

Council Members Present (via Zoom):

Bob Reuning — Vice President & Chief Administrative Officer (Chair)
Ann Tonggarwee — Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the President
Mary Dorman — Executive Director, Environmental Safety, Sustainability & Risk
Colleen Wright-Riva — Assistant Vice President, Division of Student Affairs
Meredith Gore — Professor, Department of Geographical Sciences
Stephanie Yearwood — Professor, Environmental Science and Technology
Tim Knight — Program Director, Environment, Technology and Economy
Susan Corry — Director, Engineering and Energy, Facilities Management
Thomas McMullen — Special Assistant to the Provost, Facilities Management
Mark Addy — Executive Director of Systems and Networking, Division of Information Technology (left early)
Courtnee Cannon — Graduate Student Representative
Zie Goodman — Undergraduate Student Representative

Guests Present:

Javiera King — Executive Assistant, Division of Information Technology

Meeting start time: 12:00 pm

Meeting Highlights

Welcome & Agenda Overview — B. Reuning

Bob Reuning opened the November meeting and welcomed attendees. Sally DeLeon introduced the agenda, which included a Sustainability Fund project update and vote, a presentation on the university's most recent sustainability rating report, and a discussion on updating the Council's sustainability goals.

Sustainability Fund Grant Recommendation, November 2025 — Z. Goodman

Sustainability Fund Administrator, Taylor Brinks, began by reminding members of the voting process for Sustainability Fund proposals, noting that the Chair facilitates discussion and initiates the call for motions

to vote, with final tallies recorded via the Zoom chat using yes, no, or abstain responses. Members who submit proposals must abstain from voting on their own projects.

Undergraduate representative and Chair of the Sustainability Fund Review Committee (SFRC), Zie Goodman, then presented the SFRC's recommendation for the proposal, Arboretum and Botanical Gardens Summer Internships. The project requested \$224,789 total to fund ten summer interns each year over three years. The proposed program would employ undergraduate interns to support tree inventory management, edible food gardening, and conservation landscaping across campus. The committee, after review, recommended an adjusted total of \$174,813, supporting eight interns per year at an annual allocation of \$58,271. This funding covers wages, uniforms, and lunches for eight interns per year, while excluding costs for pruning tools and professional field day travel. The Council determined that this reduction would still allow the program to proceed successfully.

The adjusted funding amount leaves a remaining FY26 Sustainability Fund balance of \$1,055,837. Tim Knight, who serves on the Arboretum Steering Committee, praised the program's success in past years and expressed his support for continued funding. **The proposal was unanimously approved.**

Council Goals Review Process — S. DeLeon

Sustainability Manager, Sally DeLeon, reviewed the Council's six sustainability goals that were last updated in 2014. She explained that with the university's achievement of carbon neutrality earlier this year and new developments such as the NextGen Energy Program, the Council has an opportunity to refresh its long-term priorities and update the goals to be more aligned with the evolving definition of sustainability. For instance, the "Smart Growth" goal, once aligned with state terminology, is now considered outdated. Similarly, elements of the "Local and Global Impact" goal have since been integrated into the Fearlessly Forward Strategic Plan, which presents an opportunity to adapt the goal, perhaps to be more aligned with SDG 12: Responsible Consumption and Production.

DeLeon encouraged the Council to ensure the next iteration of goals reflects the university's leadership role in sustainability, incorporates social and technological dimensions, and aligns with both the university Strategic Plan and the State of Maryland's 2024 plan, as well as global frameworks. She reminded members that their feedback during the meeting would directly inform draft goals to be reviewed at the December Council meeting.

UMD's 2025 STARS Report — D. Frye

Dyani Frye, Sustainability Associate in the Office of Sustainability, presented the 2025 Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS) results, which benchmark the university's sustainability performance against its own progress and peer institutions. UMD has maintained a Gold rating since 2014, including the most recent submission in March 2025 under the updated Version 3.0 framework. The new

version introduced stronger criteria in several areas including equity, social justice, and procurement, resulting in a score decrease as the university creates new goals, programs, and procedures which align with the evolving standard of sustainability in higher education.

UMD was the first Big Ten institution to certify under Version 3.0 and remains a global leader in several areas, including Research and Representation and Access, for which it was acknowledged in AASHE's 2025 Sustainable Campus Index.

Frye also noted areas for growth, which include the Wellbeing and Work subcategory, largely due to limited data collection capabilities. She identified several opportunities for future progress, such as administering a sustainability literacy assessment to undergraduates, expanding the percentage of degree programs with sustainability learning outcomes, and improving data-sharing processes with HR to report on pay equity and living wage metrics. She emphasized that STARS is not only a benchmarking tool but also a roadmap for continuous improvement and an important resource for shaping new institutional sustainability goals. Members of the Council sought clarification on how learning outcomes are tracked in STARS, how regional limitations can be balanced when considering international benchmarks, and how the use of AI might impact the university's sustainability metrics in the future.

Goal Brainstorming Breakout Groups — *Facilitated by S. Holt*

Savannah Holt, Outreach and Communications Coordinator in the Office of Sustainability, outlined the process for the breakout group activity, which was designed to gather input on updating the Council's goals. The groups used the Zoom whiteboard tool to brainstorm responses to four guiding questions about where UMD is poised to be a skilled leader in the next 10 years, pressing sustainability challenges in the state, the role for higher education institutions in conferring sustainable development literacy, and the role for the Council in the upcoming years. After 45 minutes of discussion, participants reconvened to share highlights from their conversations.

