



Northeastern

TO: Senate Agenda Committee

FROM: Climate Justice Action Planning Committee

DATE: March 28, 2023

SUBJECT: Final report for the Academic Years 2022-2023

This 2022-2023 academic year marked the second time that the Climate Justice Action Committee was a standing committee of the Faculty Senate. The committee was created in response to a specific recommendation of the 2020-2021 ad-hoc Climate Justice Action Committee and stood for the first time during the 2021-2022 academic year.

The committee met regularly from September through March to review charges and information, discuss challenges and opportunities for climate justice action and gain insights from meetings with key constituents. The committee met with members from the Sustainability Hub, unit-level Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion representatives, and Inclusion and Diversity Committee members.

The committee also conducted two surveys among faculty and other forms of research to support its findings and recommendations.

Committee Members:

1. Rachel F Rodgers, Department of Applied Psychology, Boston campus, Co-Chair
2. Mikhail Oet, College of Professional Studies, Boston campus, Co-Chair
3. Alpha Yacob Arsano, School of Architecture, Boston campus
4. Rebekah E. Moore, Department of Music, Boston campus
5. Tony Mullen, Khoury College of Computer Sciences, Seattle Campus

2022-2023 Charges:

- 1: Recommend a specific plan for the NEU as a global campus to increase ratings across various rankings.
2. Develop metrics for the global university to measure impact and track progress concerning the strategic plan created by the previous committee.
3. Develop a plan for a visible and coordinated group of key players and stakeholders across different groups (students, staff, faculty, community partners, etc.)

Climate Justice Action Committee - Report to the Faculty Senate: March 28th, 2023

A. Definition and role of climate justice action in education

Climate justice is an approach to climate action that redresses the legacies of exploitation and injustice that have resulted in sharply unequal vulnerabilities to climate risks, both locally and globally. Climate justice action requires transformative systems-level changes that integrate multiple kinds of knowledge linking technological and social innovation in ways that prioritize social, racial, and economic equity.

Within higher education, climate justice action includes centering climate justice as a university priority within all educational and training activities, in their content and their practice, as well as committing to a more equitable, inclusive, diverse, and accessible university community and ending fossil fuel reliance within our communities and our global network of campuses. Climate justice also involves expanding our commitment to partnering with and centering the needs of under-invested-in communities and communities of color who continue to be more vulnerable to increasingly frequent and intense climate disruptions and whose health and well-being are disproportionately harmed by fossil fuel use. As a global campus, Northeastern has the potential and the responsibility to be a global leader and to ensure that our priorities, strategies, and actions are aligned with and respond to the needs and priorities of broader networks of non-academic communities. Prioritizing climate justice is both an opportunity and a responsibility for any university committed to advancing racial justice, sustaining collaborative community relations, and restoring ecosystems.

B. Summary of Key Findings and recommendations from the 2021-2022 committee

1. Northeastern in the context of Climate Justice Action Leadership

While over a decade ago, Northeastern established itself as a global sustainability leader when it designated sustainability as one of the university's three main research thrusts, more recently, it has yet to catch up with others. A review of climate action initiatives in other Boston-area universities demonstrates that while some continue to demonstrate leadership, Northeastern is no longer a leader regarding climate action. As a fast-expanding global campus, Northeastern has a unique opportunity to be an innovative global leader in climate justice and sustainability.

As noted by the previous committee, several prominent Boston-area universities, including MIT, have positioned their climate work as a presidential-level initiative.

Table 1: Northeastern’s lag in the communication of and commitment to a clear strategic plan for Climate Action Justice compared to neighboring institutions

University peer	Presidential statement	Commitment to zero carbon emissions / fossil fuel neutral	Strategic Plan
MIT’s Fast Forward (2021) link	X	by 2026	X
Boston University (2017) link	X	by 2040	X
Harvard Climate Action Plan link	X	by 2026	X
Tufts (2013) link	X		X
UMass Boston (2020) link	X		X
Brandeis (2020) link	X		X

2. Recommendations from the 2021-2022 Committee

The previous committee articulated recommendations around four key areas: Leadership, Assessment, Inclusive Engagement, and Synergies.

Leadership: The Committee advocated for the elevation of climate and environmental justice to a Presidential-level initiative, on par with the priority level attributed by other flagship Universities in the Boston area.

Assessment: The previous Committee called for a transparent evaluation of the university policies, priorities, and activities, including through the STARS rating system.

Inclusive Engagement: The Committee prioritized developing best practices within and beyond the campus by engaging university constituents and external partners. It called for demonstrated inclusive dialogue with surrounding communities, including community organizers, local and state/provincial governments, and Indigenous populations, with particular emphasis on historically marginalized populations, under-resourced communities that typically both bear a disproportionately negative impact of university expansion and have the least capacity to avoid or alleviate the resulting hardships.

Synergies: Finally, the committee focused on leveraging synergies among research, teaching, learning, experiential and administrative activities throughout the university’s global network of campuses and communities to increase Northeastern’s impact on climate and environmental justice.

The previous committee articulated three essential directions for this work:

1. Develop communication strategies for the university community to engage in discussions surrounding climate justice and options for activism.
2. Provide recommendations to update and expand on the university's 2010 Climate Action Plan by including modifications that emphasize a university-wide commitment to climate justice action.
3. Implement specific steps to enable Northeastern to operationalize climate justice action, including suggestions on particular mechanisms for climate justice action to align with the university's new strategic plan.

