

2019 SUSTAINABILITY HIGHLIGHTS



OFFICE OF SUSTAINABILITY

Division of Finance and Operations

SUSTAINABILITY

Texas A&M University defines sustainability as the efficient, deliberate and responsible preservation of environmental, social and economic resources to protect our earth for future generations of Texas Aggies, the Texas A&M University community and beyond.



SUSTAINABILITY
RESPECT. PROTECT. PRESERVE.

2019 Sustainability Highlights



April 28, 2020

Texas A&M University strives to lead fearlessly in sustainability and to increasingly embed our commitment to respect, protect, and preserve the financial, environmental, and people resources that support our community not only for today, but for future generations of Aggies.

Stemming back to the institution's first Sustainability Master Plan (SMP) in 2010, the university has evolved with the growing discipline of sustainability. Throughout the years, the campus community has remained committed to its definition of sustainability: the efficient, deliberate, and responsible preservation of environmental, social, and economic resources to protect our earth for future generations of Texas Aggies, the Texas A&M University community, and beyond.

Texas A&M University renewed its commitment to sustainability by launching the 2018 Sustainability Master Plan (SMP) last October. The SMP identifies nine themes, 16 evergreen goals, and 47 targets to move Texas A&M toward a more sustainable future. We are pleased with the results of this highly collaborative update and have spent the last year prioritizing goals and implementing the SMP's recommendations to further Texas A&M's overall sustainability performance.

Texas A&M strives to be a leader in sustainability and to increasingly embed our commitment to respect, protect, and preserve the financial, environmental, and people resources that support our community not only for today, but for future generations of Aggies. In coordination with initial implementation of the 2018 SMP, completing our sixth STARS submission has helped our campus advance sustainability efforts.

Thank you for your interest in Texas A&M University's ongoing sustainability voyage.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Michael K. Young". The signature is stylized and cursive.

MICHAEL K . YOUNG
President, Texas A&M University



About This Report

From its inception as a land-grant institution in 1876 to the addition of sea- and space-grant designations, Texas A&M University (TAMU) has been a leader in research and education for how we interact with — and impact — our world. In March 2008, the Office of Sustainability (OS) was founded and charged with creating a culture of sustainability in Aggieland to enhance these efforts.

Through OS coordination and with guidance from the President's Sustainability Advisory Council (SAC), TAMU monitors institutional sustainability performance using the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS). STARS is a program managed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE).

The 2019 highlights in this report come primarily from the campus' most recent STARS submission, where Texas A&M University earned its fourth STARS Gold rating. STARS evaluates institutions based on performance in the following four categories, and this report provides highlights for each. To view the entire submission, visit [STARS AASHE 2019](#).

ACADEMICS



ENGAGEMENT



OPERATIONS



PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION





ACADEMICS

*TAMU demonstrates initiative by turning our campus into a **Living Laboratory**. Examples include **Howdy! Farm**, class projects, waste audits, and a variety of internships.*

78%



of academic departments (or equivalents) offer at least one course related to sustainability.

TAMU offers **Geography 380** (Workshop in Environmental Studies) and the **Texas Target Communities Program (TCCP)** as immersive student sustainability opportunities.



More than 75%

of departments with sponsored research conduct sustainability-related research.



More than **36%** of sponsored researchers on campus are engaged in sustainability-related research.

17% of the university's offered courses focus on or relate to sustainability.

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES maintains a voluntary open-access policy that ensures all scholarly articles produced by faculty and staff are accessible. This policy helps address both the price and permission barriers that undermine global access to products of TAMU's scholarly and creative work.

The university offers sustainability-oriented degrees, minors, and certificates. Examples include:

UNDERGRADUATE DEGREES

- Ecological Restoration
- Environmental Design
- Environmental Studies
- Environmental Geosciences
- Renewable Natural Resources

GRADUATE DEGREES

- Natural Resource Development
- Water Management & Hydrological Science
- Ecosystem Science & Management

MINORS & CERTIFICATES

- Climate Change
- Earth Sciences
- Environmental Geosciences
- Sustainable Architecture & Planning
- Sustainable Urbanism (Graduate)
- Watershed Certificate

The Office of Sustainability collaborated with the Service Learning Fellows Program to offer funds to faculty members who agree to enhance their courses with a food security or sustainability focus.



