

Framework Crosswalk: Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability, AASHE STARS 3.0, and Second Nature Climate Action Milestones

Released May 2026

Disclaimer: The purpose of this crosswalk is to demonstrate linkages across the Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability, AASHE STARS 3.0, and Second Nature Climate Action Milestones frameworks as a reference for institutions participating in more than one. Each prompt should be considered individually as there are no exact matches.

The [Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability](#) is designed to recognize and celebrate higher education institutions that demonstrate a commitment to sustainability and climate action as integral to their academic missions.

- Classification Term: Six years
- Application Cycle: Available every three years
- Designation: Classified

The [Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System](#) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance.

- Certification Term: Three years
- Application Cycle: Rolling
- Designation: Tiered Rating

The [Second Nature Climate Action Milestones](#) is designed for the higher education sector with the intention to more fully recognize the climate action journey, prioritize decarbonization, and accelerate a broad suite of higher education's assets towards these aims.

- Certification Term: Varies by milestone
- Application Cycle: Rolling
- Designation: Milestone Achieved

Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability				AASHE STARS 3.0		
Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Direct	Indirect	Notes
I. Campus Information & Applicant Contact						
Applicant & Institutional Identification	Section 1	IPEDS Upload	Institution name (IPEDS): IPEDS Unit ID, Campus name for endorsement; primary contact; President/Chancellor, Chief Academic Officer; Head communications officer; Community College or Non-Community College; Institution Type; Public/private; Land grant; Religious affiliation; Carnegie Basic Classification; Degree of urbanization; BEA region; Natural disaster ID; Other framework participation; Mailing address; Full-time undergraduate and graduate equivalent enrollment; FTE staff and faculty; Self-assessed stage of sustainability institutionalization (Emergent, Developing, or Established).			DISCLAIMER: The STARS application often requires quantitative data across the sustainability spectrum, but Carnegie looking for a cohesive narrative. STARS responses may be able to inform certain sections of the Carnegie application, but often additional context and narratives will be needed. In addition, campus's are encouraged to review their Innovation & Leadership credit submissions for additional application materials.
II. Institutional Context/Campus						
Institutional Landscape, Mission, Context	Section 2.1	750	Describe your institution in a way that provides clear context for understanding the campus sustainability landscape, leadership priorities, and long-term goals. Include an overview of the environmental and climate challenges facing both the institution and its surrounding region. Highlight relevant institutional characteristics - such as founding and history, institutional culture, demographics, campus setting (urban, suburban, or rural), connections to indigenous communities or cultural traditions, climate and natural resources - and explain how these factors shape sustainability priorities and create unique opportunities for innovation.			
Accessibility and Reach	Section 2.2	500	Identify how your sustainability practices address the context and the needs of vulnerable populations within your campus and surrounding community.		EN 6: Community Partnerships	EN 6 asks about community partnerships that explicitly aim to support underrepresented groups and/or vulnerable populations in addressing sustainability challenges they have identified.
