

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus Course Overview and Policies

Welcome to Professor Mike Bryson's Spring 2015 SUST 390 Special Topics course which focuses on the sustainability of college and university campuses. This document provides an overview of the course's theme, goals, format, activities, and general requirements. For more detailed information, including our weekly schedule, required assignments, and suggested readings, consult the [Syllabus](#) section of our course Blackboard (Bb) site. SUST 390 is an upper-level course in the Sustainability Studies major, and may be taken for elective credit by students in other programs.

Pre-req: ENG 102 and SUST 210.

The Sustainable Campus: More than Just a Cool Building

What are colleges and universities doing to make themselves more sustainable institutions? How can their efforts serve as laboratories for innovation and models for larger communities, from small college towns to sprawling suburbs to bustling big cities? What have Roosevelt University and other area institutions accomplished the last few years in creating more sustainable campuses, and where are they headed in terms of sustainability planning, operations, academics, and community relations?

This new special topics course focuses on the microcosm of the university as a lens through which to explore how communities are striving to save energy, conserve water, reduce waste, encourage active transportation, restore biodiversity, foster environmental literacy, develop innovative curricula, and connect with local communities. Seen in this context, the Sustainable Campus is always a work in progress, yet has the capacity to model sustainable development strategies that may be applied to communities large and small.

While we will consider case-studies of other US colleges and universities that are well on the path toward sustainability, this section of SUST 390 will concentrate on Roosevelt's efforts since 2010 to green its operations and curriculum, which have recently culminated in a series of university-wide sustainability planning workshops during the Fall 2014 semester. As a follow-up to the creation of **RU's Strategic Sustainability Plan** (the draft of which is currently under review by the RU faculty and administration), our class will gather data about Roosevelt and its sustainability initiatives accomplishments within these four thematic areas:

- Academics
- Engagement
- Operations
- Planning and Administration



Among our many activities, we'll use the STARS 2.0 Sustainability Tracking and Reporting System adopted by many universities to guide our research, as we document and assess Roosevelt's progress on various indicators of sustainability. This work will form the foundation of the university's forthcoming STARS reporting efforts in alignment with the new Strategic Sustainability Plan, and provide critical baseline data as we launch new sustainability initiatives in coming years.

Students in SUST 390 The Sustainable Campus will get an in-depth perspective on the university's sustainability efforts and, through their research, gain practical experience gathering data and generating reports for the STARS 2.0 tracking system. More importantly, they will have a hand in helping the university realize its vision of becoming a more sustainable institution, both inside its walls and throughout its connection with Chicagoland communities.

Learning Objectives and Course Goals

- Understand the key elements of campus sustainability in terms of operations, academics, outreach, governance, leadership, etc.
- Investigate instructive examples of campus sustainability efforts at different colleges and universities
- Analyze Roosevelt's efforts since 2010 to green itself, create a sustainability plan, and map out future goals and projects
- Conduct research on RU sustainability efforts in academics, campus and public engagement, operations, and planning/administration; and produce usable data for the STARS 2.0 reporting system
- Develop skills in critical interpretation of texts, data compilation and analysis, public communication and presentation, and utilization of the STARS 2.0 metric

Tentative Weekly Schedule at a Glance

Updated 14 January 2015 and subject to revision as needed

Week	Topic / Activity	Campus Reports	Assignment Due	STARS Assessment Work
1 -- Jan 14	Introduction to Course			
2 -- Jan 21	AASHE and STARS	Establish schedule		Organize research teams
3 -- Jan 28	Leadership	Reports start		Develop work plan
4 -- Feb 4	Curriculum		Research Plan	Contact sources
5 -- Feb 11	Change			Gather data
6 -- Feb 18	Mission and Culture			Gather data
7 -- Feb 25	Accountability			Assess progress to date
8 -- Mar 4	Transformation		Progress Report	Gather/analyze data
9 -- Mar 11	Spring Break			
10 -- Mar 18	Research / Service			Gather/analyze data
11 -- Mar 25	Research / Service			Gather/analyze data
12 -- Apr 1	No class this week			Confer as groups
13 -- Apr 8	Research / Service			Identify/fix gaps in data
14 -- Apr 15	STARS Submission	Last report day	Data Report	Upload data to system
15 -- Apr 22	SUST Symposium			
16 -- Apr 29	Finals Week		Reflection Essay	

Seminar Format and Classroom Expectations

This class is a seminar, which places a premium on critical thinking, interactive discussion, class participation, writing, and research. Our small size and hands-on learning approach mean that **each of you will play a vital role in the class as scholar, worker, and active participant**. Consequently, my expectations are high for engaged, thoughtful, and regular participation.