C. Summary of 2022-2023 key findings and recommendations

Summary: The 2022-2023 committee acknowledges the legacy of the previous committee and reaffirms the priorities outlined by that group. The current committee calls for more urgent and visible action around the identified priorities and activities and notes an overall need for more visible advancement toward the identified goals.

The current committee reaffirms and expands the priorities articulated by the previous committee. In addition, the current committee highlights the increased urgency, responsibility, and potential for Northeastern University to become a global leader in Climate Justice Action, given its Global Campus.

Table 2: 2022-2023 Identified Climate Action Priorities
1. Situate Climate Justice Action as a presidential priority and provide the structures and incentives to facilitate synergistic work across research, educational experiences, and services and facilities throughout the Global Campus.
2. Communicate vocally and transparently regarding the university's commitment to Climate Justice Action through a visible strategic plan, ambitious goals, and available indices of its commitment to and accountable progress towards Climate Justice Action.
3. Engage in and facilitate inclusive community engagement, critical stakeholder participation, and partner collaboration towards aligning priorities on Climate Justice and Social Justice, as envisaged by the first Climate Justice Action Committee.

Given these priorities, the committee calls for operationalized actions across these levels.

Table 3: Operationalized Actions Towards Climate Justice Action Priorities

STARS Assessment dimension	Proposed actions
ACADEMICS: Curriculum	<p>Global campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Incentivize participation in innovative courses related to climate justice: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a NUPath Core Category for climate justice. 2. Map existing coursework and curricula on climate justice: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Conduct a comprehensive audit of courses across the curricula focusing on climate justice, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, and climate adaptation. A mixed methods approach is recommended, including a quantitative analysis of the university catalog, utilizing the noted keywords, and a short-form campus-wide survey inviting faculty to list all courses articulating these topics in the substantive course content (e.g., module themes) or learning outcomes. 3. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling. 4. Incentivize the development of innovative, experiential coursework and curricula on climate justice: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Establish a summer stipend program for interdisciplinary faculty groups to develop team-taught first-year courses that would satisfy the climate justice NUPath requirement; b. Recommend to units that efforts to address climate justice issues be included in merit reviews and other performance-tracking systems; c. Invite CATLR and the Sustainability Hub to offer training on integrating such content within educational offerings. <p>Northeastern Boston campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increase faculty engagement in sustainability research. 2. Improve integration of sustainability into the curriculum. <p>Northeastern Oakland campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance the quality of sustainability-focused programs and expand interdisciplinary collaboration. 2. Improve the ratio of students to sustainability course offerings.
ACADEMICS: Research Impactful interdisciplinary research on climate justice	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create Impact Engines on climate justice, environmental justice, environmental sustainability, and climate adaptation. 2. Host low barrier-to-entry, community-building research events, such as micro-conferences, brain-dating, hackathons, and solution rooms to help spark new research collaborations around climate justice. 3. Create a new internal funding schema for a dedicated climate justice research track for all significant internal research awards (e.g., TIER, Interdisciplinary Sabbatical Program, etc.) 4. Create a dedicated climate justice category for the annual RISE awards. 5. Revise tenure and promotion review standards to accept interdisciplinary applied research (e.g., community-based programs and policy advocacy) and non-hierarchical multi-authored

	<p>publications as valid and necessary exemplars of research oriented toward climate justice.</p> <p>6. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling.
ENGAGEMENT: Campus Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen sustainability orientation activities and programming for all entering students. 2. Increase visibility and promotion of climate justice-related events and initiatives on campus. 3. Promote cross-campus faculty representation on the committee and in all actions described above. 4. Invite student climate groups to meet with the committee in an advisory capacity and inform future priorities. 5. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling.
ENGAGEMENT: Public Engagement	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhance collaboration between faculty, students, and community stakeholders in climate justice initiatives. 2. Convene a community advisory board to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify possible teaching/research partnerships on local sustainability and climate change challenges; and b. Clarify the university's environmental impacts on surrounding neighborhoods. 3. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling.
OPERATIONS	<p>Global campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Create carbon-neutral facilities. 2. Identify and prioritize existing systems within the global campus that may be usefully translated to other campuses. 3. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling. <p>Northeastern Boston campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Prioritize waste reduction, water conservation, and sustainable transportation options. <p>Northeastern Oakland campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Prioritize waste reduction and recycling initiatives. 6. Improve water conservation and management practices. 7. Encourage using sustainable transportation options, such as public transit, biking, and carpooling.
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION	<p>Global campus:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Include Climate Justice Action as a Presidential level priority <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Create a Senior Leadership Position (e.g., Vice Provost for Climate and Sustainability, as at Harvard); b. Develop a public Climate Justice Action Plan.

-
2. Implement an inclusive process for developing the University Climate Justice Action Plan (CJAP):
 - a. Establish a Climate Task Force to build faculty, student, and community stakeholder in developing, implementing, and evaluating the CJAP.
 3. Develop governance to support visibility and accountability regarding progress toward strategic goals:
 - a. Establish evaluative measures in consultation with the Task Force;
 - b. Create comprehensive interactive dashboards of relevant indices of the Global Campus, accessible to the NU community.
 4. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps:
 - a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling.

