

UC San Diego Achieves ‘Gold’ STARS Sustainability Rating

Rating is based on the campus’s performance in three broad sustainability-focused categories: education and research, operations and planning, administration and engagement



Photos by Erik Jepsen/UC San Diego Publications

The University of California, San Diego has earned a “gold” sustainability-performance rating in the prestigious annual Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS) survey.

This year, the campus is one of seven colleges in California and is the only college in the San Diego region to achieve a STARS “gold” rating, which is in effect for three years. When UC San Diego participated in the survey in 2011, it was the first college or university in California to achieve gold.

“Our ‘gold’ rating can be attributed to the hard work of our students, staff and faculty, whose commitment to environmental sustainability is unwavering,” said UC San Diego Chancellor Pradeep K. Khosla. “UC San Diego’s legacy of pioneering sustainable solutions dates back to the founding of our campus. It was here that Charles David Keeling of Scripps Institution of Oceanography began testing the atmosphere for carbon dioxide. His work laid the foundation for research on global warming. This legacy of groundbreaking climate science research continues today through the campus’s numerous sustainability initiatives.”



UC San Diego's "gold" STARS rating is based on the campus's performance in hundreds of measurements in three broad sustainability-focused categories: education and research, operations and planning, administration and engagement.

"To receive a STARS 'gold' rating is an honor as STARS has become a definitive survey for colleges and universities for its extensiveness and objectivity," said Gary C. Matthews, vice chancellor for Resource Management and Planning at UC San Diego. "Today, our students, faculty and staff are building on

UC San Diego's tradition of sustainable practices. We are proud that our campus has transformed into a living laboratory where sustainability is top priority in education, research and campus operations."

STARS is based on concrete metrics of performance by participating institutions. The survey gauged hundreds of factors on UC San Diego's campus including its use of alternative transportation, water conservation efforts, energy efficiency, and "green" building accreditations, recycling levels, sustainable purchasing, number of student sustainability organizations and more.

Administered by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE), the STARS survey was created with broad participation from the higher education community, according to AASHE.

"The survey was developed as a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance," AASHE states on the STARS website. "Each rating level represents significant sustainability leadership. Participating in STARS, which includes gathering extensive data and sharing it publicly, represents a commitment to sustainability that should be applauded."



Of the 252 institutions that have registered for the STARS survey recently, 62 have achieved a bronze rating, 125 received silver and 45 attained gold. No college or university has yet achieved platinum.

For more information on the STARS survey, go to: <https://stars.aashe.org>. For more information on UC San Diego's sustainability initiatives, go to: <http://sustainability.ucsd.edu>.

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