

## SUSTAINABILITY PLANNING 2007 - 2022

### **The University of Miami Receives STARS Gold Rating for the second time in a row!**

In 2022, the University of Miami has earned a STARS Gold rating in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). STARS, the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System measures and encourages sustainability in all aspects of higher education. UM's STARS report is publicly available on the [STARS website](#)

We encourage any member of the UM community to consult the [STARS 2019 Gold report](#) , [The Sustainability Report 2020](#), and send your comments and suggestions to [green@umiami.edu](mailto:green@umiami.edu).

The Sustainability Tracking and Assessment Rating System ([STARS](#)) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. It was developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ([AASHE](#)) with broad participation from the higher education community.

STARS participants submit data to earn a Bronze, Silver, Gold or Platinum rating, or recognition as a STARS Reporter. The credits are organized into four categories: Academics, Engagement, Operations, and Planning AND Administration. As of July 1, 2018, 906 STARS reports were submitted by 477 institutions in 11 countries, and there were 902 STARS Participants in 37 countries. In 2016, we decided to join the hundreds of higher education STARS rated institutions. The biggest benefit of STARS is that it has generated a framework to promote new ideas. Sustainability, now a tenet of our institutional operations, allowed UM to achieve a Gold rating in this reporting period, after achieving a Silver rating back in 2016. Several of our Institutions major initiatives that led to this improvement are:

Sustainability in the Curriculum: In the past year and half, special efforts have been deployed to increase the inclusion of sustainability in our curriculum and our research. The inventory of courses that are either focused or including sustainability in the

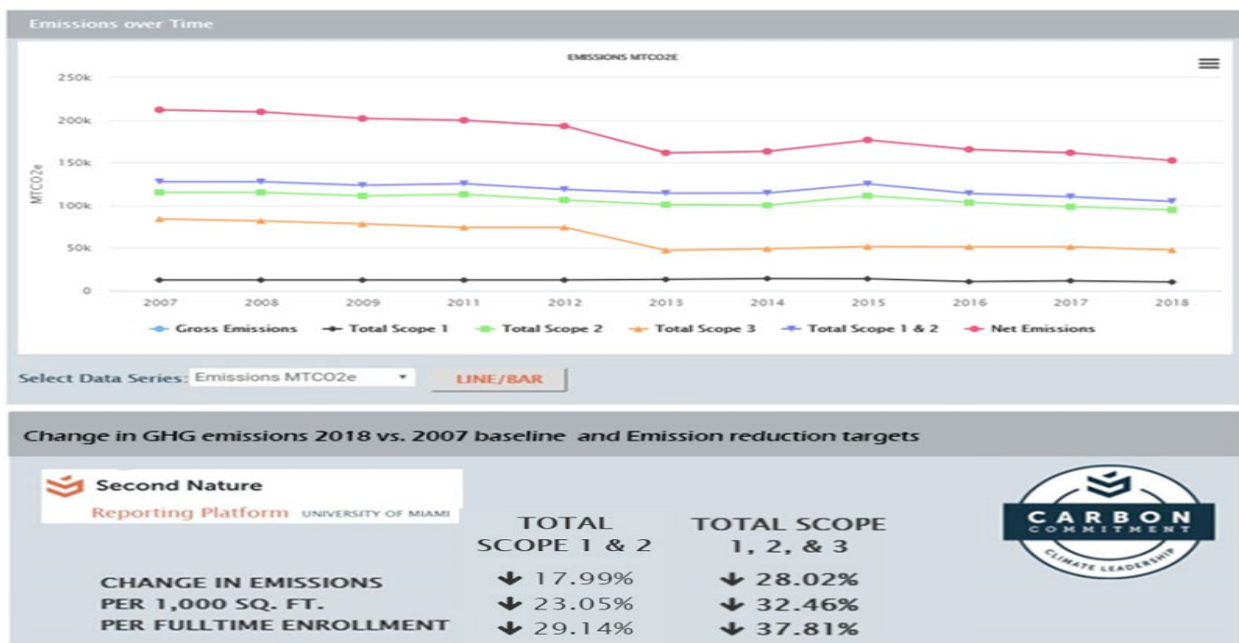
curriculum takes time to complete, but years after years, we are starting to see a very good response from all of our schools. Following our Sustainability Action Plan 2019 roadmap, a SUST course attribute was approved by the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee, that allows students to more efficiently select classes and apply to the Sustainability Undergraduate Certificate, Sustainability minors and new Sustainability focused degrees. This Fall, many graduate students will have a panel of sustainability oriented programs to choose from, and our researchers are continuously working across disciplines to solve the most urgent sustainability and resiliency challenges the World faces.