Northeastern Boston campus:

5. Maintain efficient performance while increasing the percentage of low-income students and ensuring all employees are assessed.

Northeastern Oakland campus:

6. Increase diversity in the highest governing body, particularly the representation of women.
7. Enhance need-based financial aid for students and work towards reducing student loan debt.
8. Support low-income students by improving graduation and success rates.

**INNOVATION &
LEADERSHIP**

Global campus:

1. Incentivize integration of teaching and research with university facility projects:
 - a. Invite faculty to develop funded experiential learning opportunities around climate justice using university facilities projects as their real-world partner.
 2. Developing synergistic partnerships with key stakeholders:
 - a. Forge connections with relevant Impact Engines, industry, government, and academic partners;
 - b. Recommend that the DEI office expands offerings highlighting the inter-related issues of climate justice and DEI (e.g., community practice meeting).
 3. Integrating research and educational experiences across the Global Network:
 - a. Promote integrating locally relevant, experiential climate justice learning opportunities into coursework at all levels, in many disciplines, across the global network.
 4. Support a visible and coordinated group of key players and stakeholders across different groups:
 - a. Promote cross-campus faculty representation on the committee and in all actions described above;
 - b. Invite student climate groups to meet with the committee in an advisory capacity and inform future priorities;
 - c. Convene a community advisory board to:
 - i. identify possible teaching/research partnerships on local sustainability and climate change challenges and
-

-
- ii. clarify the university's environmental impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.
5. Committee on Climate Justice Action Planning and the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub to coordinate data collection efforts and address gaps:
- a. Revise the semi-annual faculty survey as instruments for data collection and sampling.
-

D. Charge 1: Make a recommendation to NEU as a global campus for a specific plan to increase ratings across a range of rankings

1. Progress

STARS Rating system

STARS is a transparent, self-reporting framework developed by AASHE (Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education) for colleges and universities to measure sustainability performance. It covers various categories, including Academics, Engagement, Operations, Planning & Administration, and Innovation & Leadership.

During the 2022-2023 Academic Year, this committee, in partnership and collaboration with the Northeastern Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub, has sponsored an experiential project to study the performance of the Northeastern University global campus as reported in the STARS system relative to its peers. Specifically, we have focused on the two Northeastern university campuses with the most substantial campus infrastructures: the Northeastern Boston campus and the Northeastern Oakland campus. In this study, we benchmarked the performance of the Northeastern Boston campus relative to the STARS data of 35 New England colleges and universities. We benchmarked the performance of the Northeastern Oakland campus relative to 38 California colleges and universities.

Our analysis of the STARS data shows that the Northeastern Boston campus has made significant progress in areas such as waste reduction, water conservation, and sustainable transportation options. However, there is room for improvement in faculty engagement in sustainability research and integration of sustainability into the curriculum. On the other hand, the Northeastern Oakland campus has made strides in the quality of sustainability-focused programs and interdisciplinary collaboration. Still, there is a need to expand course offerings related to sustainability and improve the ratio of students to sustainability course offerings.

Other rankings

In addition to the STARS system, other ranking systems have been developed. For example, the Times Higher Education Impact Rankings (see Table 3) include several vital indicators. According to these indices, NEU is currently ranked outside the top 100 institutions, and these metrics are available to the NEU community.

Table 4: Times Higher Education Impact Rankings 2022: Climate action (SDG 13) methodology

Metrics

Research on climate action (27%)

- The proportion of papers in the top 10% of journals as defined by CiteScore (10%)
- Field-weighted citation index of papers produced by the university (10%)

- Number of publications (7%)

This metric focuses on research that is relevant to climate action. The field-weighted citation index is a subject-normalized score of the citation performance of publications.

Low-carbon energy use (27%)

- Measure the amount of low-carbon energy used (13.5%)
- The proportion of electricity from low-carbon sources (13.5%)

The first indicator gives higher scores if the amount of low-carbon energy used is measured across the university. If universities do not calculate this amount, they cannot score for the second indicator. The second indicator refers to the gigajoules (GJ) of the total energy used and energy used from low-carbon sources. The total energy used includes energy generated by the university and energy purchased by the university.

Environmental education measures (23%)

- Local education programs or campaigns on climate change (4.6%)
- Existence of a university climate action plan shared with local government and community groups (4.6%)
- Working with the local or national government to plan for climate change disasters (4.6%)

- Inform and support the local or regional government on issues associated with climate change (4.6%)
- Collaborate with NGOs on climate change adaptation (4.6%)

Commitment to carbon neutral university (23%)

- Commitment to carbon neutrality (11.5%)
- Achieve by date (11.5%)

According to the Greenhouse Gas Protocol, the first indicator asks whether the university has a target date by which it will become carbon neutral. The second indicator asks when carbon neutrality for Scopes 1 and 2 is expected (or whether it has already been achieved). Higher scores are given for the first indicator if the target includes all three scopes.

2. Recommendations

Our analysis has identified areas in which Northeastern University can improve its Climate justice action planning as a global campus:

- In the Academics assessment category, focus on increasing faculty engagement in sustainability research, improving the integration of sustainability into the curriculum, and enhancing the quality of sustainability-focused programs through interdisciplinary collaboration.
- In the Engagement assessment category, strengthen sustainability orientation activities and programming for all entering students to raise awareness and engagement in sustainability issues, increase visibility and promotion of climate justice-related events

and initiatives on campus, encourage greater participation from the university community, and foster collaboration between faculty, students, and community stakeholders in climate justice initiatives.

