

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well

Campus News Archive

Campus News, Newsletters, and Events

9-24-2010

Morris registers as charter participant in sustainability rating system

University Relations

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news

Recommended Citation

University Relations, "Morris registers as charter participant in sustainability rating system" (2010).
Campus News Archive. 1553.
https://digitalcommons.morris.umn.edu/urel_news/1553

This News Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Campus News, Newsletters, and Events at University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. It has been accepted for inclusion in Campus News Archive by an authorized administrator of University of Minnesota Morris Digital Well. For more information, please contact skulann@morris.umn.edu.

Contact

Melissa Weber, Director of Communications
Phone: 320-589-6414, weberm@morris.umn.edu

Jenna Ray, Editor/Writer
Phone: 320-589-6068, jrray@morris.umn.edu

Morris registers as charter participant in sustainability rating system

Summary: STARS participants report achievements in education, research, operations, planning, administration, and engagement.

(September 24, 2010)-The University of Minnesota, Morris announces its participation in a new program to encourage sustainability in all aspects of higher education. To date, nearly 230 higher education institutions, including Morris, have registered as [Sustainability, Tracking, Assessment and Rating System](#) (STARS) Charter Participants. The [Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education](#) (AASHE) will administer the STARS program.

“The Morris campus is pleased to participate in STARS and for the opportunity to share information that we learn through our sustainability initiatives to encourage and help others in their efforts,” says Chancellor Jacqueline Johnson. “Together, STARS institutions will continue to advance sustainability and celebrate successes.”

Morris is a national leader in sustainable, environmentally friendly initiatives. Green efforts touch nearly all aspects of campus life—power, food, water, transportation, waste-stream infrastructure, academic study, and quality of life. A biomass gasification plant—fueled by crop residues from nearby farms—generates steam for an integrated system that heats and cools buildings. Thermal cells heat the Regional Fitness Center’s swimming pool. A wind turbine generates electricity for the campus and the region, and a second wind turbine is planned. In addition to renewable power, other sustainability measures include historic building reuse, green building design and construction, conservation, local foods programs, hybrid vehicles, innovative curriculum, and community outreach.

The STARS program is the only one of its kind that involves publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university’s sustainability performance. Participants report achievements in three overall areas: education and research operations and planning, administration, and engagement.

“The advantage of STARS is that institutions can earn credits for all of their contributions to sustainability,” said Paul Rowland, AASHE executive director. “From providing sustainability coursework, to using green cleaning products, to energy efficiency in campus buildings, there are lots of opportunities for a school to identify and track its sustainability progress.”

Unlike other rating or ranking systems, this program is open to all institutions of higher education in the United States and Canada, and the criteria that determine a STARS rating are transparent and accessible to anyone. Because STARS is a program based on credits earned, it allows for both internal comparisons as well as comparisons with similar institutions.

“We are looking forward to enthusiastic participation from our students, faculty, and staff, as well as to watching sustainability efforts grow on campus through the STARS program,” says Troy Goodnough, sustainability coordinator at Morris.

AASHE is an association of colleges and universities working to create a sustainable future. Its mission is to empower higher education to lead the sustainability transformation. It provides resources, professional development and a network of support to enable institutions of higher education to model and advance sustainability in everything they do, from governance and operations to education and research.

Through personal and academic discovery, the University of Minnesota, Morris provides opportunities for students to grow intellectually, engage in community, experience environmental stewardship and celebrate diversity. A renewable and sustainable educational experience, Morris prepares graduates for careers, for advanced degrees, for lifelong learning, for work world flexibility in the future, and for global citizenship. Learn more about Morris at morris.umn.edu or call 888-866-3382.