Definition	Section 2.3	750	Does your institution have institutionally approved definition of sustainability? If so, how was the definition developed and approved? If not, how is sustainability understood across different units and disciplines? How are the definition(s) applied across institutional policies, initiatives, and engagement?		PA 2: Commitments and Planning	PA 2 addressed public commitments to sustainability, which may include an institutionally approved definition of sustainability.
Governance	Section 2.4	500	Describe how sustainability is governed at your institution, how strategic and operational decisions are made, and how leadership, division, departments, institutes, and/or academic units coordinate to implement initiatives.		PA 1: Sustainability Coordination	PA 1 asks about coordinating offices and staff, but additional context will be need about how sustainability is governed campus.
Recognition & Rewards: Faculty & Staff	Section 2.5a	250	Describe any policies, practices, or awards from all levels of the institution (campus, college, school, department) that specifically recognize and/or reward faculty, instructors, and/or staff efforts in sustainability.		AC 6.2: Sustainability Research	AC 6 asks about incentives for academic staff to conduct sustainability research, but does not include other demographics.
Recognition & Rewards: Students, Alumni & Community	Section 2.5b	250	Describe any policies, practices, or awards from all levels of the institution (campus, college, school, department) that specifically recognize and/or reward students, alumni, and/or community members for efforts in sustainability.		AC 6.2: Sustainability Research	AC 6 asks about incentives for students to conduct sustainability research, but does not include other demographics.
Professional Development (Faculty/Instructors/Staff)	Section 2.6	100	What sustainability-related professional development opportunities are available to faculty, instructors, and staff at your institution? Provide one illustrative example.	EN 3: Staff Engagement and Training	AC 1.3: Sustainability Course Offerings	EN 3 asks about sustainability focused engagement and training programs for staff; AC 1.3 asks about programs to support faculty in integrating sustainability into their academic courses.
Internal Funding & Financial Investments	Section 2.7a	Data Table & 100-word narrative	List the financial contributions made by the institution budget (internal funds) toward sustainability efforts, including budgets for facilities, research, and education. Showcase the diversity of your investments by including examples across multiple categories (e.g., Facilities, Research, Education, Workforce, Community, Sustainability Office, Dedicated Staffing, Student, Other). Include examples for at least three categories. Do not share more than three examples per category. Provide 5-15 examples.			
External Funding Sources	Section 2.7b	Data Table & 100-word narrative	Identify the most impactful external funding sources such as grants, donations, or partnerships with government, private, and philanthropic entities to advance sustainability initiatives. Include up to 15 examples.			
Alumni & Student-Driven Funding	Section 2.7c	Data Table & 100-word narrative	Identify alumni and student-driven funding mechanisms, such as sustainability fees or alumni-support sustainability funds. Include up to 15 examples.			
III. Ecosystem Model						
Ecosystem Model & Interdisciplinary Partnerships	Section 3.1	750 & Image Upload	Describe how an ecosystem model is used to create interconnected, interdisciplinary partnerships focused on sustainability and climate action. Explain the integration of different sectors in developing shared goals. Include MOUs, joint funding initiatives, or co-created strategic plans.		EN 6: Community Partnerships	Various credits ask about these concepts throughout STARS, but no single credits captures the breath or intention behind this section of the Carnegie application. It is recommended for institution's to think about this question holistically in the context of campus's application.

Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability				AASHE STARS 3.0		
Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Direct	Indirect	Notes
Specific Partnership Examples	Section 3.2	500	Provide specific examples of partnerships with local and/or regional governments, schools, non-profits, and small businesses that address sustainability challenges and how resources are shared. Highlight specific achievements and how knowledge transfer occurs between partners to enhance collective capabilities.	EN 6: Community Partnerships		EN 6.1 asks about sustainability-focused community partnerships. EN 6.2 asks about community partnerships that explicitly aim to support underrepresented groups and/or vulnerable populations in addressing the sustainability challenges they have
Measuring Partnership Success	Section 3.3	500 & Letter Upload (3)	Describe how the institution measures the success of ecosystem partnerships, including environmental, economic, and social indicators, explaining mechanisms for collecting feedback, resolving conflicts and adapting partnerships to new challenges and opportunities. Provide examples of measurable impacts, such as energy saved, emissions reduced, or community engagement rates.	EN 6: Community Partnerships		EN 6.3 asks about how community partnerships are addressed.
IV. Academic Integration of Sustainability						
General Curricular Integration	Section 4.1a	750	Describe how sustainability is integrated into traditional curricular structures.			STARS asks about quantitative data related to curriculum integration but institutions will need to provide the narrative context of how this advances the institution's mission and sustainability objectives.
Curricular Data Table (Optional)	Section 4.1b	Data Table	Complete the data table.	AC 1: Academic Course Offerings		
Academic Program Examples	Section 4.2	Data Table	Identify 3 to 10 academic programs that explicitly incorporate sustainability/climate objectives, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions. For each example, indicate the program type and level for each course if applicable. Describe relevant course objectives and learning outcomes, applied or experiential learning components, and assessment methods used to evaluate impact. Highlight innovative pedagogical strategies like case-based teaching, simulations, community-engaged learning, and design thinking that engage students in real-world sustainability challenges. Indicate if they are undergraduate or graduate level courses.	AC 1: Academic Course Offerings; AC 2: Undergraduate Programs; AC 3: Graduate Programs		
Co-Curricular Programs	Section 4.3	Data Table	Describe 3 to 5 co-curricular programs, events, or clubs that promote sustainability-guided awareness, knowledge, and skill development outside the classroom. Examples might include sustainability weeks, campus garden initiatives, or energy-saving competitions. The narrative may include participation rates, the frequency of which the program, event, or club is held, and/or any relevant history.	AC 4: Applied Learning; EN 2: Co-Curricular Activities		
Student Leadership Opportunities	Section 4.4	Data Table	Identify 3 to 5 opportunities for sustainability-focused student leadership roles affiliated with the institution.	EN 2: Co-Curricular Activities	PA 3: Institutional Governance	EN 2 asks about a range of sustainability-focused co-curricular activities, many of which could provide opportunities for student leadership. PA 3 asks about student participation in institutional governance more generally, which may or may not have a specific sustainability focus.
V. Research & Innovation						
Research Priorities & Long-Term Vision	Section 5.1	500	Describe the institution's overarching research priorities and long-term vision for its role in advancing climate/sustainability research and innovation, emphasizing scalability and global relevance. Discuss how these priorities align with global sustainability goals, such as those outlined in the Paris Agreement or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).			STARS asks for quantitative data related to sustainability research but institutions need to provide the narrative context of how this advances the institution's mission and sustainability objectives.
Student Engagement in Research	Section 5.2	500	Describe how students engage in sustainability-focused research, including faculty-led research projects that involve students in addressing sustainability challenges, and including interdisciplinary projects and community-based research.		AC 6.2: Sustainability Research	
Key Research Projects	Section 5.3	Data Table & 250-word narrative	Describe up to 10 key research projects or initiatives that exemplify your institution's commitment to advancing climate or sustainability research and innovation.	AC 6.1 Sustainability Research	AC 7: Center for Sustainability Research	AC 6.1 requires a list of inventory of the institution's sustainability research by department. AC 7 asks about research centers focused on sustainability.
Ethical & equitable Research Practices	Section 5.4	500	Describe how your institution ensures that research practices are co-designed with communities and conducted in ways that are ethically responsible, mutually beneficial, and socially equitable. Include the specific adopted standards, frameworks, and practices that are in place to ensure research activities directly address disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities.		AC 8: Responsible Research & Innovation; EN 6: Community Partnerships	AC 8.1 asks about an ethical code of conduct for research and AC 8.2 asks about institutional support for integrated, community-based, and extra-academic research. EN 6 asks about guidelines for creating and maintaining reciprocal and mutually beneficial community partnerships, which may or may not have a research focus.
Technology Innovations	Section 5.5	500	Describe innovations in sustainable technologies or practices emerging from campus research. Include examples of patents, start-ups, or public-sector collaborations that have scaled climate solutions.			

Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability				AASHE STARS 3.0		
Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Direct	Indirect	Notes
VIA. Workforce Development & Career Preparation (Non-Community Colleges)						
Career Services & Graduate Employment	Section 6.1A	250	Describe how students and alumni connect with companies, non-profits, and government agencies utilizing career service resources, internships, mentorships, pipeline program, or job opportunities that lead to sustainability-related careers. Explain how the institution contributes to the local and regional economy by training students for jobs, highlighting systems used to track graduates' employment in sustainability-related fields, including job placement rates, employer partnerships, and career trajectories.			
Experiential Learning Opportunities	Section 6.2A	Data Table	Identify 3 to 10 experiential learning opportunities that explicitly prepare students for careers that address real-world sustainability challenges.	AC 4: Applied Learning	AC 1: Sustainability Course Offerings; AC 2: Undergraduate Programs; AC 3: Graduate Programs	The programs identified in these credits may have sustainability career components.
Workforce Metrics & Evaluation	Section 6.3A	250	What metrics or indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the sustainability projects and initiatives related to workforce development? Briefly describe how data are collected and reviewed to improve programs and strengthen alignment with workforce needs.			
VIB. Workforce Development & Career Preparation (Community Colleges)						
Industry & Government Collaboration	Section 6.1B	500	Describe how the college collaborates with local industries and municipal government to design programs that align with workforce needs. How does the college contribute to regional sustainability goals by training students in emerging fields?			
Evolving Job Market	Section 6.2B	250	Explain how students are trained to adapt to the evolving demands of the sustainability job market.			
Certificate & Degree Programs	Section 6.3B	Data Table	Identify 5 to 7 certificate programs, associate degrees, and training initiatives designed to meet the sustainability workforce demands of the local economy.	AC 2: Undergraduate Programs		
Career Support Resources	Section 6.4B	Data Table	Identify 5 to 10 courses or opportunities that explicitly prepare students for careers that address real-world sustainability challenges.	AC 4: Applied Learning	AC 1: Sustainability Course Offerings; AC 2: Undergraduate Programs; AC 3: Graduate Programs	The programs identified in these credits may have sustainability career components.
Workforce Metrics & Evaluation	Section 6.5B	250	What metrics or indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the sustainability projects and initiatives related to workforce development? Briefly describe how data is collected and reviewed to improve the programs and strengthen alignment with workforce needs.			
Career Support Services	Section 6.6B	250	Describe how your institution provides targeted resources and support (e.g., career centers, placement services, etc.) for students or alumni seeking sustainability-related careers.		EN 7: Continuing Education	EN 7 asks about sustainability continuing education programs, which may provide support for alumni seeking sustainability-related careers.
VII. Climate Action Plan						
Strategic Document Plan Existence	Section 7.1	Document Upload	Does your institution have a climate action plan or equivalent planning document? If so, you will be asked to upload your Climate Action Plan (or equivalent) document.	PA 2.2: Commitments and Planning		
CAP National and International Compatibility	Section 7.2	250	Provide a brief description of the plan, including its development process, stakeholders involved, and the primary goals and priorities. Describe how the Climate Action Plan aligns with national and international goals, such as the Paris Agreement, net zero frameworks, or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).		PA 2.2: Commitments and Planning	STARS asks about measurable objectives but does not explicitly ask about the development process, stakeholders, and alignment with other global net zero frameworks.
CAP Progress Assessment & Lessons Learned	Section 7.3	250	How does your institution assess progress on the Climate Action Plan? Share the most successful strategies from the plan, and explain what factors contributed to their success. Identify areas requiring additional attention or resources and provide insights into how these challenges are being addressed.		PA 2.2: Commitments and Planning	STARS asks what the measurable objectives are but does not require the same level of narrative detail as Carnegie.
VIII. Campus Infrastructure for Sustainability						
Green Building Practices	Section 8.1	500	Describe green building practices and identify 5 to 7 standards or targets that support building decisions or examples of green-certified buildings or campus-wide sustainability features such as energy-efficient designs, construction, and occupancy. If your institution does not use a formal green building rating system, explain the alternative methodology or approach applied to achieve these goals. Additionally, highlight any campus-wide sustainability features such as energy-efficient designs or renewable energy systems.	OP 1: Building Design and Construction; OP 2: Building Operations and Maintenance; OP 5: Energy Use		STARS often asks for the quantifiable metrics associated with these credits, but institution's need to provide context for how these decisions were made and implemented.
Hubs & Collaborative Spaces	Section 8.2	500	Highlight sustainability hubs including physical spaces or centers dedicated to sustainability education, research, and cross-disciplinary collaboration spaces?		AC 7: Center for Sustainability Research; PA 1: Sustainability Coordination	AC 7 asks about research centers and institute that are focused on sustainability. PA 1: asks about mechanisms and personnel to support and coordinate institutional sustainability initiatives.

Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability				AASHE STARS 3.0		
Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Direct	Indirect	Notes
Natural Habitat, Indigenous Land & Traditional Ecological Knowledge	Section 8.3	500	Describe efforts to recognize, honor and preserve the campus's natural habitat, including indigenous land acknowledgements, traditional ecological knowledge, and partnerships with local communities.		OP 4: Ecologically Managed Grounds	OP 4 asks about sustainable management practices that integrate ecological and social/cultural/economic considerations.
Inclusivity & Accessibility of Green Infrastructure	Section 8.4	500	Describe your institution's efforts to ensure that sustainability-related infrastructure, programs, and practices are inclusive and accessible to all members of the campus community - regardless of physical ability, socio-economic status, or digital access barriers. This includes both the physical campus environment and virtual platforms used for sustainability education, engagement, and decision-making with consideration for socio-economic and language inclusion.			
Conservation Practices	Section 8.5	500	Describe your institution's approach to conservation, focusing on efforts to protect and sustain natural resources on and around campus. Your response may address water conservation, land conservation and stewardship, resource management and circularity, transportation solutions, and/or healthy and sustainable menu choices.	OP 3: Water Use ; OP 4: Ecologically Managed Grounds; OP 7: Dining Service Procurement; OP 11: Materials Management; OP 12: Waste Generation and Recovery		
Campus Physical & Population Evolution	Section 8.6	250	Provide an overview of how your institution's physical campus and population have evolved over the years, ideally using the same baseline year provided in question 7 below. Describe changes in campus square footage (i.e., new buildings, renovations, land acquisition), and institutional population (i.e., student enrollment, staff hiring, facility growth or contraction).			
Energy, GHG, Water & Waste Data	Section 8.7	Data Table Upload	Download and complete the data submission file to provide a snapshot of your institution's energy use, GHG emissions, water consumption, and waste diversion. Follow the "Read Me" in the first tab of the downloadable submission file carefully and refer to the guidebook and additional resources for more information. Include a brief narrative that provides context for each specific area and your institution's approach to monitoring, managing, and assessing programs in each area, and provide an explanation if data is	OP 3: Water Use, OP 5: Energy Use, OP 6: Greenhouse Gas Emissions, & OP 12: Waste Generation and Recovery		
IX. Resilience & Adaptation						
Addressing Theme Vulnerabilities	Section 9.1	250	What frameworks, models or strategies does your institution use to assess and address vulnerabilities to climate risks (e.g., disaster planning, extreme weather events, resource scarcity) on campus and in the local community?	PA 2.3: Commitments and Planning		PA 2.3 asks for information on campus-community climate vulnerability assessments.
Infrastructure Adaptation Initiatives	Section 9.2	250	What specific campus operations and infrastructure initiatives have your institution undertaken to adapt to changing climate conditions (e.g., green infrastructure, water management systems, heat mitigation strategies)?		OP 3: Water Use; OP 4: Ecologically Managed Grounds; OP 5: Energy Use	Initiatives implemented that reduce water and energy use, and manage campus landscapes in an ecologically minded way, may have been implemented in conjunction with campus resilience initiatives.
Resilience in Curriculum, Research & Training	Section 9.3	500	How are resilience and adaptation integrated into curriculum, research, or training programs for students, faculty, and staff? Describe the specific metrics or indicators used.		AC 1: Sustainability Course Offerings; AC 6: Sustainability Research; EN 2: Co-Curricular Activities; EN 3: Staff Engagement and Training; PA 2: Commitments and Planning	AC 1, AC 6, EN 2, and EN 3 are focused on sustainability, generally, but may include courses, research, and training programs related to resilience and adaptation. PA 2.3 asks how resilience and adaptation were integrated into published plans, which may reference curriculum and research depending on the campus.
Support for Marginalized Communities & Climate Resilience	Section 9.4	500	What specific programs or initiatives support marginalized communities in building climate resilience? How does your institution share data, resources, or expertise with local organizations to support climate adaptation efforts? Describe the specific metrics or indicators used.		EN 6: Community Partnerships; PA 2.3: Commitments and Planning	EN 6.2 asks about community partnerships that explicitly aim to support underrepresented groups and/or vulnerable populations in addressing the sustainability challenges may have identified, which may be related to resilience. PA 2.3 asks about campus-community task forces and other published plans that include resilience. These responses may reference supporting marginalized communities.
X. Reflection & Additional Information						
Misaligned Practices	Section 10.1	250	Identify any current practices or programs on your campus that are not fully aligned with sustainability principles. Describe the context in which these practices occur, the challenges in addressing them, and any actions or strategies that have been attempted to improve or replace them. What lessons have been learned, and what opportunities exist for future improvement?			