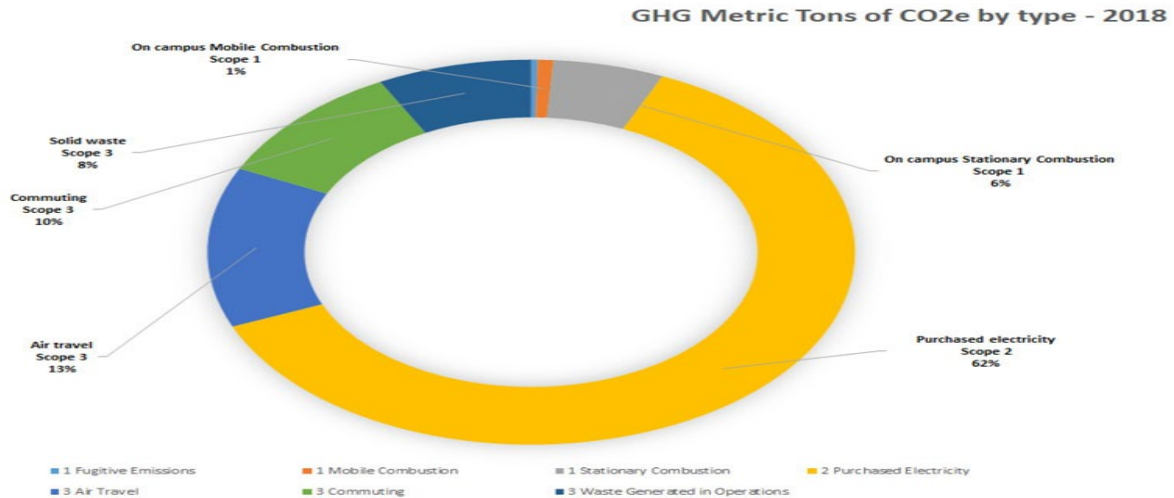
Energy Conservation efforts: Since 2007 and despite an ever growing campus, energy per capita has steadily been decreasing. This can be explained by our strict commitment to Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design certification for our new constructions. But addressing new buildings is not enough, and most existing buildings have been retrofitted to be more energy efficient too. Our teams in Facilities Operations and Planning are probably the most responsive to the data collection effort, which doesn't mean the data is easy to get. In this past application, we had to review a whole section of our historical legacy data because we realized it accounted for chilled water energy consumption separately, skewing our CO2 equivalent emissions. All these energy efficiency and conservation strategies have allowed us to be on track with our original carbon emission reduction goal of 20% from a 2007 baseline by 2020. In that regard, the LEED Gold New Housing Village that our students will inaugurate in 2020 is a testimony of UM's commitment to Climate Change mitigation.

Institutional Collaboration: The other big advantage of using STARS is that the process itself promotes collaboration between our sustainability office and other departments who provide data; in some cases other partnerships grow out of what was initiated by requesting data for STARS, it really expands sustainability understanding and accountability across campus. For example, the collaboration with our office of Planning, Institutional Research, and Assessment was crucial this year to fast track some of the STARS credits, especially the ones related to Sustainability in Research.

We would not have been able to complete our Sustainability Action Plan 2019 without a comprehensive and efficient tool like STARS. We first collected all the data, entered it

into the online platform, and from there, were able to benchmark with other similar institutions in the country. The application to STARS, no matter the size of the institution is always an exciting and challenging time. Some of the challenges come from the strict requirements of certain credits, like the Clean and Renewable Energy credit. In other instances, we had to wait for a semester to start in order to have students working on other credits, like in the case of the Food and Beverages Purchasing credit handled by our Geography and Regional Studies undergraduate majors. The data collection process can be lengthy, but the final report we get is really comprehensive. To guarantee an improved and more rapid response to the data collection effort, a letter from President Frenk was sent to a “Directors and above” listserv. Introducing the rationale behind the STARS application and the data collection team to our leaders was instrumental. It allowed us to submit our application two month ahead of schedule. The STARS methodology allowed us to build a gap analysis for every credit we’ve submitted, and to start designing a series of goals to fill those gaps. Most of those goals are now implemented, which lead us to the current Gold rating on our 2019 application. Given that STARS is so widely used, the credits we were not able to attain are looked at as suggestions that we hope to implement in the future.