Please note these important classroom guidelines:

- Attend every class session. There is no substitute for good attendance.
- Turn phones to silent mode during class to avoid interruptions.
- Close laptops unless we're working on something together (email and Facebook can wait).
- Come to class prepared to discuss all of the assigned readings.
- Check your RU student email account several times per week to stay hip (to the syllabus, that is).

Requirements and Key Assignments

This class is 16 weeks in duration (which includes Spring Break and Finals) and has a distinct weekly rhythm. Required readings include our assigned text, *Sustainability in Higher Education: Stories and Strategies for Transformation* (Barlett and Chase, eds.), websites, and/or documents available in the **Readings** section of our Bb site. You should also access the following online information resources:

- Subscribe to the [SUST at RU blog](#) and the [Schaumburg's Sustainable Future blog](#); and "like" the [SUST Facebook page](#) (if you're a FB user)
- Register on the [AASHE website](#) and e-subscribe to the [AASHE Bulletin](#)

In addition to regular and engaged **Class Participation** during all class activities and discussions, our class also requires several key writing/research assignments:

- a **Campus Sustainability Report** (6-10 Pp slides) in which you describe, analyze, and make a 15min class presentation on the sustainability accomplishments and initiatives of a college or university of your choice; these will run from Weeks 3 to 14
- a collaboratively written **Research Plan** (2 pages) that maps out your STARS assessment team's research strategy on a timeline
- a **Progress Report** (1-2 pages) that details your own progress on your designated research responsibilities within your group
- a **Data Report** (Excel file) that contains the quantitative data and verbal explanation required for the STARS credit(s) for which you are responsible
- a **Reflection Essay** (5-7 pages) submitted at semester's end in which you reflect upon your overall learning experiences in light of the course readings, writing and research work in the course, and participation in your STARS research team

More information on specific assignments, class participation, and course grading policies will be available in the **Syllabus** section of our Bb site.

Contact Information

Email (mbryson@roosevelt.edu) is the best way to get in touch with me; cellphone is next best. My office hours are published in our 350 Bb site as well as on the Contact page on my faculty website. Wednesdays I'm in Gage 205 from 11am-2:30pm unless scheduled for a faculty meeting.

Mike Bryson, PhD

Associate Professor & Director of Sustainability Studies
Gage 205 (office hours on Mon 10:30am-12:45pm and Wed 11am-2:30pm)
mbryson@roosevelt.edu | 312.281.3148 (office) | 815.557.3153 (cell)
<http://sites.roosevelt.edu/mbryson> (faculty website)

I am available for a campus-based or phone appointment, should you have questions or feel like you need some individualized help beyond what I can provide in the classroom. Keeping up is vitally important in this class, for our schedule is both tight and complex. Please do not disappear! I check my email and voicemail regularly, and I do my best to return messages within a day during the work week. Remember that there's no substitute for regular participation and timely submission of your assignments.

Accommodation of Persons with Disabilities

"The University will provide reasonable accommodations to students or applicants with documented disabilities in compliance with all local, state and federal laws and University policies and procedures.

"Students with documented disabilities who wish to receive accommodations and/or services should notify the University as soon as possible. Students should contact the Office of Disability Services, at (312) 341-3810 for the Chicago Campus or (847) 619-8846 for the Schaumburg Campus, and provide documentation of their disabilities and their requests for accommodations/services to this office. Reasonable accommodations will be determined on a case-by-case basis."

(RU Student Handbook, p. 113).

Accommodation of Students for Religious Holidays

"Roosevelt University respects the rights of students to observe major religious holidays and will make accommodations, upon request, for such observances. Students who wish to observe religious holidays must inform their instructors in writing within the first two weeks of each semester of their intent to observe the holiday so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. Students who make such arrangements by the deadline will not be required to attend classes or take examinations on the designated days, and faculty must provide reasonable opportunities for such students to make up missed work and examinations. However, all work missed for such absences, including papers and examinations, must be made up. Students who do not arrange for excused absences by the deadline are not entitled to such accommodations."

(RU Student Handbook, p. 112).