- In the Operations assessment category, prioritize waste reduction and recycling initiatives, improve water conservation and management practices, and encourage sustainable transportation options, such as public transit, biking, and carpooling.
- In the Planning and Administration assessment category, increase the diversity of the highest governing body, particularly the representation of women, enhance need-based financial aid for students and work towards reducing student loan debt, support low-income students by improving graduation and success rates, and assess a more significant percentage of employees, either directly or through representative samples.

By implementing these recommendations, NEU can work towards increasing its ratings across various sustainability and climate justice rankings and demonstrate its commitment to creating a more sustainable and just global campus.

E. Charge 2: Develop metrics for the global university to measure impact and track progress concerning the strategic plan created by the previous committee.

1. Progress

The committee has reviewed various sustainability and climate justice-related metrics and frameworks, such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the AASHE STARS rating system. We have also researched examples of interactive dashboards and other institutions' monitoring tools to track their progress and impact in these areas.

2. Recommendation

We recommend developing a comprehensive set of metrics and indicators to measure the impact and track progress concerning the strategic plan. These metrics should be aligned with established frameworks such as the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and the AASHE STARS rating system.

To effectively monitor and communicate progress, the global university should develop an interactive dashboard similar to those used by other institutions, like Brandeis University's Sustainability Dashboard (<https://www.brandeis.edu/sustainability/data/index.html>). This dashboard should be accessible to the NEU community and regularly updated with relevant data and progress reports.

The following categories and metrics exemplify potential candidates for inclusion in the dashboard:

a. Research and Teaching:

- The number of faculty and student research projects aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, particularly climate-related ones.

- The number and percentage of courses incorporating sustainability and climate justice topics in their curriculum.
 - The number of interdisciplinary collaborations focused on climate justice and sustainability.
- b. Campus Operations and Facilities:
- Energy consumption and greenhouse gas emissions per capita.
 - Waste diversion rate and reduction in waste generation.
 - Water consumption and conservation measures implemented.
- c. Community Engagement and Partnerships:
- The number of partnerships with local and global organizations working on climate justice and sustainability issues.
 - Participation rates in sustainability-focused events and initiatives.
 - Diversity and inclusion metrics, such as representation in the highest governing body, need-based financial aid distribution, and graduation rates for low-income students.
- d. Planning and Administration:
- Progress towards the implementation of the Climate Justice Action Plan (CJAP).
 - Inclusion of sustainability and climate justice goals in strategic planning documents and departmental plans.
 - Establishment of a Climate Task Force to oversee the development, implementation, and evaluation of the CJAP.

More specifically, we recommend the following metrics be included, based on the joint experiential project conducted by this Committee, the Climate Action and Sustainability Hub, and the graduate students at the College of Professional Studies.

Table 5: AASHE STARS Variables recommended for Performance Monitoring	
ACADEMICS – Curriculum monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
AC-1.63	Number of undergraduate courses offered that are sustainability-focused
AC-1.64	Number of graduate courses offered that are sustainability-focused
AC-1.65	Number of undergraduate courses offered that are sustainability-inclusive
AC-1.66	Number of graduate courses offered that are sustainability-inclusive
AC-1.67	Percentage of courses that are sustainability course offerings
AC-1.68	Total number of academic departments that offer courses
AC-1.69	Number of academic departments with sustainability course offerings
AC-1.70	Percentage of academic departments with sustainability course offerings
AC-2.81	Total number of graduates from degree programs
AC-2.87	Percentage of students who graduate from programs that require an understanding of the concept of sustainability
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
AC-2.78	Has the institution adopted one or more sustainability learning outcomes that apply to the entire student body or, at minimum, to the institution's predominant student body?
AC-3.90	Does the institution offer at least one sustainability-focused major, degree, or certificate program for undergraduate students?

AC-3.101	Does the institution offer one or more sustainability-focused minors or concentrations for undergraduate students?
AC-4.113	Does the institution offer at least one sustainability-focused major, degree program, or the equivalent for graduate students?
AC-4.124	Does the institution offer one or more graduate-level sustainability-focused minors, concentrations or certificates?
AC-5.136	Does the institution offer at least one immersive, sustainability-focused educational study program that is one week or more in length?
AC-6.140	Does the institution conduct an assessment of the sustainability literacy of its students?
AC-7.150	Does the institution have an ongoing program that offers incentives for academic staff in multiple disciplines or departments to develop new sustainability courses and/or incorporate sustainability into existing courses?
AC-8.155	Is the institution utilizing its infrastructure and operations as a living laboratory for applied student learning for sustainability in relation to Campus Engagement?
AC-8.157	Is the institution utilizing its infrastructure and operations as a living laboratory for applied student learning for sustainability in relation to Public Engagement?