The first group focused on strengthening partnerships and enhancing community engagement. The group suggested looking to successes of DOTS, like their transportation grants and fleet upgrades, as models for future initiatives. They encouraged collaboration with external partners for mutual benefit, pointing to the program, *Terps Learn Everywhere* as a model for linking sustainability learning to course credit and extracurricular activities.

The second group mentioned the importance of supporting sustainable businesses within the local and regional economy and developing a food-focused sustainability goal that leverages purposeful partnerships with local producers. They also suggested introducing processes for vetting how university vendors and suppliers align with campus sustainability values and goals. Finally, the group mentioned

the importance of reviving the Sustainability Teaching Fellows Program for assisting faculty in integrating sustainability into their curriculum and encouraging cross-disciplinary collaboration.

The third group emphasized equity and community engagement as being central to future Council goals. They discussed the importance of building reciprocal relationships with the Greater College Park community and Indigenous groups, ensuring that sustainability initiatives are inclusive and mutually beneficial.

The fourth group discussed the challenge of supporting the university's growing research enterprise while simultaneously managing energy use and aging infrastructure. They also suggested that since many state sustainability and emissions mandates are often unfunded, there should be some alignment of campus sustainability goals with state requirements to help prioritize limited resources.

The final group raised the point that as UMD positions itself as a leader in fields such as AI and quantum computing, it must also consider the environmental and ethical implications of these technologies. They emphasized the importance of proactive planning to ensure technological leadership aligns with sustainability values. They also stressed the need to continually ask "sustainability for whom," ensuring that the university's goals are inclusive, equitable, and not solely driven by external mandates or reporting systems like STARS.

Next steps — S. DeLeon

Sally DeLeon thanked the Council for their contributions and noted that the group had developed a strong range of ideas to synthesize into new goals. Members were encouraged to continue adding input to the whiteboards after the meeting or to email their group leader with additional thoughts. Bob Reuning expressed appreciation for the interesting ideas shared and for OS's facilitation.

Adjourn 1:55 PM

Appendices

Appendix A: Sustainability Fund Grant Recommendations November 2025

Appendix B: UMD's 2025 STARS Report



GRANT RECOMMENDATIONS November 2025



Sustainability Fund Budget for FY26-FY28



Summary of <u>Total</u> Requests		Recommendations for 11/3/25	
FY26 Requested	\$1,214,280.47	FY26 Recommendations	\$58,271.20
FY27 Requested	\$531,220.76	FY27 Recommendations	\$58,271.20
FY28 Requested	\$535,779.37	FY28 Recommendations	\$58,271.20
Total Requested	\$2,281,280.60	Total Grant Recommendations	\$174,813.60
FY26 Total Available	\$1,114,108.15	Amount remaining for FY26 if recommendations are approved	\$1,055,836.95



Projects Recommended for Funding



1. [Arboretum & Botanical Gardens Summer 2026 Internships](#)



Arboretum & Botanical Gardens Summer 2026 Internships



Total Requested	\$224,789.70	SFRC Recommended	\$174,813.60
FY26 Requested	\$74,929.90	SFRC Recommended	\$58,271.20
FY27 Requested	\$74,929.90	SFRC Recommended	\$58,271.20
FY28 Requested	\$74,929.90	SFRC Recommended	\$58,271.20

Summary: This proposal requests \$224,789.70 (\$74,929.90/year) to fund 10 summer interns for 2026, 2027, and 2028. Interns will collect measurements and data for upkeep of the campus tree inventory, conduct maintenance and communication associated with edible gardening, and participate in landscaping maintenance and support of Arboretum programs. Requested funds would cover intern salaries, lunches, uniforms, tools, and costs associated with attending the American University Green Professionals Field Day.

Submitted by: Meg Smolinski, Outreach Coordinator, UMD Arboretum & Botanical Gardens



Arboretum & Botanical Gardens Summer 2026 Internships



- **Primary Goal:** To expand students' appreciation and knowledge of campus green spaces through meaningful paid internships, where students will participate in environmental stewardship and support operations of the UMD Arboretum.
- **Expected Impact:**
 - Improved sustainability on campus through stormwater management and contributions to the campus pantry.
 - Resume building and the development of leadership skills for students, preparing them for careers in environmental stewardship.
 - Strengthened connections among students, staff, and sustainability resources at UMD.
- **Need:** The Arboretum does not have the funding for paid internships and has relied on the Sustainability Fund in previous years. Three year funding would allow this initiative to continue without having to reapply each year.
- **Proposed Positions:**
 - Tree Inventory Intern: collects measurements and data for upkeep of the campus tree inventory
 - Campus Food Gardens Intern: conducts maintenance and communication associated with edible gardening
 - Conservation Landscape Intern: participates in landscaping maintenance and support of Arboretum programs
- **Metrics for Success:** Student/Supervisor Evaluations
- **Broader Impacts:** This project supports carbon neutrality and biodiversity on campus, and supports food insecurity through donations to the campus pantry.



Proposed Budget



Hourly Pay (10 interns)	\$67,200.00
Block Meal Plan (50) for Lunch	\$5250.00
Admission & Transportation to American University Green Professionals Field Day	\$1,341.00
Uniforms	\$389.00
Pruners	\$749.90
FY25 Request	\$74,929.90
FY26 Request	\$74,929.90
FY27 Request	\$74,929.90
Total Request	\$224,789.70



Recommended Budget



Hourly Pay (8 interns)	\$53,760
Block Meal Plan (50) for Lunch	\$4,200
Uniforms	\$311.20
FY25 Request	\$58,271.20
FY26 Request	\$58,271.20
FY27 Request	\$58,271.20
Total Request	\$174,813.60

UMD's 2025 STARS Report

Sustainability Tracking, Assessment,
and Rating System (STARS)