Updated 14 January 2015

Weekly Schedule at a Glance

Updated 25 April 2015

Week	Topic / Activity	Campus Reports	Assignment Due	STARS Assessment Work
1 -- Jan 14	Introduction to Course			
2 -- Jan 21	AASHE and STARS			Organize research teams
3 -- Jan 28	Leadership	Maria, Rebecca		Develop work plan
4 -- Feb 4	Curriculum	Emily, Sera	Research Plan 2/6	Contact sources
5 -- Feb 11	Change	Jenny, Shannon		Gather data
6 -- Feb 18	Mission and Culture	Ana, Cassidy		Gather data
7 -- Feb 25	No class this week			Confer as groups
8 -- Mar 4	STARS Planning	[cancelled]	Progress Report 3/8	Gather/analyze data
9 -- Mar 11	Spring Break			
10 -- Mar 18	Accountability	Courtney, Jesse, Reece		Gather/analyze data
11 -- Mar 25	Transformation	Colleen, Kelsey, Melissa		Gather/analyze data
12 -- Apr 1	No class this week			Confer as groups
13 -- Apr 8	Research / Service	Jordan, Kyle, Stephanie		Identify/fix gaps in data
14 -- Apr 15	STARS Submission	Deidra, Tom, Yessenia	Data Report 4/17	Prepare data for uploading
15 -- Apr 22	SUST Symposium			
16 -- Apr 29	Finals Week		Reflection 5/4	

Detailed Weekly Schedule of Readings, Activities, and Assignments

Color Key: Campus Reports / Major writing assignments

Week One (1/14): The Sustainable Campus

- Introduction to course theme, format, report schedule, and academic requirements
- Online resources: register with [AASHE](#); subscribe to the [SUST at RU](#) blog, the [Schaumburg's Sustainable Future](#) blog, and the [AASHE Bulletin](#); like the [SUST Facebook page](#); and check out the [RU Green Campus](#) website

Week Two (1/21): AASHE and the STARS 2.0 Assessment Tool

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - RU Strategic Sustainability Plan (review carefully)
 - STARS Annual Report (2014), Credit Checklist, and Technical Manual (scan)
- Review schedule for Campus Reports (thanks for volunteering on week 1!)
- Organize STARS research teams and discuss semester schedule

Week Three (1/28): Leadership

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part I -- Leadership and Commitment
- Campus Reports: Maria C., Rebecca Q.
- STARS Teams: determine credits to pursue, develop research plan, and map out timeline

Week Four (2/4): Curriculum

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part II -- Curricular Transformation
- **Campus Reports:** Emily R., Sera S.
- STARS Teams: group-authored **Research Plan due Fri 2/6**

Week Five (2/11): Change

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part III -- Defining the Paradigm for Change
- **Campus Reports:** Jenny P., Shannon C.
- STARS Teams: begin contacting sources for data

Week Six (2/18): Mission and Culture

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part IV -- Institutional Mission and the Culture of Sustainability
- **Campus Reports:** Cassidy A., Ana M.
- STARS Teams: gather data

Week Seven (2/25): REGULAR CLASS DOES NOT MEET

- STARS Teams should confer as groups during class time: assess progress to date, adjust plans/goals/work assignments as necessary, continue gathering and assessing data
- Consult instructor via Bb and email
- Read ahead in Barlett and Chase for Weeks 10 and 11

Week Eight (3/4): Campus Report and Research Team Progress Assessment

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
- **Campus Reports:** cancelled due to instructor family emergency
- STARS Teams: gather/analyze data, assess progress thus far to prepare individual reports
- **Progress Report due Sun 3/8** (individually authored)

Week Nine (3/11): Spring Break

Week Ten (3/18): Accountability

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part V -- Accountability
- **Campus Reports:** Courtney H., Jesse W., Reece K.
- STARS Teams: gather/analyze data

Week Eleven (3/25): Transformation

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
 - Barlett and Chase, Part VI -- Professional and Personal Transformation
- **Campus Reports:** Colleen D., Kelsey N., Melissa M.
- STARS Teams: gather/analyze data

Week Twelve (4/1): REGULAR CLASS DOES NOT MEET

- STARS Teams should confer as groups during class time: gather/analyze data and assess/troubleshoot progress to date; back up all Excel files and notes; check format and content against published example reports (UIC, Loyola, etc.)
- Consult instructor via Bb and email

Week Thirteen (4/8): Research / Service

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
- **Campus Reports:** Jordan E., Kyle, H.
- STARS Teams: identify/fill gaps in data