ACADEMICS – Research monitoring

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
AC-9.187	Total number of employees that conduct research
AC-9.190	Total number of academic departments that include at least one employee who conducts research
AC-10.198	Does the institution have an ongoing program to encourage students in multiple disciplines or academic programs to conduct sustainability research?
AC-10.200	Does the institution have a program to encourage academic staff from multiple disciplines or academic programs to conduct sustainability research?
AC-10.205	Does the institution have ongoing library support for sustainability research and learning?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
AC-9.189	Percentage of employees that conduct research that are engaged in sustainability research
AC-9.192	Percentage of departments that conduct research that are engaged in sustainability research
AC-10.202	Has the institution published written policies and procedures that give positive recognition to interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and multidisciplinary research during faculty promotion and/or tenure decisions?
AC-11.209	Does the institution offer repository hosting that makes versions of journal articles, book chapters, and other peer-reviewed scholarly works by its employees freely available on the public internet?
AC-11.212	Does the institution have a published policy that requires its employees to publish scholarly works open access or archive final post-peer reviewed versions of scholarly works in an open access repository?

ENGAGEMENT – Campus Engagement monitoring

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
EN-1.225	Percentage of students served by a peer-to-peer sustainability outreach and education program
EN-7.324	Percentage of employees served by a peer-to-peer sustainability outreach and education program
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
EN-1.256	Hours worked annually by trained student sustainability educators per student served by a peer-to-peer program

EN-8.349	Percentage of new employees that are offered orientation and/or outreach and guidance materials that cover sustainability topics
ENGAGEMENT – Public Engagement monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
EN-10.363	Does the institution provide financial or material support for the partnership?
EN-12.400	Total number of continuing education courses offered
EN-13.417	Does the institution have a formal program to support employee volunteering during regular work hours?
EN-14.423	Does the institution advocate for public policies that support campus sustainability or that otherwise advance sustainability at the municipal/local level?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
EN-10.366	Are underrepresented groups and/or vulnerable populations engaged as equal partners?
EN-12.402	Percentage of continuing education courses that are sustainability course offerings
EN-13.416	Number of annual community service hours contributed per student
EN-15.435	Is the institution a member of the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC)?
OPERATIONS – Air & Climate monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-1.444	Has the institution conducted a GHG emissions inventory within the previous three years that includes all Scope 1 and 2 emissions?
OP-1.452	Total gross Scope 1 GHG emissions, performance year
OP-1.455	Total gross Scope 2 GHG emissions, performance year
OP-18.864	Total full-time equivalent student enrollment, performance year
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-1.471	Total Scope 3 GHG emissions, performance year
OP-2.497	Gross Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions, performance year
OP-2.504	Net carbon sinks, performance year
OP-2.538	Percentage reduction in adjusted net Scope 1 and Scope 2 GHG emissions per weighted campus user from baseline
OPERATIONS – Buildings monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-2.525	Total full-time equivalent student enrollment, performance year
OP-2.526	Full-time equivalent of employees, performance year
OP-3.548	Total floor area of newly constructed or renovated building space
OP-3.559	Percentage of newly constructed or renovated building space certified under a green building rating system for design and construction
OP-4.564	Total floor area of existing building space
OP-4.565	Floor area of existing building space operated and maintained in accordance with a sustainable management policy/program and/or a green building rating system
OP-4.575	Percentage of existing building space certified under a green building rating system rating system focused on the operations and maintenance of existing buildings
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-3.550	Floor area of newly constructed or renovated building space certified at the highest achievable level under a multi-attribute GBC rating system for design and construction
OP-3.551	Floor area of newly constructed or renovated building space certified at the 2nd highest level under a 4- or 5-tier, multi-attribute GBC rating system for design and construction

OP-3.552	Floor area of newly constructed or renovated building space certified at mid-level under a 3- or 5-tier, multi-attribute GBC rating system for design and construction
OP-3.553	Floor area of newly constructed or renovated building space certified at a step above minimum level under a 4- or 5-tier, multi-attribute GBC rating system for design and construction
OP-4.566	Floor area of existing building space certified LEED O+M Platinum or at the highest achievable level under another green building rating system for the operations and maintenance of existing buildings used by an Established Green Building Council (GBC)
OP-4.567	Floor area of existing building space certified at the 2nd highest level under a 4- or 5-tier, multi-attribute, GBC rating system focused on the operations and maintenance of existing buildings
OP-4.568	Floor area of existing building space certified at mid-level under a 3- or 5-tier, multi-attribute, GBC rating system focused on the operations and maintenance of existing buildings

OPERATIONS – Energy monitoring

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-5.579	Imported electricity, performance year (kWh)
OP-5.580	Electricity from on-site, non-combustion facilities/devices, performance year (kWh)
OP-5.583	Total energy consumption (site energy), performance year
OP-5.590	Heating degree days, performance year
OP-5.591	Cooling degree days, performance year

Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-5.595	Total energy consumption (site energy) per unit of EUI-adjusted floor area per degree day, performance year
OP-5.606	Total building energy consumption (site energy) per unit of floor area, performance year
OP-5.607	Total building energy consumption (source energy) per unit of floor area, performance year
OP-5.610	Percentage reduction in total energy consumption (source energy) per unit of floor area from baseline
OP-6.632	Percentage of total energy consumption from clean and renewable sources

OPERATIONS – Food & Dining monitoring
--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-7.653	Percentage of total annual food and beverage expenditures on products that are sustainably or ethically produced
OP-7.654	Percentage of total annual food and beverage expenditures on plant-based foods
OP-7.668	Are vending services present on campus?
OP-7.670	Are concessions present on campus?
OP-7.672	Total annual dining services budget for food and beverage products
OP-7.664	Are franchises present on campus?
OP-8.689	Does the institution or its primary dining services contractor participate in a competition or commitment program and/or use a food waste prevention system to track and improve its food management practices?

Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-7.674	Website URL where information about the food and beverage purchasing program is available
OP-8.676	Does institution or its primary dining services contractor host a farmers market, community supported agriculture (CSA) or fishery program, or urban agriculture project, or supports such a program in the local community?

OP-8.678	Does the institution or its primary dining services contractor host a sustainability-themed food outlet on-site, either independently or in partnership with a contractor or retailer?
OP-8.683	Does the institution or its primary dining services contractor host low impact dining events or promote plant-forward options?
OP-8.685	Does the institution or its primary dining services contractor have a vegan dining program that makes diverse, complete-protein vegan options available to every member of the campus community at every meal?
OP-8.691	Has the institution or its primary dining services contractor implemented trayless dining (in which trays are removed from or not available in dining halls) and/or modified menus/portions to reduce post-consumer food waste?
OP-7.655	An inventory of food and beverage purchases that qualify as sustainably/ethically produced

OPERATIONS – Grounds monitoring	
--	--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
PRE-4.41	Total campus area
OP-9.711	Area managed organically, without the use of inorganic fertilizers and chemical pesticides, fungicides and herbicides
OP-9.712	Area managed in accordance with an Integrated Pest Management (IPM) program that uses selected chemicals only when needed
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-9.716	Percentage of grounds managed organically
OP-9.718	Percentage of grounds managed in accordance with an IPM program
OP-10.737	Estimated percentage of areas of biodiversity importance that are also protected areas

OPERATIONS – Purchasing monitoring	
---	--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-12.764	Total annual expenditures on electronics
OP-13.773	Total annual expenditures on cleaning products
OP-14.781	Total annual expenditures on office paper
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-13.774	Annual expenditures on certified green cleaning products
OP-14.786	Annual expenditures on 90-100 percent post-consumer recycled and/or agricultural residue content or FSC Recycled/100% label office paper
OP-13.777	Percentage of expenditures on cleaning and janitorial products that are third party certified to meet recognized sustainability standards

OPERATIONS – Transportation monitoring	
---	--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-15.790	Total number of vehicles in the institution's fleet
OP-16.805	Total full-time equivalent student enrollment
PRE-5.55	Full-time equivalent of employees
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-15.796	Number of 100 percent electric vehicles in the institution's fleet
OP-16.808	Total percentage of students that use more sustainable commuting options as their primary mode of transportation
OP-16.811	Total percentage of employees that use more sustainable commuting options as their primary mode of transportation

OPERATIONS – Waste monitoring	
--------------------------------------	--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-18.849	Total waste generated, performance year
PRE-5.59	Weighted campus users, performance year
OP-18.857	Total waste generated, baseline year

OP-2.535	Weighted campus users, baseline year
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-18.843	Materials recycled, performance year
OP-18.844	Materials composted, performance year
OP-18.845	Materials donated or re-sold, performance year
OP-18.879	Percentage of materials diverted from the landfill or incinerator by recycling, composting, donating or re-selling, performance year

OPERATIONS – Water monitoring

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
OP-21.931	Total water withdrawal, performance year
PRE-5.59	Weighted campus users, performance year
OP-21.932	Total water withdrawal, baseline year
OP-2.535	Weighted campus users, baseline year
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
OP-21.954	Potable water use per weighted campus user, performance year
OP-21.959	Potable water use per unit of floor area, performance year
OP-21.964	Total water withdrawal per unit of vegetated grounds, performance year
OP-21.956	Percentage reduction in potable water use per weighted campus user from baseline

PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION– Coordination & Planning monitoring
--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
PA-1.978	Does the institution have at least one sustainability committee?
PA-1.981	Does the institution have at least one sustainability office that includes more than 1 full-time equivalent employee?
PA-1.984	Does the institution have at least one sustainability officer?
PA-2.999	Does the institution have a published plan or plans that include measurable sustainability objectives that address sustainability in curriculum and/or research?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
PA-3.1032	Total number of individuals on the institution’s highest governing body
PA-3.1036	Number of women serving as official members of the institution’s highest governing body
PA-3.1037	Percentage of official members of the highest governing body that are women
PA-2.1005	Does the institution have a published plan or plans that include measurable sustainability objectives that address diversity, equity, and inclusion; sustainable investment/finance; or wellbeing?

PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION– Diversity & Affordability monitoring
--

Input Code	STARS Input Variable
PA-7.1081	Does the institution have programs specifically designed to recruit students from underrepresented groups?
PA-7.1082	Does the institution have programs specifically designed to recruit academic staff from underrepresented groups?
PA-7.1089	Does the institution have training and development programs, teaching fellowships and/or other programs that specifically aim to support and prepare students from underrepresented groups for careers as faculty members?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
PA-5.1055	Does the institution have a diversity and equity committee, office, and/or officer tasked by the administration or governing body to advise on and implement policies, programs, and trainings related to diversity, equity, inclusion and human rights?