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Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Direct	Indirect	Notes
Reflection - Who Was Around the Table	Section 10.2	250	Reflect on your self-study process. Who was around the table and who was missing? How could including more and different perspectives enhance sustainability efforts?			
Additional Space (Optional)	Section 10.3	250	Use this space to elaborate on any question for your you need more space. Specify the corresponding section and question number.			

Carnegie Elective Classification for Sustainability				Second Nature Climate Action Milestones	
Type of Information Requested	Section/Question	Word Count	Summary of Requested Information	Milestone	Notes
I. Campus Information & Applicant Contact					
Applicant & Institutional Identification	Section 1	IPEDS Upload	Institution name (IPEDS); IPEDS Unit ID, Campus name for endorsement; primary contact; President/Chancellor, Chief Academic Officer; Head communications officer; Community College or Non-Community College; Institution Type; Public/private; Land grant; Religious affiliation; Carnegie Basic Classification; Degree of urbanization; BEA region; Natural disaster ID; Other framework participation; Mailing address; Full-time undergraduate and graduate equivalent enrollment; FTE staff and faculty; Self-assessed stage of sustainability institutionalization (Emergent, Developing, or Established).		DISCLAIMER: The Second Nature Milestones are focused on campus climate action exclusively, as opposed to broader sustainability programs. The narratives developed for Carnegie can be used as part of the forthcoming SN Milestone applications.
II. Institutional Context/Campus					
Institutional Landscape, Mission, Context	Section 2.1	750	Describe your institution in a way that provides clear context for understanding the campus sustainability landscape, leadership priorities, and long-term goals. Include an overview of the environmental and climate challenges facing both the institution and its surrounding region. Highlight relevant institutional characteristics - such as founding and history, institutional culture, demographics, campus setting (urban, suburban, or rural), connections to indigenous communities or cultural traditions, climate and natural resources - and explain how these factors shape sustainability priorities and create unique opportunities for innovation.		
Accessibility and Reach	Section 2.2	500	Identify how your sustainability practices address the context and the needs of vulnerable populations within your campus and surrounding community.		
Definition	Section 2.3	750	Does your institution have institutionally approved definition of sustainability? If so, how was the definition developed and approved? If not, how is sustainability understood across different units and disciplines? How are the definition(s) applied across institutional policies, initiatives, and engagement?		
Governance	Section 2.4	500	Describe how sustainability is governed at your institution, how strategic and operational decisions are made, and how leadership, division, departments, institutes, and/or academic units coordinate to implement initiatives.		
Recognition & Rewards: Faculty & Staff	Section 2.5a	250	Describe any policies, practices, or awards from all levels of the institution (campus, college, school, department) that specifically recognize and/or reward faculty, instructors, and/or staff efforts in sustainability.		
Recognition & Rewards: Students, Alumni & Community	Section 2.5b	250	Describe any policies, practices, or awards from all levels of the institution (campus, college, school, department) that specifically recognize and/or reward students, alumni, and/or community members for efforts in sustainability.		
Professional Development (Faculty/Instructors/Staff)	Section 2.6	100	What sustainability-related professional development opportunities are available to faculty, instructors, and staff at your institution? Provide one illustrative example.		
Internal Funding & Financial Investments	Section 2.7a	Data Table & 100-word narrative	List the financial contributions made by the institution budget (internal funds) toward sustainability efforts, including budgets for facilities, research, and education. Showcase the diversity of your investments by including examples across multiple categories (e.g., Facilities, Research, Education, Workforce, Community, Sustainability Office, Dedicated Staffing, Student, Other). Include examples for at least three categories. Do not share more than three examples per category. Provide 5-15 examples.	Milestone 8: Investment in Decarbonization	To earn this milestone, an institution must demonstrate attribution of institutional investment to a decarbonization activity or activities that will decrease source emissions. The attribution of funds should be at least multi-year, or otherwise demonstrate an enduring commitment to decarbonization. The impact of these funds should be significant to the tune of about 10% reduction from prior year emissions.
External Funding Sources	Section 2.7b	Data Table & 100-word narrative	Identify the most impactful external funding sources such as grants, donations, or partnerships with government, private, and philanthropic entities to advance sustainability initiatives. Include up to 15 examples.		
Alumni & Student-Driven Funding	Section 2.7c	Data Table & 100-word narrative	Identify alumni and student-driven funding mechanisms, such as sustainability fees or alumni-support sustainability funds. Include up to 15 examples.		
III. Ecosystem Model					
Ecosystem Model & Interdisciplinary Partnerships	Section 3.1	750 & Image Upload	Describe how an ecosystem model is used to create interconnected, interdisciplinary partnerships focused on sustainability and climate action. Explain the integration of different sectors in developing shared goals. Include MOUs, joint funding initiatives, or co-created strategic plans.	Milestone 2: Community Collaboration	Can use specific climate-focused community collaborations featured throughout the Ecosystem Model section.
Specific Partnership Examples	Section 3.2	500	Provide specific examples of partnerships with local and/or regional governments, schools, non-profits, and small businesses that address sustainability challenges and how resources are shared. Highlight specific achievements and how knowledge transfer occurs between partners to enhance collective capabilities.		To earn the milestone, an institution must describe how it is engaging deeply with local and regional communities to co-create climate solutions. This campus-community collaboration may include outreach programs, community-based projects, partnerships with local organizations, and resilience/sustainability/climate committees and higher education working groups.
Measuring Partnership Success	Section 3.3	500 & Letter Upload (3)	Describe how the institution measures the success of ecosystem partnerships, including environmental, economic, and social indicators, explaining mechanisms for collecting feedback, resolving conflicts and adapting partnerships to new challenges and opportunities. Provide examples of measurable impacts, such as energy saved, emissions reduced, or community engagement rates.		
IV. Academic Integration of Sustainability					