Agenda

1. Background
2. UMD's Report
3. Benchmarking to Similar Institutions
4. Strength Areas
5. Areas of Opportunity
6. Key takeaways





Background

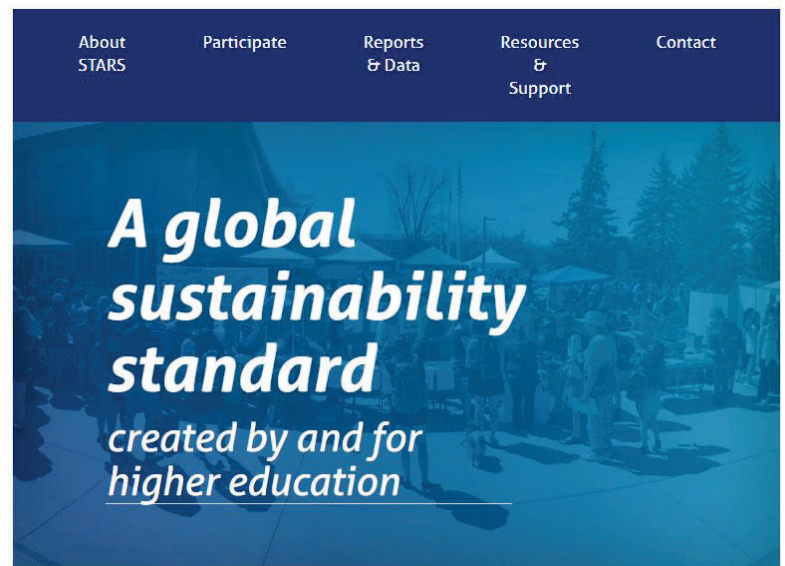


The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System

(STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.

Purpose

- Provides a framework for understanding sustainability in all sectors of higher ed
- Enable comparisons over time and across institutions
- Incentives continual improvement
- Facilitate information sharing
- Track progress; establish baselines for new goals



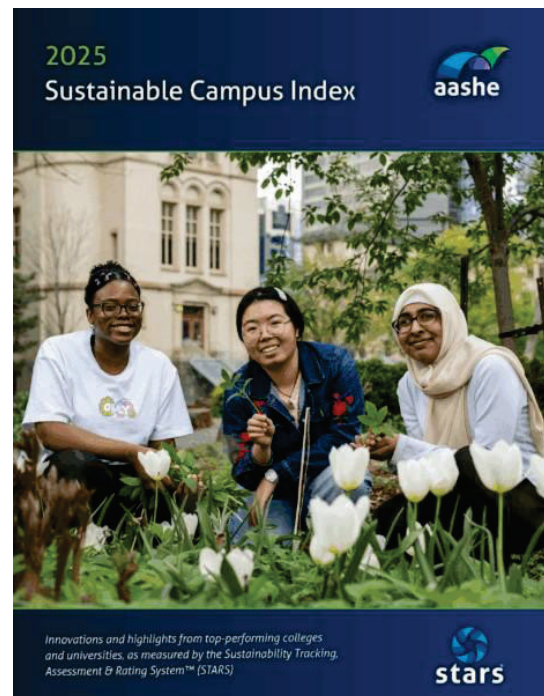


The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System

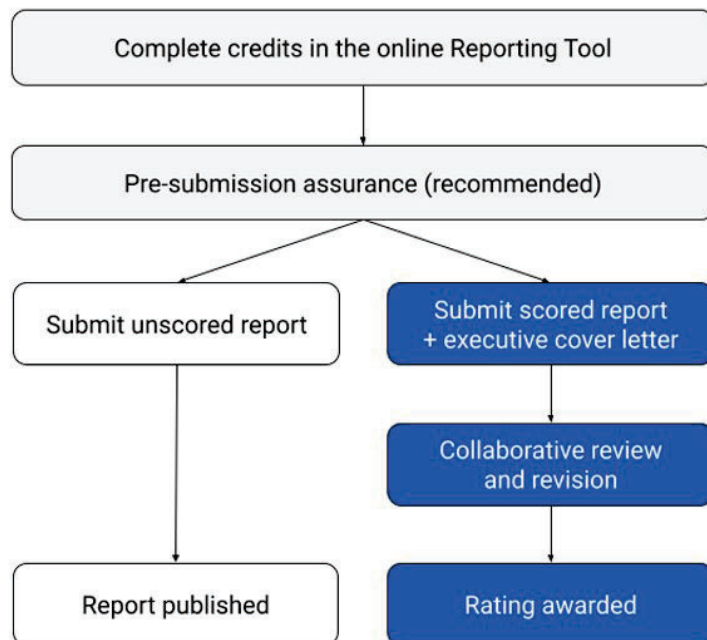
(STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.

