Incorporate sustainability into immersive study experiences
- Explore sustainability course designation

Benefits of Goal #1 Strategies

- Enhanced academic quality
- Proactive environmental behavior

Costs of Goal #1 Strategies

- Faculty/staff time

Moving forward

Goal 2: Assess and strengthen sustainability culture and literacy (Metric: performance on a literacy survey or test²)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FCY17</th>
<th>FY26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>71% of campus community answered 6 questions about climate correctly</td>
<td>60% of campus community is sustainability-literate using a more rigorous test³</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proposed strategies for Goal 2:

- Adopt standard literacy survey such as Sulitest
- Engage with Libraries to create online curricular sustainability resources
- Create strong OHIO sustainability network through the Sustainability Hub programs

Benefits of Goal #2 Strategies

- Enhanced academic quality
- Proactive environmental behavior

Costs of Goal #2 Strategies

- Staff time (O&M)
- Reputational gains

Notes and Definitions

1. Sustainability majors at OHIO include Urban Planning & Sustainability and HTC Environmental Studies (undergraduate) and Environmental Studies (graduate). Certificate programs include Environmental Studies and Environmental Studies-Sustainability.
2. Course offerings including sustainability are defined by AASHE in the AC1 section of the Technical Manual.
3. Sustainability learning outcomes are defined by AASHE in the AC2 section of the Technical Manual. More details are in the appendix.
4. See Sustainability Project Laboratory webpage.
5. In FY17, sustainability literacy was defined as being able to correctly answer 6 simple questions about the climate. For FY26, the target will be using a more rigorous literacy test.

All OHIO carbon emissions are related to curriculum in one way or another.
**Engagement**

**Core**

**Aspiration:** Create transformative sustainability engagement ecosystems for and with alumni, students, faculty, staff & community members

---

**Where we are now**

- Benchmark 8: Improve sustainability literacy of students, faculty and staff. **Target met and strategies in progress.**
- Benchmark 33: Encourage residency in City of Athens for Athens campus employees. **Target partially met, but benchmark will be abandoned in new plan.**

---

**Moving forward**

**Goal 1:** Create, enhance and track transformative sustainability engagement ecosystems (Metric: number of ecosystems created/enhanced)

- **FY17:** 1
- **FY26:** 16

**Proposed Strategies:**
- Sustainability Project Laboratory
- Sustainability Hub initiatives
- Center for Campus & Community Engagement, Experiential Learning, Honors Programs, and Office of Sustainability collaborations on sustainability experiential learning projects
- Ohio Sustainability Professionals Consortium participation

**Benefits of Goal #1**

- Community building
- Reputation (enrollment)
- Proactive environmental behavior

**Costs of Goal #1**

- Capital costs, for some
- Operating costs, for some

*(Goal both requires employee time and saves employee time)*

**Notes and Definitions**

1. Engagement ecosystems are initiative-driven working groups which ideally include members of all the following: OHIO faculty, OHIO staff, the local community and the OHIO student body

---

**Moving forward**

**Goal 2:** Continue offering opportunities for alumni, campus and community members to learn about or contribute to sustainability initiatives (Metric: opportunities available)

**Opportunities**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FY17</th>
<th>FY26</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Student Sustainability Educators</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability in Orientations</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability in Student Life</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Continuing Education (number of courses)</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Service (percent of students)</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participation in Public Policy Advocacy for Sustainability</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Sustainability Partnerships</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Outreach</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability Professional Development</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proposed Strategies:**

- Create Sustainability Badge Course for Employees
- Expand Sustainability Alumni Network for Alumni
- Expand Sustainability Tracking & Evaluation Program (STEP) for Employees

**Benefits of Goal #2**

**Costs of Goal #2**

- Reputation
- Social justice benefits
- Proactive environmental behavior

*(Volunteers save time, while planning uses employee time)*

---

**OHIO Carbon Emissions Breakout, FY18**

- Other Off-Campus Stationary
- Street Transportation
- Fertilizer & Animals
- Purchased Electricity
- Faculty Conmuting
- Staff Conmuting

**Notes and Definitions**

3. All carbon emissions are related to engagement in one way or another.
Research Core

Aspiration: All researchers at OHIO will understand the framework of sustainability

Where we are now

✓ Benchmark 1: Strengthen sustainable research activities. In progress (% is increasing for faculty and departments who conduct sustainability research)
✓ Benchmark 35: Define and track sustainability research activities. Target met. Definition and tracking in place.

Goal 1: Increase research focused on sustainability or carbon neutrality (Metric: Percent of active researchers and research departments with applicable research)

Proposed strategies:
- Encourage use of the Sustainability Project Laboratory throughout the University
- Increase interest and participation in sustainability-focused research opportunities by featuring such research in Hub Seminars, newsletters, reports and award applications
- Develop new sustainability research collaborations through Hub Coordinators
- Provide incentives and support for sustainability research (see Goal 2)
- Investigate methods of collecting research data to improve accuracy of metrics.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefits of Goal #1 Strategies</th>
<th>Costs of Goal #1 Strategies</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fulfillment of core mission</td>
<td>Staff time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in environmental impacts from research</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in operating expenses</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes and Definitions

1As defined by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) in section A9 of their STARS Technical Manual.

Goal 2: Provide incentives and support to researchers who conduct sustainability engagement ecosystem research with triple bottom line benefits (Metric: Percent of programs, grants, awards or tools supporting sustainability engagement ecosystem research)

Proposed strategies:
- Create sustainability revolving loan mini-grants program
- Develop library guides for sustainability researchers
- Support development and use of Open Access resources for sustainability research
- Develop training programs for researchers on incorporating sustainability and the triple bottom line into their research
- Enhance Sustainability Project Laboratory database to support sustainability research project formulation
- Continue Student Expo Sustainability awards
- Publicize Experiential Learning funding opportunities for undergraduate sustainability researchers and faculty/staff who serve them
- Monitor and circulate sustainability-focused external grant opportunities; provide letters of support for grant applications for sustainability researchers

Research contributes to emissions in all categories reported by Ohio University