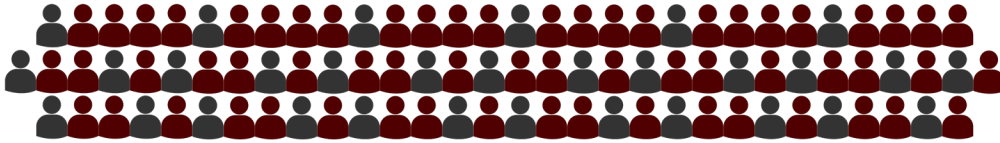
22% of continuing education courses offered by TAMU Extension agencies address sustainability.



ENGAGEMENT



*The goal of the **Internship Program** coordinated by the **Office of Sustainability** is to bring people from a variety of backgrounds and academic disciplines together to create a team that educates the campus community about sustainability issues. To date, the program has served 92 students.*



Environmental Health & Safety

coordinates a volunteer program in which staff and students spend a Saturday once per year cleaning creek banks. Last year, **58** volunteers removed **37** bags of trash from creek banks.



Aggie Eco Reps is an organization coordinated by **Residence Life** in which students educate their peers about how to live a sustainable lifestyle.



TAMU actively supports the **Texas Regional Alliance for Campus Sustainability** (TRACS), a network for higher education institutions looking to enhance sustainability efforts. The 7th Annual TRACS Summit was hosted by Huston-Tillotson University



At least **50%** of staff members participated in sustainability-themed training or professional development.



The **AGGIE GREEN FUND** empowers students, faculty, and staff to take action and bring about creative sustainability initiatives to campus. Since 2011, more than **\$1.98 MILLION** has been granted for projects making campus more sustainable.

The Department of **Residence Life** hosts the “**U Challenge**”, wherein teams of students (graduate & undergraduate) study utility and energy consumption for assigned residence hall communities as well as student engagement patterns. Their recommendations are reviewed by department leadership for implementation.

This past November, the **Residence Life** and **Dinner with a Prof** partnered to host the **6th Annual Sustainability Dinner**. Chartwells caters the locally sourced dinner and the event provides a networking opportunity for students to engage with faculty and staff that live, research, or teach sustainability. Attendance has grown each year and is expected to continue to grow as students become more involved with sustainability efforts.

The **Texas Target Communities Program** in the **College of Architecture** develops partnerships across the state to advance sustainability. Partnerships include: Houston Independent School District, Charity Productions, and the City of Rockport.

The **Institute for Sustainable Communities** works closely with the Texas Environmental Justice Advocacy Service to investigate issues related to pollution and environmental justice along Houston's Ship Channel.



OPERATIONS



*With **Utilities & Energy Services (UES)** leading the way, TAMU has reduced energy consumption per gross square feet by **49%** (364 mBtu per GSF to 187 mBtu per GSF) from FY 2002 to FY 2019. This has resulted in a cumulative **\$270 million** purchased energy cost avoidance.*

9.82% of the food and beverage options **Chartwells** provides for TAMU are sourced locally and/or third-party verified. Chartwells also provides sustainability-themed meals and vegetarian and vegan options at numerous campus locations.

Even though full-time equivalent students, faculty, and staff increased by almost **41%** and gross floor area of building space increased **131%**, TAMU has reduced total water use on campus by **50%** since 1991.



The Athletics Department created a green athletics program, the **12th Man Green Team**, to enhance sustainability through waste diversion, food and beverage purchasing, alternative transportation, and education.



SSC Grounds uses a four-tiered integrated pest management approach on 100% of managed grounds.

*In FY 2019, **UES**, **Chartwells**, and **SSC** helped divert **59%** of campus waste from the landfill. This is up from 10% in FY 2010.*



82% of all the construction and demolition waste produced by TAMU was diverted from the landfill.