General Curricular Integration	Section 4.1a	750	Describe how sustainability is integrated into traditional curricular structures.	Milestone 11: Education Integration	To earn milestone, an institution must describe how it has meaningfully integrated educational opportunities alongside campus decarbonization and climate action efforts. Integration can occur through the curriculum the campus as a living lab, experiential learning opportunities, etc.
Curricular Data Table (Optional)	Section 4.1b	Data Table	Complete the data table.		
Academic Program Examples	Section 4.2	Data Table	Identify 3 to 10 academic programs that explicitly incorporate sustainability/climate objectives, including environmental, social, and economic dimensions. For each example, indicate the program type and level for each course if applicable. Describe relevant course objectives and learning outcomes, applied or experiential learning components, and assessment methods used to evaluate impact. Highlight innovative pedagogical strategies like case-based teaching, simulations, community-engaged learning, and design thinking that engage students in real-world sustainability challenges. Indicate if they are undergraduate or graduate level courses.		
Co-Curricular Programs	Section 4.3	Data Table	Describe 3 to 5 co-curricular programs, events, or clubs that promote sustainability-guided awareness, knowledge, and skill development outside the classroom. Examples might include sustainability weeks, campus garden initiatives, or energy-saving competitions. The narrative may include participation rates, the frequency of which the program, event, or club is held, and/or any relevant history.		
Student Leadership Opportunities	Section 4.4	Data Table	Identify 3 to 5 opportunities for sustainability-focused student leadership roles affiliated with the institution.		
V. Research & Innovation					
Research Priorities & Long-Term Vision	Section 5.1	500	Describe the institution's overarching research priorities and long-term vision for its role in advancing climate/sustainability research and innovation, emphasizing scalability and global relevance. Discuss how these priorities align with global sustainability goals, such as those outlined in the Paris Agreement or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).	Milestone 14: Research	Can use specific climate research assertions. To earn this milestone, an institution must describe how it is conducting exemplary climate solutions research that meets society's needs. All disciplines are welcome, including transdisciplinary research.
Student Engagement in Research	Section 5.2	500	Describe how students engage in sustainability-focused research, including faculty-led research projects that involve students in addressing sustainability challenges, and including interdisciplinary projects and community-based research.		
Key Research Projects	Section 5.3	Data Table & 250-word narrative	Describe up to 10 key research projects or initiatives that exemplify your institution's commitment to advancing climate or sustainability research and innovation.		
Ethical & equitable Research Practices	Section 5.4	500	Describe how your institution ensures that research practices are co-designed with communities and conducted in ways that are ethically responsible, mutually beneficial, and socially equitable. Include the specific adopted standards, frameworks, and practices that are in place to ensure research activities directly address disproportionate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities.		
Technology Innovations	Section 5.5	500	Describe innovations in sustainable technologies or practices emerging from campus research. Include examples of patents, start-ups, or public-sector collaborations that have scaled climate solutions.		
VIA. Workforce Development & Career Preparation (Non-Community Colleges)					
Career Services & Graduate Employment	Section 6.1A	250	Describe how students and alumni connect with companies, non-profits, and government agencies utilizing career service resources, internships, mentorships, pipeline program, or job opportunities that lead to sustainability-related careers. Explain how the institution contributes to the local and regional economy by training students for jobs, highlighting systems used to track graduates' employment in sustainability-related fields, including job placement rates, employer partnerships, and career trajectories.	Milestone 13: Workforce Development Innovations	Can use specific climate workforce development assertions. To earn the Workforce Development Innovations milestone, an institution must describe how it is preparing students for climate-focused careers and fostering a skilled workforce ready to tackle climate-related challenges.
Experiential Learning Opportunities	Section 6.2A	Data Table	Identify 3 to 10 experiential learning opportunities that explicitly prepare students for careers that address real-world sustainability challenges.		
Workforce Metrics & Evaluation	Section 6.3A	250	What metrics or indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the sustainability projects and initiatives related to workforce development? Briefly describe how data are collected and reviewed to improve programs and strengthen alignment with workforce needs.		
VIB. Workforce Development & Career Preparation (Community Colleges)					
Industry & Government Collaboration	Section 6.1B	500	Describe how the college collaborates with local industries and municipal government to design programs that align with workforce needs. How does the college contribute to regional sustainability goals by training students in emerging fields?	Milestone 13: Workforce Development Innovations	Can use specific climate workforce development assertions. To earn the Workforce Development Innovations milestone, an institution must describe how it is preparing students for climate-focused careers and fostering a skilled workforce ready to tackle climate-related challenges.
Evolving Job Market	Section 6.2B	250	Explain how students are trained to adapt to the evolving demands of the sustainability job market.		
Certificate & Degree Programs	Section 6.3B	Data Table	Identify 5 to 7 certificate programs, associate degrees, and training initiatives designed to meet the sustainability workforce demands of the local economy.		
Career Support Resources	Section 6.4B	Data Table	Identify 5 to 10 courses or opportunities that explicitly prepare students for careers that address real-world sustainability challenges.		
Workforce Metrics & Evaluation	Section 6.5B	250	What metrics or indicators are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the sustainability projects and initiatives related to workforce development? Briefly describe how data is collected and reviewed to improve the programs and strengthen alignment with workforce needs.		