PA-5.1058	Estimated proportion of students that has participated in that has participated in cultural competence, anti-oppression, anti-racism, and/or social inclusion trainings and activities
PA-5.1060	Estimated proportion of non-academic staff that has participated in cultural competence, anti-oppression, anti-racism, and/or social inclusion trainings and activities
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION– Investment & Finance monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
PA-10.1113	Total value of the investment pool
PA-10.1132	Does the institution participate in a public divestment effort and/or have a publicly available investment policy with negative screens?
PA-10.1135	Does the institution engage in policy advocacy by participating in investor networks and/or engage in inter-organizational collaborations to share best practices?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
PA-9.1104	Does the institution have a formally established and active committee on investor responsibility (CIR) or equivalent body?
PA-10.1121	Percentage of the institution's investment pool in positive sustainability investments
PA-10.1127	Has the institution engaged in proxy voting, either by its CIR or other committee or through the use of guidelines, to promote sustainability during the previous three years?
PLANNING & ADMINISTRATION– Wellbeing & Work monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
PA-12.1148	The local living wage (based on a family of four and expressed as an hourly wage)
PA-12.1149	Percentage of employees that receive a living wage (benefits excluded)
PA-12.1150	Does the institution have significant contractors with employees that work on-site as part of regular and ongoing campus operations?
PA-12.1153	Total compensation provided to the institution's lowest paid regular, part-time or full-time employee or pay grade meets or exceeds what percentage of the living wage?
PA-13.1159	Has the institution conducted a survey or other evaluation that allows for anonymous feedback to measure employee satisfaction and engagement during the previous three years?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
PA-14.1165	Does the institution have a wellness program that makes counseling, referral, and wellbeing services available to all students?
PA-14.1166	Does the institution have a wellness and/or employee assistance program that makes counseling, referral, and wellbeing services available to all academic staff?
PA-14.1167	Does the institution have a wellness and/or employee assistance program that makes counseling, referral, and wellbeing services available to all non-academic staff?
PA-15.1176	Does the institution have an occupational health and safety management system (OHSMS)?
PA-15.1184	Annual number of recordable incidents of work-related injury or ill health per 100 FTE employees
INNOVATION & LEADERSHIP monitoring	
Input Code	STARS Input Variable
IN-5.1213	Has the institution developed a peer reviewed carbon offsets project that follows an existing carbon reduction protocol during the previous three years?

IN-8.1236	Approximately what proportion of on-site food service outlets (by location or sales) are third party certified?
IN-15.1265	Percentage of courses offered by the institution that are taught by academic staff who are full-time, tenured, and/or eligible for tenure (“tenure track”)
IN-26.1355	Year the institution’s nitrogen footprint was completed or last updated
IN-34.1393	A brief description of the institution’s sustainability-related spend analysis
IN-41.1432	Does the institution host a peer-to-peer textbook exchange program, textbook lending library, or alternate textbook project?
IN-43.1444	Has the institution calculated a natural water balance for the campus to assess the sustainability of its water withdrawal?
Output Code	STARS Output Variable
IN-28.1363	The factor by which the compensation of the highest compensated senior administrator exceeds that of the lowest compensated full-time employee
IN-36.1401	Percentile of local or regional rainfall events for which the institution manages runoff on-site using LID practices and green infrastructure
IN-37.1405	Percentage of student employees paid a living wage for one adult
IN-40.1426	Which of the following best describes the primary source of funding for the sustainability projects fund?
IN-42.1438	Has the institution been recognized as a Voter Friendly Campus within the previous three years?
IN-44.1449	Has the institution been recognized for leadership in health and wellness during the previous three years by a national or international program?
IN-47.1461	A brief description of the innovative policy, practice, program, or outcome that outlines how credit criteria are met and any positive measurable outcomes associated with the innovation

By developing and tracking these metrics, the global university can better understand its impact, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate its commitment to sustainability and climate justice.

F. Charge 3: Develop a plan for a visible and coordinated group of key players and stakeholders across different groups (students, staff, faculty, community partners, etc.)

1. Progress

The committee undertook a mapping exercise to identify key stakeholder groups across the university, including university offices (e.g., the [Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub](#)), campus sustainability commitments ([Mills at Northeastern Sustainability](#) and [NU London Sustainability](#)), research institutes supporting related research (the Boston Area Research Initiative’s focus on urban climate impacts and the CoE’s Beyond Traffic Innovation Center), academic programs (NU Boston Marine and Environmental Sciences degree and the former NU Mills Environmental Science degree), and student groups (Mills Gardening Club and NU Boston Husky Environmental Action Team).

In recognition that climate change and sustainability challenges adversely impact marginalized and minoritized communities (including members of the NU community and adjacent communities across many of our campuses) and that climate justice and

racial justice are intrinsically linked and must be concurrently pursued, we also met with unit-level Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion representatives, and a member of the Inclusion and Diversity Committee to determine if and to what degree climate justice is a priority in their work.

The most significant development impacting Charge 3 has been the establishment of the Climate Justice and Sustainability Hub, formerly known as the Office of Sustainability, with a revised stated mission to “engage, implement, and put research into action on climate justice, sustainability, and resilience at Northeastern.” In addition to meeting with Leah Bamberger, Executive Director, and Megan Curtis-Brown, Director of Campus Sustainability & Engagement, we have reviewed the latest updates on the Climate Justice Action Plan (CJAP) published on the Facilities website. Stated progress on the CJAP includes a 2021 survey and feedback event engaging faculty, staff, students, and alumni (47 respondents). The CJAP also mentions the engagement of two Boston-area community partner organizations (Alternatives and Community Environment and One Square World). However, the nature and extent of their involvement in the drafting of the plan could be more explicit. An included report on an April 2022 “community panel” hosted by the newly launched Hub clarifies that no community members were present at the event. Additionally, updates about the Hub’s plan to hire local community consultants have yet to be published. Survey respondents noted several excellent recommendations on Community Engagement and Climate Justice, but the specificity and measurability of these recommendations need to be reflected in the Draft Goals.