Benefits

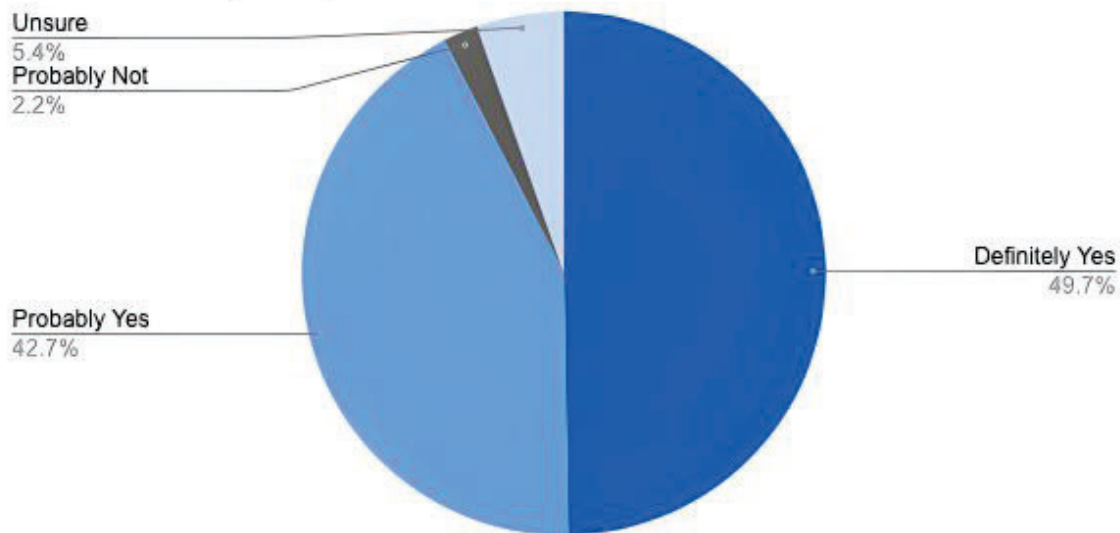
- Sustainability goals are tangible & measurable
- Gain international recognition for sustainability efforts
- Compare progress & initiatives with peer institutions
- Highlight areas for improvement
- Inform strategic planning and budgeting



STARS Reporting Process



Do you believe that participating in STARS has instigated changes that have moved or will move your campus toward being more sustainable? (n=185)





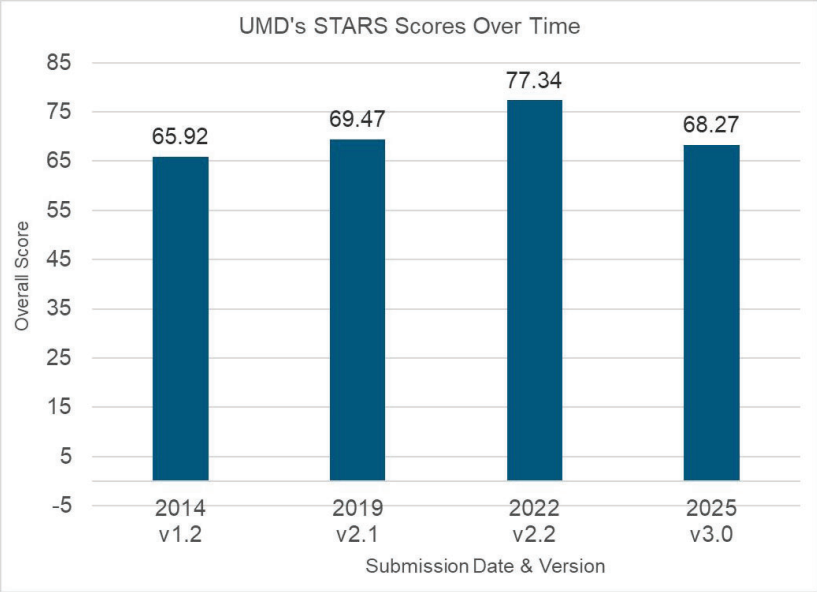
UMD's 2025 Report

Points earned in each category over time

Version	Date	Academics	Engagement	Operations	Planning & Administration	Innovation	Overall
v3.0	Mar. 2025	76%	71%	50%	67%	100%	68%
v.2.2	Feb. 2022	88%	83%	60%	71%	100%	78%
v.2.1	Feb. 2019	71%	85%	51%	62%	100%	69%
v1.2	Feb. 2014	83%	85%	52%	61%	100%	66%



UMD has been Gold Rated Since 2014



Recognition level		Minimum overall score
	Platinum rating	85
	Gold rating	65
	Silver rating	45
	Bronze rating	25



STARS Categories	Subcategory	Credits
Academics (AC)	Curriculum	(AC-1 to AC-5) Sustainability Course Offerings, Undergraduate Programs, Graduate Programs, Applied Learning, Sustainability Literacy Assessment
	Research	(AC-6 to AC-8) Sustainability Research, Center for Sustainability Research, Responsible Research and Innovation
Engagement (EN)	Campus Engagement	(EN-1 to EN-4) Outreach and Communications, Co-Curricular Activities, Staff Engagement and Training, Sustainability Culture Assessment
	Public Engagement	(EN-5 to EN-9) Civic Engagement, Community Partnerships, Continuing Education, Shared Facilities, Inter-Campus Collaboration
Operations (OP)	Buildings and Grounds	(OP-1 to OP-4) Building Design and Construction, Building Operations and Maintenance, Water Use, Ecologically Managed Grounds
	Energy & Climate	(OP-5 to OP-6) Energy Use, Greenhouse Gas Emissions
	Food & Dining	(OP-7 to OP-8) Dining Service Procurement, Food Recovery
	Procurement & Waste	(OP-9 to OP-12) Sustainable Procurement System, Purchased Goods, Materials Management, Waste Generation and Recovery
	Transportation	(OP-13 to OP-15) Vehicle Fleet, Commute Modal Split, Air Travel
Planning & Administration	Coordination & Planning	(PA-1 to PA-3) Sustainability coordination, Commitments and Planning, Institutional Governance
	Investment	(PA-4 to PA-5) Sustainable Investment Program, Investment Holdings
	Representation & Access	(PA-6 to PA-10) Institutional Climate, Racial and Ethnic Representation, Gender Parity, Affordability and Access, Student Success
	Wellbeing & Work	(PA-11 to PA-13) Health, Safety and Wellbeing, Employee Rights, Pay equity and Living Wage
Innovation & Leadership	Catalog of optional credits	(IL-1 to IL-69)