Week Fourteen (4/15): STARS Submission Party

- Readings for discussion:
 - AASHE Bulletin news
- **Campus Reports:** Diedra S., Tom L., Yessenia B.
- STARS Teams: prepare data in Excel files to be uploaded to STARS system
- **Data Report due Fri 4/17** (individually authored)

Week Fifteen (4/22): Earth Day and the SUST Student Symposium

- Our class hosts the Spring 2015 Symposium! Invite friends and colleagues, promote on social media, enjoy the research/internship presentations, and savor the conviviality. Location is here in WB 616 unless otherwise announced.
- Fill out course evaluations (online)

Week Sixteen (4/29): Finals Week

- Brief class wrap-up session from 3-3:30pm; I will come to WB 616 by 2:30pm
- **Reflection Essay due Mon 5/4** (individually authored, no grace period)

-- This schedule hopefully definitely will not be modified further --

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus
Assignments and Grading Policies

Assignments	Points
Campus Sustainability Report (slides)*	40
Campus Sustainability Report (presentation)	10
STARS Research Team Plan	50
STARS Progress Report	50
STARS Data Report	100
Reflection Essay	100
Class Participation (1st half)	25
Class Participation (2nd half)	25
Total	400

* May be revised and resubmitted

Participation Requirements and Guidelines

Class participation includes faithful weekly attendance in our online discussions, substantive contributions to said discussions, and completion of writing assignments in a timely fashion. Your active involvement in class is not only appreciated, but absolutely necessary to the effectiveness of our seminar. Everyone should read each assignment completely and carefully, bring questions to the table, and be prepared to discuss the material with each other. You must make regular, substantial, focused, and insightful contributions to class discussion in order to earn a "B" or better in participation. Note that the participation grade is split into two parts -- one for the first half of the semester (through Week 7), the other for the remaining half.

- **You may miss one week of class, no questions asked**, without jeopardizing your participation credit. If you must miss class time due to illness, family emergency, or other similar situation, please notify me as soon as possible. I reserve the right to determine whether a particular absence is excused or not.
- More than one unexcused absence will negatively affect your participation grade.
- Even if you miss class during a given week, you are still responsible for the assigned material that week, including any written assignment that is due.

Writing Assignments / Revision Policy

In addition to regular class participation, this section of 390 requires several writing assignments of varying length. Detailed directions for the assignments are posted in the **Syllabus** section of our Bb site. The various papers and the STARS research team project asks you to *apply* your knowledge and critical thinking skills in various kinds of ways. Key things to remember:

- **Late assignments will be docked 5% the 1st week they are late, 10% the second week, etc. up to a 20% penalty.** Extensions are granted *only* for extreme circumstances, and must be approved by me *prior* to the assignment's due date.

- You have a **24-hr. grace period** on all assignments, during which they can be turned in without a late penalty. (This does not apply to the revision option below.)
- All writing assignments are turned in through the **Submit Work** section of our Bb site. In the event of a rare network problem with Bb, I will make adjustments to a given due date.
- **The Campus Sustainability Report slide presentation may be revised** after the initial grade and resubmitted, if you wish, for further consideration. The revision due date will be posted on the **Weekly Schedule** page.

Backing Up Your Files

Avoid heartache and sadness from losing your brilliant prose and deep thoughts. Here's how:

- Save each significant version of a document under a separate filename (e.g., Essay1 v1, Essay1 v2, etc.).
- Back up your files frequently by:
 - emailing them to your Roosevelt email account
 - saving them periodically to a flash drive or external hard drive

A Note on Academic Honesty -- Very Important!

All of your work in SUST 390 and every other college class must be your own. A full explanation of academic honesty is available in the document, [*Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students*](#), published by the Roosevelt University Provost's Office. You should read this document carefully and print a copy for your records.

- **Plagiarism is a serious academic offense and is unacceptable in any form.** Examples in academic writing assignments include putting your name on another person's writing and presenting it as your own work (an egregious case!); failing to properly cite information from another source (i.e., not giving credit where it's due); failing to put a direct quote in quotation marks (even if it's cited properly); or not adequately paraphrasing the language of an outside source (again, even if it's cited properly). The latter two examples are the most common forms of plagiarism, and even though in many cases they are unintentional mistakes, *they're still wrong -- and unethical.*
- **My policy on plagiarism:** An assignment that contains plagiarized passages, whether intentional or not, usually is returned without a grade. The author must schedule an appointment with me to discuss the assignment and then submit a thorough revision of the paper. If the revision does not correct the problem, the assignment will receive a failing grade. The objective of my policy is not to punish, but to help you gain critical skills and confidence in properly summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting, and documenting sources within your writing. *In cases of egregious academic dishonesty*, however, I reserve the right to record a failing grade for the assignment without possibility of revision, a lowered course grade, or a failing course grade (per the *Roosevelt Student Handbook*).