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### [UM Sustainability Action Plan - 2019](#)

The Sustainability Action Plan is a road map to monitor and improve UM sustainability performance. Based on our STARS Silver rating, the report establishes a series of goals for 2019, year of our next application to the STARS program. Most of our goals are either in the process of being implemented or already implemented. Feel free to consult the **Sustainability Action Plan**, see how it can apply to your area of expertise, how you can get engaged.

**University of Miami has earned a STARS Silver rating in recognition of its sustainability achievements from the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE). The University of Miami's STARS report can be viewed on the STARS [website](#).**

The STARS (Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System) rating is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their

sustainability performance and encourage sustainability in all aspects of higher education.

UM's rating comes as a result of the University's dedication to engaging students, faculty and staff in various sustainability programs and policies, according to Teddy Lhoutellier, UM's sustainability manager. The UM community's collective efforts have led to improved energy conservation, waste diversion and public engagement.

"We can define sustainability in a pluralistic and inclusive way, encompassing human and ecological health, social justice, secure livelihoods, and a better world for all generations," Lhoutellier said. "STARS attempts to translate this broad view of sustainability to measurable objectives at the campus level. Thus, we are very proud to have achieved a silver rating. It will help us build our new Sustainability Action Plan for our next application in 2019."

Among the University's most significant achievements was the 2015 debut of the Patricia Louise Frost Music Studios, the first higher education building in the region to achieve LEED Platinum certification. With a 70 KW solar system, electro-chromatic windows and a rainwater harvesting system for irrigating the landscape and flushing the toilets, the Frost Studios serve as a benchmark and illustrate the University's commitment to environmental responsibility in all areas of construction.

With more than 800 participants on six continents, AASHE's STARS program is the most widely recognized framework in the world for publicly reporting comprehensive information related to a college or university's sustainability performance. Participants report achievements in four overall areas: academics; engagement; operations; and planning and administration.

**The University of Miami's STARS report can be viewed on the STARS [website](#).**

In 2005 the University launched **Green U**, under the direction of **Alan J Fish** (The Vice President of Business Services at the time) in order to officially categorize and direct the numerous sustainability efforts of the University. Green U's first aim was to make UM: "*a community leader in the acquisition of environmentally responsible products and the practice of ecologically sound maintenance and operations procedures.*"

**The American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment ([ACUPCC](#))** is a project developed by the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education ([AASHE](#)), to which the University belongs. The commitment provides a framework and support for America's colleges and universities to become Carbon neutral. As a member of the elite Leadership Circle, President Shalala is one of the original signatories.

***“The University of Miami is recognized for preparing students to be environmental thinkers and responsible citizens of the world... Now we are making a commitment to a sustainable future by broadening our approach to educating students on environmental sustainability and by fostering a culture of environmental awareness at the University.” - President Shalala on her historic signing (April 18th, 2007)***



Download the [2014 Sustainability report](#)

## **2009 CLIMATE ACTION PLAN**

The University of Miami's 2009 Climate Action Plan was a proposal of logical steps to fulfill long-term goals of greenhouse gas emission reductions. Future scenarios,

accomplishments, recommendations, and all important interim steps were detailed in [this Report](#).

The categories of green house gas sources were analyzed given three general categories:

Scope 1, Direct Sources (produced on campus):

- “Including (but not limited to): production of electricity, heat, or steam; transportation, materials, products, waste, and community members; and fugitive emissions (from unintentional leaks).”

Scope 2, Indirect Sources (produced off campus but imported on):

- “Includes GHG emissions from imports of electricity, heat or steam – generally those associated with the generation of imported sources of energy.”

Scope 3, Indirect sources (produced off campus but related to institution):

- “These result from the institution’s activities, but occur from sources owned or controlled by another company. Includes: business travel, outsourced activities and contracts, emissions from waste generated by the institution when the GHG emissions occur at a facility controlled by another company, e.g. methane emissions from land-filled waste, and the commuting habits of community members.” *WBCSD/WRI*, <http://www.wbcd.org/web/publications/ghg-protocol.pdf>

**2007 University of Miami Emissions**