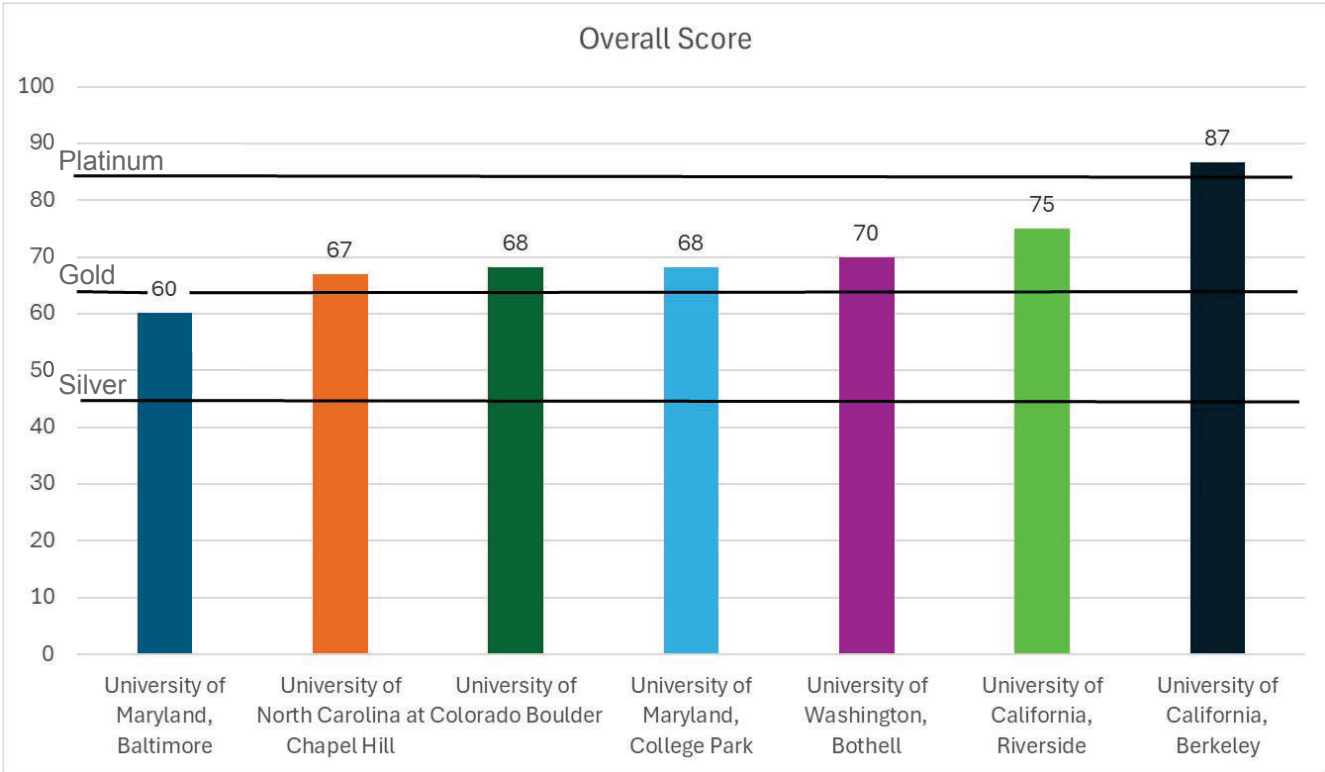
STARS Categories	Subcategory	Points Earned	Points Available	% of Points Earned
Academics (AC)	Curriculum	28.70	40	72%
	Research	23	23	100%
Engagement (EN)	Campus Engagement	14.75	25	59%
	Public Engagement	20.5	25	82%
Operations (OP)	Buildings and Grounds	11.69	19	62%
	Energy & Climate	13.12	26	50%
	Food & Dining	4.29	10	43%
	Procurement & Waste	8.33	20	42%
	Transportation	4.9	10	49%
Planning & Administration	Coordination & Planning	9.67	11	88%
	Investment	4.9	10	49%
	Representation & Access	11.4	14	81%
	Wellbeing & Work	4.75	11	43%
Innovation & Leadership	Catalog of optional credits	10/10	10	100%