2. Recommendation

- a. The committee requests an update on the proposed actions listed in the Climate Justice Action plan:
 - Convene Steering Committee comprises NU faculty, students, staff, and environmental justice leaders in Boston, Feb. 2023.
 - Host racial equity training for faculty, students, staff, and community partners in March 2022.
 - Host community conversations to identify community priorities and concerns in May 2023.
- b. The committee recommends full transparency on the selection criteria for the Climate Hub’s community partners and the nature and scope of their engagement.
- c. Above, we have recommended integrating locally relevant, experiential climate justice learning opportunities into coursework at all levels, in many disciplines, across the global network. This recommendation aligns with 2021 survey respondents, who requested more service-learning classes with community partners and co-op opportunities with local businesses/nonprofits. We also recommend re-establishing the legacy program in Environmental Science at Mills.
- d. Related to this, and in alignment with the Climate Justice Action Plan draft goal to “collaborate with adjacent communities to contribute to equitable and sustainable neighborhoods,” we recommend the establishment of a Community Advisory Board convened in consultation with the Office of City and Community Engagement and faculty who have established community research and learning

partnerships, and the reservation of one seat on the proposed Climate Justice Task Force for a community member. A goal of the Board will be to expand campus-community partnerships across the Northeastern network, to identify possible teaching/research partnerships on local sustainability and climate change challenges, and to clarify the university's environmental impacts on surrounding neighborhoods.

- e. We recommend that the 2023-2024 Committee continues to pursue engagement with unit-level DEI heads and seeks conversations with the Inclusion and Diversity Committee to ensure alignment and accountability for climate equity.

Respectfully submitted,

Alpha Arsano, Tony Mullen, Rebekah Moore, Mikhail Oet, Rachel F. Rodgers

References

- 2021-2022 Climate Justice Action Committee Report. (2022).
<https://faculty.northeastern.edu/app/uploads/sites/2/2021/04/Climate-Justice-Action-Planning-April-2021-Faculty-Senate-presentation.pdf>
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. (2021). Building diversity, equity, and inclusion into your sustainability program.
<https://www.aashe.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/RESJ-2020-Anthology-Essay-4.pdf>
- Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education. (2021). STARS 2.2 technical manual.
<https://stars.aashe.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/STARS-2.2-Technical-Manual.pdf>
- Boston University Office of the President. (2017). Climate action plan resolution by Board of Trustees.
<https://www.bu.edu/president/climate-action-plan-resolution-by-board-of-%20trustees/>
- Brandeis University. (n.d.). Office of Sustainability.
<https://www.brandeis.edu/sustainability/>
- Brandeis University. (n.d.). Sustainability dashboard.
<https://www.brandeis.edu/sustainability/data/index.html>
- MIT Climate Portal. (2021). Fast forward: MIT's climate action plan for the Decade.
<https://climate.mit.edu/climateaction/fastforward>
- Mills College reports. (2021). Mills College | Institutions | STARS Reports.
<https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/mills-college-ca/report/>
- Northeastern University Faculty Senate (2022, March). Climate Justice Action Committee Report to the Faculty Senate.
<https://faculty.northeastern.edu/app/uploads/sites/2/2022/04/Climate-Justice-Action-Planning-Committee-Report-March-16-2022-FINAL.pdf>
- Northeastern University. (2023.). Climate Justice Action Plan.
<https://facilities.northeastern.edu/sustainability/cjap/>
- Northeastern University. (2023.). Experience Unleashed.
<https://strategicplan.northeastern.edu/>
- Northeastern University Boston reports. (2021). Northeastern University | Scorecard | Institutions | STARS Reports.
<https://reports.aashe.org/institutions/northeastern-university-ma/report/2021-05-28/>
- Northeastern University Facilities. (2018). 2017-Northeastern-Update-on-Sustainability-2005-2025.

<https://facilities.northeastern.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/2017-Northeastern-Update-on-Sustainability-2005-2025-6.4.18.pdf>

Northeastern University Facilities. (2018). NEU-Sustainable Action Plan.
<https://facilities.northeastern.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/NEU-Sustainable-Action-Plan.pdf>

Northeastern University Facilities. (2018). NU Sustainable Practices & Operations Guidelines.
<https://facilities.northeastern.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/NU-Sustainable-Practices-Operations-Guidelines.pdf>

Northeastern University Faculty Senate Climate Justice Action Resolution. (2022).
<https://cssh.northeastern.edu/policyschool/faculty-senate-passes-climate-justice-action-resolution>

Second Nature. (2023). DEIAJ toolkit - higher education's role in advancing climate justice and DEIAJ.
<https://secondnature.org/deiaj-toolkit-higher-educations-role/>

Sustainability at Harvard. (2023). Harvard's climate action plan.
<https://green.harvard.edu/campaign/harvards-climate-action-plan>

Tufts University. (2022). Progress Report - Office of Sustainability.
https://sustainability.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/FY1920-Progress-Report_Final_saved-for-web.pdf

United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development.
<https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda>

University of Massachusetts Office of the President. (n.d.). Sustainability initiative.
<https://www.umassp.edu/reports-and-initiatives/sustainability>