How I Calculate Your Grade

There are 400 total possible points that can be earned in this class. Each assignment will be given a numerical score based on its potential point value (e.g., 42 out of 50 points, equivalent to 84%, or a B for that assignment). Final grades are calculated simply by dividing your total earned points by 400, then multiplying by 100 to convert that to a percentage. Letter grades are assigned according to the following percentage scale:

A	93-100%
A-	90-92%
B+	87-89%
B	83-86%
B-	80-82%
C+	77-79%
C	73-76%
C-	70-72%
D+	67-69%
D	63-66%
D-	60-62%
F	0-59%

How I Evaluate Writing Assignments

The following is a summary of the criteria I use to evaluate most kinds of writing assignments. Please bear in mind that no list is universal -- each assignment usually demands a few special categories of consideration, and I always make the appropriate adjustments depending on the assignment. For example: text contributions to an online discussion forum are read much more loosely in terms of grammar and spelling than are formal pieces of writing, such as a critical essay.

"A" paper: Excellent

- Fulfills and successfully pushes beyond the minimum requirements of the assignment in terms of thoroughness and level of detail
- Defines its purpose/thesis very clearly and addresses a defined audience
- Exemplifies a high level of sophistication in terms of content and style (i.e., goes beyond obvious points, shows originality of thought, tackles a difficult subject, flows logically and coherently, uses mature sentence structure and diction, etc.)
- Demonstrates evidence of careful and thoughtful revision
- Displays excellent overall organization and nearly flawless mechanics
- Makes effective and judicious use of other sources (if required), and documents them correctly
- Is readable, clear, and free from needless ambiguity

"B" paper: Good

- Fulfills the minimum requirements of the assignment, and attempts (not always successfully) to go further in terms of development
- Defines its purpose/thesis adequately and addresses a particular audience (with perhaps an occasional lapse)
- Displays coherent organization, with room for possible adjustment
- Demonstrates some degree of thoughtful revision
- Employs reasonably sound writing mechanics
- Uses and documents sources competently
- Is reasonably free from logical flaws and ambiguity (though minor lapses may occur)

"C" paper: Fair

- Fulfills the bare minimum of the assignment; makes no attempt to go beyond what's easy or obvious
- Defines an audience, but does not address it adequately or consistently
- Defines a purpose, but in an unclear or confusing manner -- thesis is ineffective and unclear
- Presents material in a somewhat unorganized fashion
- Demonstrates little thoughtful revision -- changes are made only on the surface (e.g., spelling and grammar)
- Documents sources and/or uses visuals, but not effectively
- Lacks clarity -- the thought process is obscured and the prose is difficult to read
- Contains a number of stylistic and mechanical weaknesses (e.g., sentence structure may be simplistic and/or repetitive)

"D" paper: Needs a Major Overhaul

- Makes a minimal effort to fulfill the assignment, but fails to do an adequate job
- Lacks a clear purpose/focus
- Is seriously deficient in terms of audience awareness, organization, mechanics, documentation, etc.
- Is difficult to follow -- fundamental errors or lack of thoughtful development make reading a chore

Updated 22 January 2015

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus **Research Team Plan and Timeline**

To get our team-based research going for the STARS assessment project, each team will complete a Plan and Timeline document by Week 4's class session. You should collaborate on this starting in Week 3's class session by deciding what to include, outlining the document, and then making a plan for collaborating/editing it during the coming week so that it is ready to submit next Wednesday. I will provide feedback by Week 5's session so your team can begin moving forward with your research, and I am available via email and Bb for questions that might arise before Week 4's deadline. This assignment is worth 50 points. Each team member receives the same grade on this collaborative assignment, so **everyone** is obliged to share the work and pitch in. No coasting!

Since these are group-authored assignments, your group should bring a hard copy to Week 4's class as well as have a group member (designated as Editor) submit it to the Discussion Board on our Bb site. I will set up a specific forum for that purpose. This way, all the class groups will be able to read each other's plans and timelines (and learn from each other).

