AC 9: Academic Research

12 points available

A. Credit Rationale
This credit recognizes institutions where faculty and staff are conducting research on sustainability topics. Conducting an inventory of an institution’s sustainability research can serve as a valuable first step in identifying strengths and areas for development. Likewise, since sustainability requires collaboration that transcends traditional disciplines, conducting an inventory can help connect individuals, laboratories, research centers, and other campus community members with a shared interest in sustainability. The percentage of research faculty and staff and departments that are engaged in sustainability research are measures of the spread of sustainability research.

B. Criteria

Part 1
Institution’s faculty and/or staff conduct sustainability research and the institution makes an inventory of its sustainability research publicly available.

Part 2
Institution’s academic departments (or the equivalent) include faculty and staff who conduct sustainability research.

Any level of sustainability research is sufficient to be included for this credit. In other words, a researcher who conducts both sustainability research and other research may be included.

In order to report for this credit, the institution should conduct an inventory to identify its sustainability research activities and initiatives.

Each institution is free to choose a methodology to identify sustainability research that is most appropriate given its unique circumstances. For example, an institution may distribute a survey to all faculty members and ask them to self-identify as being engaged in sustainability research or ask the chairperson of each department to identify the sustainability research activities within his or her department. The research inventory should be based on the definition of “sustainability research” outlined in Standards and Terms and include, at minimum, all research centers, laboratories, departments, and faculty members whose research focuses on or is related to sustainability.

C. Applicability
This credit applies to all institutions where research is considered in faculty promotion and/or tenure decisions. Institutions that do not consider research in faculty promotion and/or tenure decisions as a matter of policy or standard practice may choose to pursue or omit this credit.
D. Scoring
Each part is scored independently.

Part 1
Institutions earn the maximum of 6 points available for Part 1 of this credit when 15 percent or more of faculty and staff that are engaged in research are engaged in sustainability research. Incremental points are awarded based on the percentage of researchers that are engaged in sustainability research. For example, if 7.5 percent of faculty and staff that are engaged in research are engaged in sustainability research, an institution would earn 3 points (half of the points available for Part 1 of this credit). Points earned are calculated according to the following table:

Enter values as indicated below to calculate points earned for Part 1 of this credit
Points will be calculated automatically when data are entered in the STARS online Reporting Tool

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Multiply</th>
<th>Faculty and Staff Engaged in Sustainability Research</th>
<th>Divide</th>
<th>Total Faculty and Staff Engaged in Research</th>
<th>Equals</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>÷</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>(Up to 6 available)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Scoring Example: Academic Research (Part 1)

Example University has 2,500 faculty members that conduct research. Of those, 200 conduct research related to sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Multiply</th>
<th>Faculty and Staff Engaged in Sustainability Research</th>
<th>Divide</th>
<th>Total Faculty and Staff Engaged in Research</th>
<th>Equals</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>÷</td>
<td>2,500</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Part 2**

Institutions earn the maximum of 6 points available for Part 2 of this credit when 75 percent or more of departments that conduct research are engaged in sustainability research. Incremental points are available based on the percentage of departments that conduct sustainability research. For example, if 25 percent of departments that conduct research are engaged in sustainability research, an institution would earn 2 points (⅓ of the points available for Part 2 of this credit). Points earned are calculated according to the following table:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Multiply</th>
<th>Departments that Conduct Sustainability Research</th>
<th>Divide</th>
<th>Total Number of Departments that Conduct Research</th>
<th>Equals</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>÷</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>(Up to 6 available)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Scoring Example: Academic Research (Part 2)**

Example University has 50 academic departments that conduct research. Of those, 10 conduct research about sustainability.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Multiply</th>
<th>Departments that Conduct Sustainability Research</th>
<th>Divide</th>
<th>Total Number of Departments that Conduct Research</th>
<th>Equals</th>
<th>Points Earned</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>×</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>÷</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>=</td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**E. Reporting Fields**

**Required**

- Number of the institution’s faculty and/or staff engaged in sustainability research (headcount)
- Total number of the institution’s faculty and/or staff engaged in research (headcount)
- Number of academic departments (or the equivalent) that include at least one faculty or staff member that conducts sustainability research
- Total number of academic departments (or the equivalent) that conduct research
Conditional
Required if the institution is reporting sustainability research:

- Names and department affiliations of faculty and staff engaged in sustainability research (text or upload)
- A brief description of the methodology the institution followed to complete the research inventory (including the types of faculty and staff included as researchers)
- An affirmation that the submitted information is accurate to the best of a responsible party’s knowledge and contact information for the responsible party. The responsible party should be a staff member, faculty member, or administrator who can respond to questions regarding the data once submitted and available to the public.

Optional

- A brief descriptions of notable accomplishments during the previous three years by faculty and staff engaged in sustainability research, including names and department affiliations
- The website URL where information about sustainability research is available
- Notes about the submission

F. Measurement

Timeframe
Report the most recent definition, results and methodology available.

Institutions may choose to report research activities from one, two, or three academic years, as long as both the total number of research faculty and staff and the number of faculty and staff engaged in sustainability research are measured during the same time.

Sampling and Data Standards
An institution may adopt a definition of faculty and staff that are engaged in research that is appropriate given its unique circumstances. Institutions may report on faculty only, or choose to include staff researchers and/or graduate student employees that conduct research, as long as they are reported in both the count of faculty and staff that are engaged in research and the count of faculty and staff that are engaged in sustainability research. Likewise, institutions may report on faculty and staff regardless of status (e.g. full-time, part-time, adjunct, graduate student), as long as they are counted consistently.

Institutions that do not have academic departments or equivalent administrative divisions should report fields of study, programs, subject areas or the equivalent.