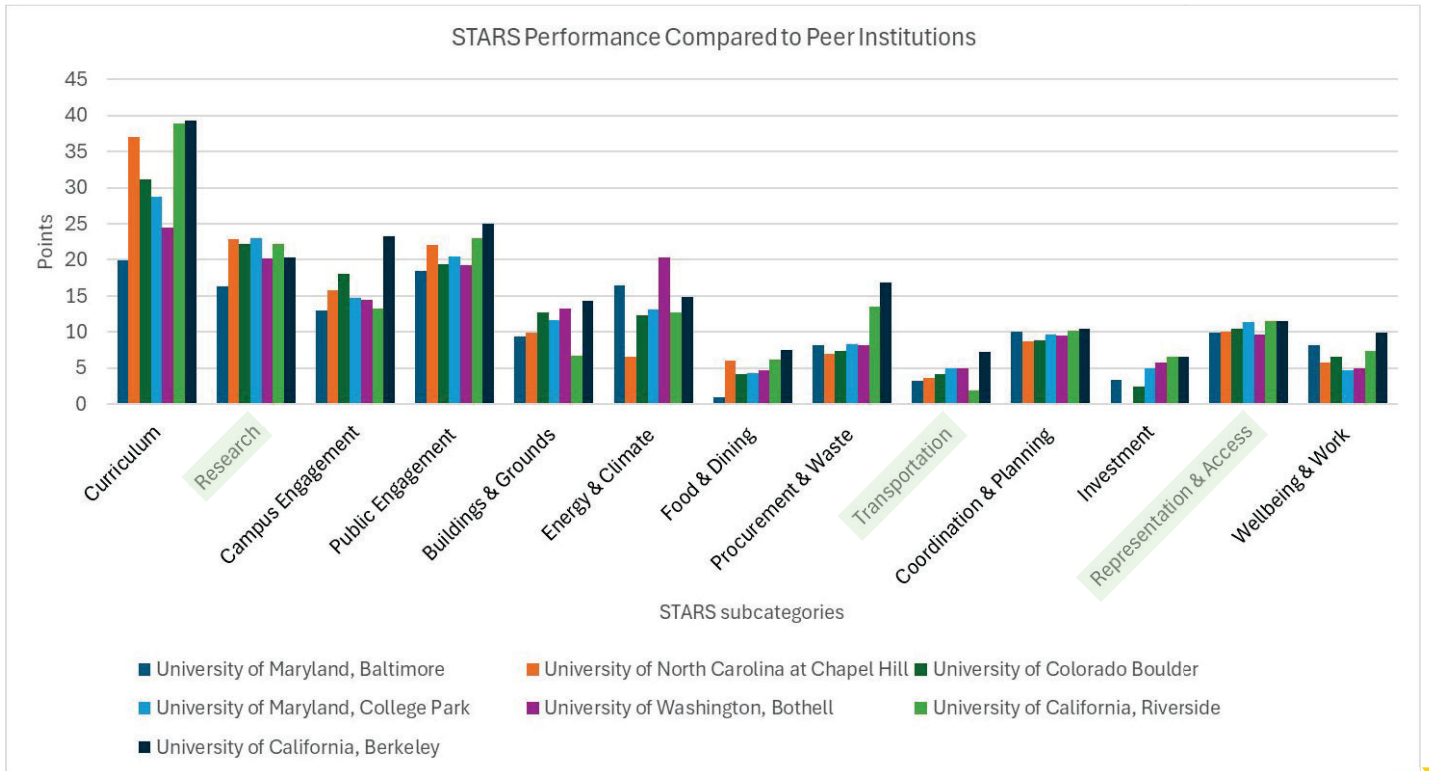
Key
Strength area (80-100%)
Moderate to good performance, but room to improve (50-80%)
Underperforming (>50%)