Format: Use headings when appropriate, spaces between headings and paragraphs, single-space within paragraphs, 1-inch margins, 12-point Times font. Make your document clear, readable, and professional. Emphasize parallel structure for the sections, lists, etc. for readability.

For information on the STARS credits, consult the **Technical Manual** as well as the **Excel datasheets** for your assigned category and credits. These are available for download from our Bb site in the **STARS Documents** section. It likely will be helpful to look at [sample STARS 2.0 reports](#) from other universities from the AASHE website. That way you can see how other colleges gathered and wrote up data for your specific credits.

- **Research Plan** (1-2 pages) -- The overall game plan for how you will gather, analyze, and write up your STARS data for your respective credits.
 - Note the credits you intend to research in terms of Category, Sub-category, and Credit #/Title. See the STARS 2.0 Credit Checklist for reference.
 - Assign each group member responsibility to specific credits.
 - If known, note potential sources of information within the university. If you don't know at this point, you will soon (that's part of the research!)
 - Anticipate and discuss potential challenges in locating and/or analyzing data.
 - Note potential universities that could serve as a good model for your STARS data gathering, and explain why (briefly).
- **Research Timeline** (1-2 pages) -- Maps out your group's weekly tasks, deadlines, and work completed; each person in the group should be listed for some key tasks. A table format such as the one on p2 would work well, though feel free to modify/improve upon this if you wish. (Improvement would not be hard.)

Week starting	Tasks	Who is doing it	Date completed

- Use the **Weekly Schedule** for our class to map out benchmark dates, assignments to be completed, etc. Realize that you'll probably modify this timeline during the semester.
- Distribute the work/responsibilities of group members evenly, as much as possible. Consider the particular strengths and interests of each person. Be flexible here -- there's plenty of work and fun to go around.
- I recommend designating an **Editor** who will be the person who is ultimately responsible for synthesizing feedback, making final edits, providing consistent formatting, and turning in the document to Bb as well as bringing it a hard copy to class on the due date. (All group members should have a copy ready, though, just in case.) The editor should not shoulder a disproportionate load, however. **Everyone** needs to contribute to this Research Plan and Timeline, whether in terms of drafting, reviewing/providing feedback, and/or editing the final version.

Updated 28 January 2015

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus **Campus Sustainability Report**

Through our Campus Sustainability Reports, we will travel beyond the walls of Roosevelt to explore, discuss, and learn from the sustainability initiatives and accomplishments of other colleges and universities. The presentation schedule for the reports is included in our Weekly Schedule, and begins on Week 3 of our seminar. Reports consist of two parts: a Powerpoint (Pp) slideshow of 6-10 slides that you will show to the class and upload to the 390 Bb site (in **Submit Work**); and an oral presentation of 15 minutes, with 5 minutes of discussion and Q/A with the class. We will typically do the Campus Sustainability Reports near the beginning of our weekly sessions, right after briefing reviewing news from the AASHE Bulletin.

Choosing an Institution

You may pick any higher education institution, in the US or abroad, to profile for this assignment. Note that higher ed institutions are classified as such: community (associate's) colleges, like Harper College; baccalaureate and master's institutions, like Roosevelt; and research universities, like the University of Illinois. You should pick one of the STARS Member Institutions, of which there are several hundred. You can use the [STARS website to explore individual schools](#), and/or use the *STARS Annual Review of 2014* (on our Bb site), to find something that piques your interest.

Finding Information

Use whatever sleuthing skills you deem appropriate to learn about the sustainability efforts at your chosen campus. A [STARS report by the institution](#) will have an immense amount of information. Also peruse the website of the institution thoroughly for additional, more detailed and up to date information, initiatives, etc. -- especially concerning student activities and contributions.

Slideshow Guidelines

Your presentation should include a title slide and a references slide, with 6-10 content slides in the middle. How much information you place on a given slide is up to you, hence the flexible length; but you want your presentation to be more than a set a photos and a couple of bullet points. There should be some detailed and thoughtful textual discussion on at least some of the slides. Your report is both support for your oral presentation to the class as well as a stand-alone document to be read online. To that end, integrate images, links, and text to make your presentation visually appealing to your audience. That said, don't worry about getting fancy with distracting graphics, animations, sounds, etc.; keep the design simple, clean, and consistent.

Note whatever key references you use for the presentation on your References slide. On the content slides, document the source of data your cite, images you use, etc. Use APA-style parenthetical references for this, and include a link if it's useful.