The League of American Bicyclists awarded TAMU as a **Silver Bicycle Friendly University**. A large part of our success is due to **Transportation Services** coordinating the largest University bike-share system in the nation.



90% of runoff from local and regional rainfall events is retained on-site using low-impact development practices and green infrastructure.

100% of waste from TAMU-owned electronics is disposed of through **Logistics Services' University Surplus Property Program**. Electronics are either re-purposed or recycled sustainably through Responsible Recycling (R2) certified recyclers.



Procurement Services added sustainability criteria to the **Universities' Bidding Requirements** that is weighted based on the intended outcomes of a given project.

At least **58%** students utilize TAMU's available sustainable transportation options. Methods include the Aggie Spirit Bus, biking, walking, and carpooling.



PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION



TAMU strives to make being an Aggie accessible and affordable. **27% of students** directly benefit from scholarships, work-study, grants, tuition waivers and other programs to support low-income and non-traditional students.

Human Resources & Organizational Effectiveness

coordinates the **Flourish** program, designed to encourage employees to live healthier lifestyles, to support a healthy workplace, and to create a culture of wellness throughout the campus community.



TAMU has been a **Fair Trade** campus since 2017 and is the largest U.S. Fair Trade university.



The **2018 Sustainability Master Plan (SMP)** identifies **9 themes**, **16 evergreen goals**, and **47 targets** to move Texas A&M toward a more sustainable future. The four working groups which helped create the SMP were reconvened as the implementation teams.



The Department of Residence Life

was awarded 2 Aggie Green Fund Grants to help achieve goals of the **Residence Life Sustainability Master Plan**.



The Office for Diversity

coordinates extensive campus diversity initiatives. Numerous programs, such as **stop hate**, work to prevent discrimination on campus, and to provide support to students, faculty, and staff from underrepresented groups.

As the campus environment evolves to include additional **public and civic spaces**, the University committed to developing interior and exterior spaces to represent a **broader cross section** of the Aggie community.



2019 Sustainability Awards

At the **5th Annual Sustainability Breakfast** held in April 2019, the **Office of Sustainability** hosted the **Sustainability Awards** ceremony to recognize members of the Aggie community who have demonstrated outstanding commitment to making TAMU more sustainable.

CHAMPION AWARDS



**MS. BRIANA
MORENO-MALDONADO**

Aggie Eco-Reps

Received the
**Student (Undergrad)
Sustainability Champion**
award for her campus engagement and
community service efforts as president
of the Aggie Eco-Reps.



**MS. KRISTAINNA
BOWLES**

Dept. of Residence Life

Received the
**Student (Graduate)
Sustainability Champion**
for pioneering multiple initiatives in
Residence Life to enhance their and the
university's sustainability and campus
engagement efforts.



**DR. ASHA
RAO**

Dept. of Biology

Received the
**Faculty Sustainability
Champion**
award for advocating for sustainability
within the Department of Biology
by proposing multiple initiatives for
reducing the environmental impact
of the Department's teaching and
research spaces.



**MR. RON
STEEDLY**

Transportation Services

Received the
**Staff Sustainability
Champion**
award for implementing numerous
programs for Alternative Transportation
that have provided sustainable options
for the community to get around campus
while reducing our environmental impact
and enhancing wellness.

STARS AWARDS



STARS Overall Top Performer: Office for Diversity; University Libraries; Residence Life
Earned the highest percentage of available points for stakeholders with multiple credits.

STARS Most Improved: SSC Grounds Management
Making the most progress in their assigned credits.

STARS Above & Beyond: Residence Life
For their efforts in creating the Residence Life Sustainability Master Plan that earned an Innovation credit.

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VISION STATEMENT

Every member of the Aggie family works together to champion environmental stewardship, encourage healthy living and improve social and economic opportunities and outcomes locally.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

The Aggie Sustainability Alliance identifies ways for individuals to contribute to a more sustainable campus and world.

Visit the [individual checklist](#) to learn more about:

- Energy & Water
- Transportation
- Food & Purchasing
- Social Sustainability
- Waste Minimization

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