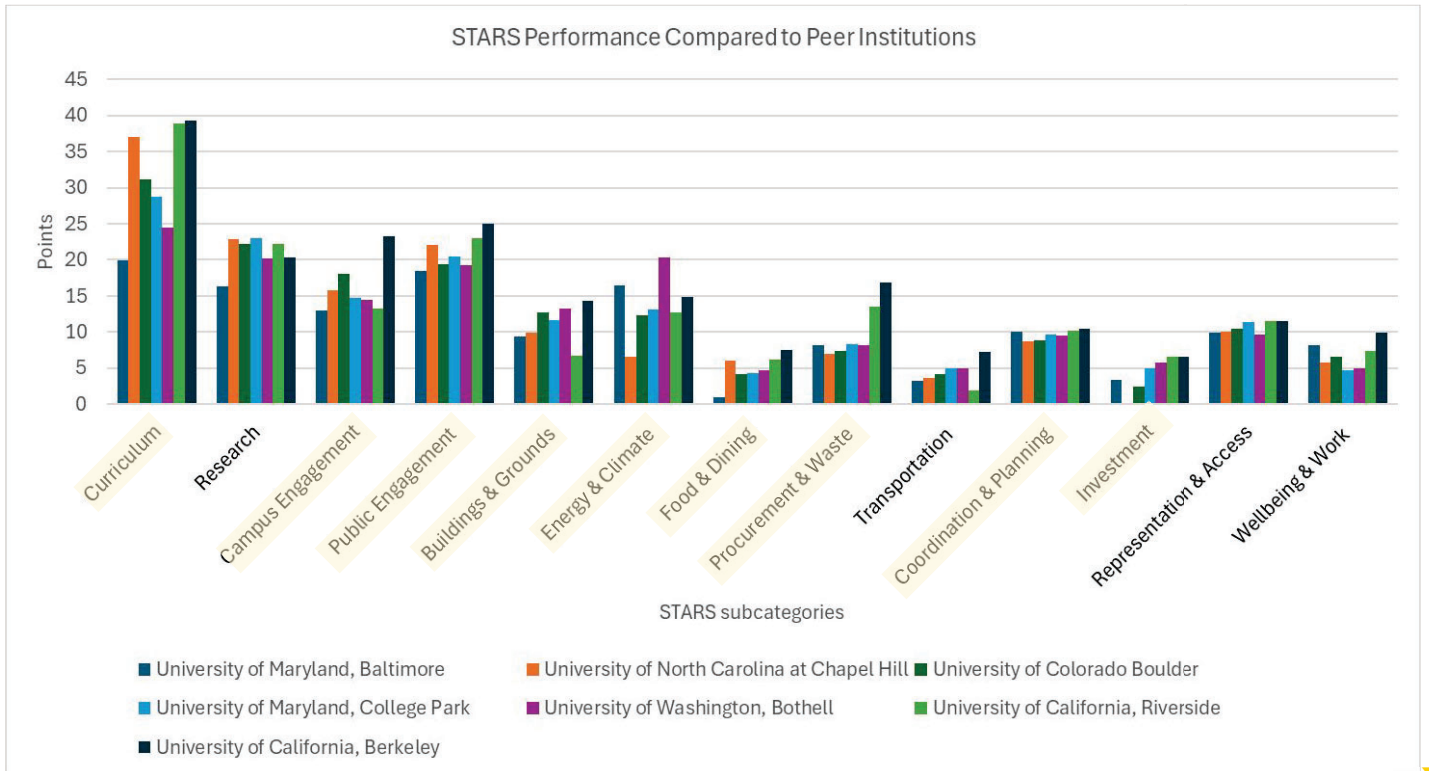


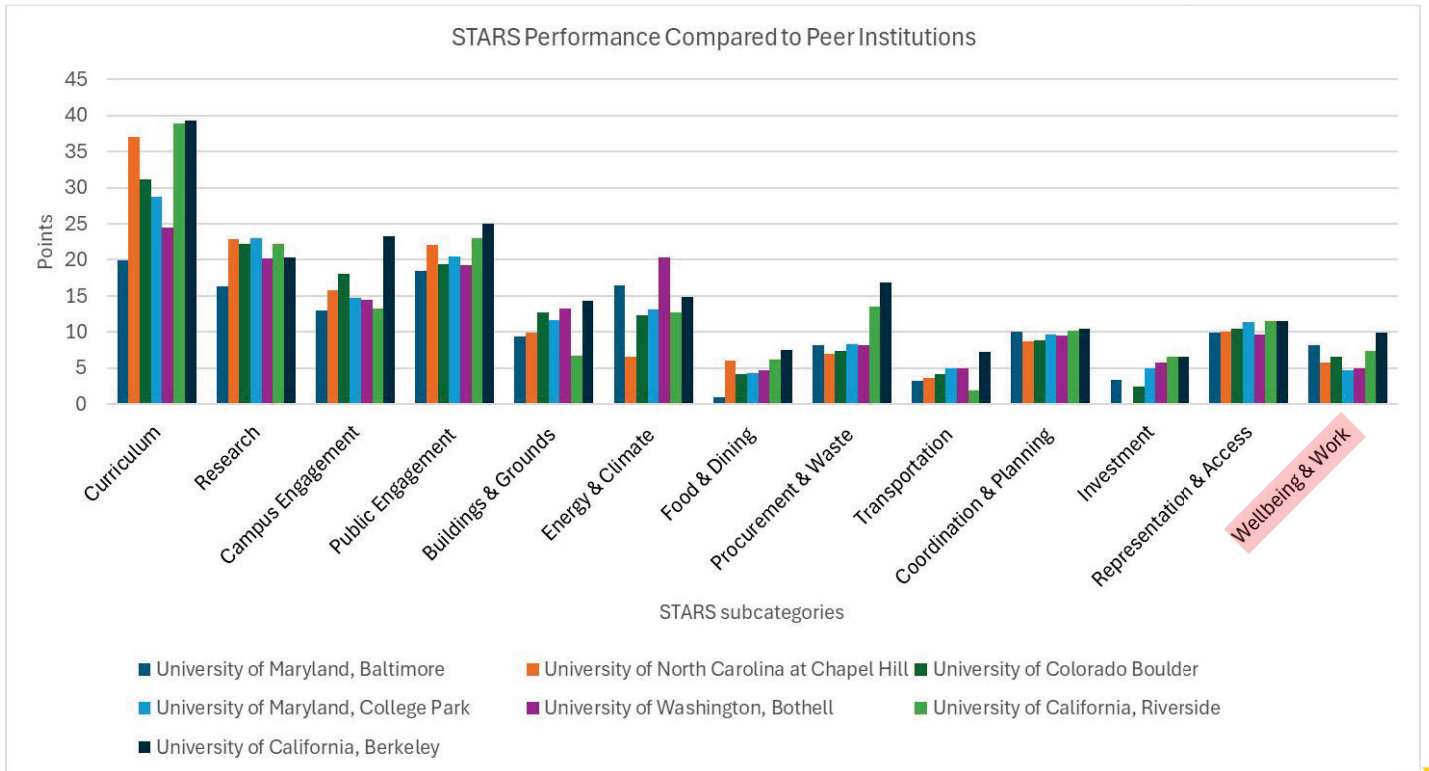


Benchmarking to Similar Institutions











Strength Areas

Among Big 10 Peers

UMD continues to be one of the highest performers and was the first in the Big Ten to achieve a Gold Rating under STARS 3.0.



Elite Performance Areas

STARS Credit	Points lost	% of points earned
AC 1: Sustainability Course Offerings	0.8	94%
AC 4: Applied Learning	0	100%
AC 6: Sustainability Research	0	100%
AC 7: Center for Sustainability Research	0	100%
AC 8: Responsible Research & Innovation	0	100%
EN 7: Continuing Education	0	100%
EN 8: Shared Facilities	0	100%
EN 9: Inter-Campus Collaboration	0	100%
OP 8: Food Recovery	0	100%
OP 11: Materials Management	0.5	88%
PA 1: Sustainability Coordination	0	100%
PA 2: Commitments and Planning	0.33	95%
PA 6: Institutional Climate	0	100%
PA 11: Health, Safety and Wellbeing	0	100%



Research

Research

Top Performers

Version 3.0				
Rank	Institution	Score	Type	Location
1(t)	Technological University Dublin	100%+	Doctoral/Research	Dublin, Ireland
1(t)	University of Maryland, College Park	100%+	Doctoral/Research	College Park, MD
3	Concordia University	100%	Doctoral/Research	Montréal, QC



Representation and Access

Representation & Access

Top Performers

Version 3.0				
Rank	Institution	Score	Type	Location
1	University of California, Berkeley	82.6%	Doctoral/Research	Berkeley, CA
2	University of California, Riverside	82.2%	Doctoral/Research	Riverside, CA
3	University of Maryland, College Park	81.4%	Doctoral/Research	College Park, MD



Operations

Operations

Two research institutions achieve carbon neutrality:

[Duke University](#) has fulfilled its commitment to achieve carbon neutrality thanks to a combination of energy savings, investments in renewable energy, and high-quality carbon offsets. The institution reduced its greenhouse gas emissions by 31% since 2007, despite significant increases in population and building space. Of the 13 institutions that have declared carbon neutrality through the Second Nature Presidents' Climate Commitment, Duke is the largest in terms of student population and greenhouse gas emissions.