Some key questions to address in your slides include:

- Overall sustainability efforts, accomplishments, etc.
- Noteworthy examples in the key categories of Education, Engagement, Operations, and Planning/Administration
- Impact of students in sustainability planning, projects, initiatives, etc.
- Room for improvement and/or future plans
- What Roosevelt can learn from this institution

Oral Presentation Guidelines and Tips

You have 15 minutes to present your slides to the class. You should be conversational in tone, but professional in demeanor -- imagine this as a chance to present valuable information to decision-makers about sustainability at Roosevelt. Note: these imaginary decision-makers are nice, not mean -- so you don't need to be intimidated by them; after all, you'll now more than they do about your subject.

You want to be informative, clear, and (if you end up making some recommendations for us) persuasive. After your presentation, we'll have 5 minutes for discussion and questions.

Some of Mike's tips . . .

- Don't read from your slides. Use them as visual aids, not as a text.
- Speak loudly and clearly and make eye contact with the room. Strive to make a connection with your audience.
- Don't rush. Let us savor your brilliance.
- Practice your presentation, so that you've run through it a few times to get the timing down. If you have more slides than you can cover, that's OK -- but be aware that I will cut you off at 15min. so we can manage our class time.
- Be confident -- your audience is sympathetic and wants you to do great. Take heart from that!

Updated 21 January 2015

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus **STARS Progress Report**

This assignment is an **individually authored report** on the progress you've made thus far on the research tasks you're conducting as part of your STARS research team, with a revised timeline of the tasks you need to complete prior to submitting your data report in Week 15.

Format: the main part of the report (see sections below) should be two pages in length, single-spaced (leave spaces between paragraphs), 12-point font, 1-inch margins. Use headings for readability. If you have sent out an email to one or several key contacts at RU, include a representative copy of that email as an appendix to your report; if you wrote significantly different versions of that email to different parties, include a copy of each version. Append representative email(s), survey questions, interview questions, etc. as separate pages -- but the report should ultimately be all one document that you submit to Bb.

Organize the two-page text of your report into these sections:

- **Your responsibilities within your research team** -- What credits are you responsible for researching? Who are the key contacts you've identified? What are the ways you've been contributing to the overall work of your group?
- **Relevant colleges or universities to your research** -- What school(s) did you determine to be useful models for the data you need to collect and analyze? Explain why.
- **Progress made thus far** -- What have you accomplished thus far in your research? Summarize your outreach to contacts, success made in gathering data and/or interviewing sources, etc.
- **Work to be accomplished and potential challenges** -- What do you need to accomplish yet, and what is your strategy for doing so? What are some of the potential challenges in getting this done by the deadlines on your timeline?
- **Questions for your group and/or for me** -- This is related to the previous section. How can your team members and/or I help you in your upcoming tasks?
- **Revised timeline for completion** -- Look back at your team's research timeline and, if need be, make adjustments to your part of it. Construct a simple timeline for yourself here in table format.

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus **STARS Data Report**

The STARS Data Report assignment is an individually authored report on your research results and analysis you've done as part of your STARS assessment team. It consists of two parts: an **Excel Data Spreadsheet** that contains information on your assigned STARS credits, and a one-page **Cover Memo** (saved as a Word, rich-text, or pdf file) that summarizes your findings and reflects on the results of your research effort. The Data Report is worth 100 points and is due on Friday 4/17 by midnight (the usual 24-hour grace period for on-time submission applies).

The Excel Data Spreadsheet

Assuming you are solely responsible* for the credits you are researching and writing up, you should use the Excel data spreadsheet provided by STARS for the appropriate credit(s). These individual spreadsheets are available for downloading on our Bb site, in the STARS Resources section. Make sure you work with the appropriate category-focused spreadsheet(s), like the sample document included with these instructions -- not the comprehensive data tracking spreadsheet.

(1) Rename your file using a standard file naming protocol, as follows. This way, you can change the date in the filename as you update the file, and thus save multiple versions of the document. Plus, I'll be able to keep the data files straight by category once they're all submitted.

Template: Category_Sub-category - YourLastName Date

Example: EN_Public Engagement - Bryson 2015-03-24

* If there are two or more authors within your group contributing to the same credits within an Excel file (e.g., the AC_Curriculum credit), be sure to include all last names in the filename. For example: AC_Curriculum - Jones_Smith 2015-03-24

(2) Fill in your information within the Excel spreadsheet, according to the basic guidelines noted in the Sample file I created, which is available on our Bb site and included with these instructions. Be especially careful to note the authorship of information/language for each of the credits in both the Summary and Data tabs of the spreadsheet. (Note that you will need to create a column heading entitled "Data Collected By" in the Data tab, which I have done in the updated Sample file.)

