

# Campus Sustainability Community Grows Through STARS Program

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The campus sustainability community continues to grow as colleges and universities aim to improve their green campus initiatives. Within this growth, the [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education](#) (AASHE) is serving as a professional home for those working on bringing environmentally-friendly and energy-efficient practices to campuses across the country. AASHE provides resources, support and professional development opportunities to faculty, staff, administrators and students looking to make these changes. One of AASHE's most prominent programs is the [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System](#) (STARS), a transparent, self-reporting framework for institutions to measure their performance in a comprehensive way.

STARS is divided into three categories: Education & Research; Operations; and Planning, Administration & Engagement. The Operations category works together with the goals of LEED by offering points for buildings that are certified under [LEED for New Construction](#) and [LEED for Existing Buildings: Operations & Maintenance](#). In addition, if institutions are implementing policies and practices for LEED for Existing Buildings: O&M and tracking building performance, the data collected may also be utilized for several of the credits in the Operations section of STARS. STARS also complements the [American College and Universities Presidents' Climate Commitment](#) (ACUPCC) in that institutions can earn points for doing a greenhouse gas emissions inventory and achieving a reduction in these emissions.

LEED and the ACUPCC continue to be important tools to help colleges and universities improve their operational performance, and the STARS program helps to ensure that sustainability plays a pertinent role in curriculum and research. STARS rewards participation in programs like LEED and also measures work that is being done to integrate sustainability into curriculum and research, as well as planning and administration.

For information about how to register for STARS or to learn more, visit the [STARS website](#).

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