[University of Maryland, College Park](#) achieved carbon neutrality, fulfilling its 2007 commitment to eliminate net greenhouse gas emissions. Notable climate accomplishments include reducing emissions by 55%, procuring 100% renewable-sourced grid electricity as of 2020, eliminating all university scope 2 greenhouse gas emissions, constructing or renovating 23 buildings to LEED Silver or higher standards, and reducing per-plate emissions by 14% on average as part of the Coolfood Pledge.

Solar hot water atop Duke University's Bryan Center Student Union. Photo credit: Bill Sneed / Duke University



“UMD has a duty to address the grand



Innovation and Leadership (IL)

- Optional credits to recognize institutions that are seeking innovative solutions to sustainability challenges and demonstrating sustainability leadership in ways that are not otherwise captured in STARS.
- UMD earned all possible bonus points for IL

Credit	Status	Points
Reporting Assurance	✓ Complete	0.50 / 1.00
Open Online Sustainability Course	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
External Funding Disclosure	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Open Access Journal Hosting	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Trademark Licensing Monitoring and Verification	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Voter Education and Participation	✓ Complete	0.50 / 1.00
Coolfood Pledge	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Materials Management Recognition	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Purchased Building Materials	✓ Complete	0.00 / 1.00
Bicycle Friendly Recognition	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Shared Mobility Program	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Participatory Budgeting	✓ Complete	0.50 / 1.00
Sustainability Projects Fund	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Sustainable Retirement Plan	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Open and Shared Course Materials	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Social Equity Recognition	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Collective Bargaining	✓ Complete	0.50 / 1.00
Wellness Recognition	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00
Workplace Recognition	✓ Complete	1.00 / 1.00





Areas of Opportunity

Key Areas for Advancement

STARS subcategory	Description	Strategic Plan Pillar
AC: Curriculum	Address sustainability through academic courses, formal education programs, and applied learning experiences	We reimagine learning
EN: Campus Engagement	Engage campus stakeholders around sustainability issues through effective outreach and communications, extracurricular activities, and staff networking and training opportunities.	We invest in people and communities
OP: Energy & Climate	Improving energy efficiency, switch to clean & renewable energy sources, and measure and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.	We take on humanity's grand challenges
OP: Procurement & Waste	Use purchasing power to help build a sustainable economy & move toward zero waste through source reduction & recovery operations.	We partner to advance the public good
PA: Wellbeing & Work	Incorporate international best practices and just employment criteria into their health, safety, and human resources policies & initiatives.	We invest in people and communities



AC: Curriculum

- Distribute the Sustainability Literacy Assessment developed by staff/faculty workgroup to a representative sample of undergraduate students (*Points to gain: 4*)
- Work with the Provost to investigate the possibility of implementing a Gen-Ed completion pathway focused on environment & society (*Points to gain: up to 6*)
- Create an institutional learning outcome focused on sustainability (*Points to gain: 2*)



EN: Campus Engagement, Public Engagement

- Develop and administer an employee sustainability culture survey to a representative sample of all UMD employees (*Points to gain: 1*)
- Work with the Center for Community Engagement to develop an assessment process that includes joint evaluation by the institution and its community partners to address the reciprocity and mutual benefit of the partnerships (*Points to gain: 2*)



OP: Energy and Climate

- Estimate Scope 3 emissions from UMD's electronics, lab equipment, paper purchasing and land-based business travel (non-air travel) in 2025 and/or 2026 (*Points to gain: up to 3*)
- Incorporate more renewable sources of energy for UMD's electric power and stationary fuel loads (*Points to gain: up to 2.7*)



OP: Procurement and Waste

- Track electronics and furniture spend annually and determine the percentage that meets sustainability criteria (*Points to gain: 2*)
- Incorporate sustainability expectations into our bid solicitation process (*Points to gain: up to 2*)
- Increase the percentage of annual contract spend with social impact supplies (*Points to gain: up to 2*)
- Increase diversion rate through expanded outreach and education initiatives and by introducing collection programs for PPE and other research waste (*Points to gain: up to 2*)



PA: Wellbeing and Work

- Establish and publish the results of an internal pay equity assessment (*Points to gain: 1*)
- Create a task force of UHR personnel to be responsible for collecting data needed for PA-13 Pay Equity and Living Wage (*Points to gain: up to 5*)



Key Takeaways

- Achieving a Platinum rating would require UMD to maintain all awarded points and earn an additional 41 points (16.5% of points available).
- Strong support and ongoing partnerships with the Provost, Chief Information Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Vice President for Student Affairs, are needed to implement and maintain new sustainability initiatives.
- UMD's strategic focus on AI may have the potential to stall progress on energy conservation.
- Under Climate Action Plan 3.0, the university is making improvements that will ultimately raise its scores in three important credits: Water Use, Energy Use, and Vehicle Fleet.



A photograph of a campus scene. In the foreground, there is a large green lawn. In the background, there are trees with some autumn-colored leaves and a building with red brick walls and white columns. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The text "FEARLESSLY FORWARD" is overlaid on the image in a bold, white, sans-serif font. The word "FEARLESSLY" is on the top line, and "FORWARD" is on the bottom line. The text is slightly tilted to the right.

FEARLESSLY

FORWARD