(3) Include "A brief text summary of the institution's activities relevant to this subcategory" in the Optional Reporting Field section in the Summary tab. Depending on how your team has split up your research responsibilities, this will either be written individually by you or co-authored with one or more of your teammates.

The Cover Memo

While the Excel data spreadsheet(s) you submit may have some collaboratively written elements, as discussed above and depending upon how your group split up its research tasks, this one-page cover memo is individually authored. Format this as a formal memorandum to me, as illustrated below. Use 1-inch margins, 12-point Times New Roman font, and single-spacing (insert lines between paragraphs).

SUST 390 Memorandum

To: Mike Bryson, 390 Instructor
From: Jane Doe, Academics Research Team
Date: 17 April 2015
RE: STARS Data Report

[Start text here.]

Your cover memo is a logical extension of your previously submitted Progress Report, in that you reiterate your research responsibilities within your team; briefly note the primary research methods you used during your research process; summarize what information you've gathered to date; note what (if anything) you still need to accomplish; indicate any issues, complications, or problems I need to be aware of as I review your report; and reflect upon the overall process of analyzing/reporting these data.

Please keep in mind that I will be poking through the tall grass, so to speak, of 19 data reports -- so it's important you frame your own work clearly and concretely in this cover memo to help me keep on track and not get totally lost. You need to be clear on what you did and how you did it, and write this memo with the care, thoroughness, and clarity you'd use with an official and important document you'd submit to a work supervisor. Try to keep it to one page, but if you need a little extra room, you may provide up to 1.5 pages of text (rather than shrink the font to make it fit on one page).

Evaluation of Your Work

When I assess your Data Report, I will be evaluating both the information you provide in the Excel data spreadsheet(s) as well as the content/form/style of your cover memo. Good content is highly important, of course, but so is thoroughness, precision, and clarity. Collectively, the assignment is worth 100 points: 80 for the Excel Spreadsheet, 20 for the Cover Memo.

Special Topics: The Sustainable Campus **Reflection Essay**

A personal essay in which you reflect upon your overall learning experiences in light of the assigned readings, writing and research work in the course, and participation in your STARS research team. Length and basic format: 5-7 pages of text (not counting images and references), 12-point font size, 1-inch margins, double-spaced. You may write more than 7 pages if you feel compelled to do so.

Key Questions to Address

Here are some overarching questions to help you generate content for your essay. They are not meant to be answered in order necessarily, but rather to be used as tools for brainstorming ideas.

- ***What important things did you learn this semester about sustainability on campus, both here at RU and elsewhere?*** Think about what you've discovered about our past and current sustainability efforts at RU, the readings from our text and the AASHE Bulletin (see below), and the Campus Report presentations on sustainability initiatives and challenges.
- ***How you assess your participation in and the overall outcome of your STARS team research effort?*** Take a step back from your work leading up to your Data Report assignment, and reflect on what you learned in this process -- not just about sustainability indicators, but also about the research process, teamwork, communication, etc. What worked well in this project? What could be improved?
- ***What are the key things you'd like RU to prioritize in its sustainability efforts?*** This is something we'll discuss together during our final class meeting on 4/29, but I'm keenly interested in your thoughts here to help us accelerate our momentum and hone our focus in implementing our new Sustainability Strategic Plan and continuing to green our university.

Note: you don't have to tell me what you think I want to hear. Just be honest.
I'm not looking for specific kinds of answers, but rather thoughtful reflection and clear expression.

Reflecting on the Readings

Despite our course's project-oriented format, we've done a fair bit of reading this semester. This essay is a chance for you to connect your impressions of and questions about some of those readings to our course activities. You should refer to and comment upon at least three of our assigned readings this semester within your discussion of the questions above. These readings could be, for example, two essays from our textbook as well as the RU Strategic Sustainability Plan; many other permutations are possible. Use APA format to document each source in your parenthetical references (within the text) and provide a References list at the end of your paper.

No outside research is required -- but if you do refer to other sources, such as a document or website linked from the AASHE Bulletin or that you found in the course of your Campus Report research, be sure to cite them, as well.