Career Support Services	Section 6.6B	250	Describe how your institution provides targeted resources and support (e.g., career centers, placement services, etc.) for students or alumni seeking sustainability-related careers.		
VII. Climate Action Plan					
Strategic Document Plan Existence	Section 7.1	Document Upload	Does your institution have a climate action plan or equivalent planning document? If so, you will be asked to upload your Climate Action Plan (or equivalent) document.		
CAP National and International Compatibility	Section 7.2	250	Provide a brief description of the plan, including its development process, stakeholders involved, and the primary goals and priorities. Describe how the Climate Action Plan aligns with national and international goals, such as the Paris Agreement, net zero frameworks, or the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).		
CAP Progress Assessment & Lessons Learned	Section 7.3	250	How does your institution assess progress on the Climate Action Plan? Share the most successful strategies from the plan, and explain what factors contributed to their success. Identify areas requiring additional attention or resources and provide insights into how these challenges are being addressed.		
VIII. Campus Infrastructure for Sustainability					
Green Building Practices	Section 8.1	500	Describe green building practices and identify 5 to 7 standards or targets that support building decisions or examples of green-certified buildings or campus-wide sustainability features such as energy-efficient designs, construction, and occupancy. If your institution does not use a formal green building rating system, explain the alternative methodology or approach applied to achieve these goals. Additionally, highlight any campus-wide sustainability features such as energy-efficient designs or renewable energy systems.		
Hubs & Collaborative Spaces	Section 8.2	500	Highlight sustainability hubs including physical spaces or centers dedicated to sustainability education, research, and cross-disciplinary collaboration spaces?		
Natural Habitat, Indigenous Land & Traditional Ecological Knowledge	Section 8.3	500	Describe efforts to recognize, honor and preserve the campus's natural habitat, including indigenous land acknowledgements, traditional ecological knowledge, and partnerships with local communities.		
Inclusivity & Accessibility of Green Infrastructure	Section 8.4	500	Describe your institution's efforts to ensure that sustainability-related infrastructure, programs, and practices are inclusive and accessible to all members of the campus community - regardless of physical ability, socio-economic status, or digital access barriers. This includes both the physical campus environment and virtual platforms used for sustainability education, engagement, and decision-making with consideration for socio-economic and language inclusion.	Milestone 10 Inclusive Governance in Climate Action: particularly subitem 4: Policy Planning and Engagement	This milestone recognizes inclusive governance in planning efforts. However, if there are implementation participation efforts that aren't recognized in another milestone, we welcome your submission here.
Conservation Practices	Section 8.5	500	Describe your institution's approach to conservation, focusing on efforts to protect and sustain natural resources on and around campus. Your response may address water conservation, land conservation and stewardship, resource management and circularity, transportation solutions, and/or healthy and sustainable menu choices.		
Campus Physical & Population Evolution	Section 8.6	250	Provide an overview of how your institution's physical campus and population have evolved over the years, ideally using the same baseline year provided in question 7 below. Describe changes in campus square footage (i.e., new buildings, renovations, land acquisition), and institutional population (i.e., student enrollment, staff hiring, facility growth or contraction).		
Energy, GHG, Water & Waste Data	Section 8.7	Data Table Upload	Download and complete the data submission file to provide a snapshot of your institution's energy use, GHG emissions, water consumption, and waste diversion. Follow the "Read Me" in the first tab of the downloadable submission file carefully and refer to the guidebook and additional resources for more information. Include a brief narrative that provides context for each specific area and your institution's approach to monitoring, managing, and assessing programs in each area, and provide an explanation if data is unavailable.		
IX. Resilience & Adaptation					
Addressing Theme Vulnerabilities	Section 9.1	250	What frameworks, models or strategies does your institution use to assess and address vulnerabilities to climate risks (e.g., disaster planning, extreme weather events, resource scarcity) on campus and in the local community?	Milestone 7: Resilience	Institutions that have applied for the Carnegie Elective Classification can use information from their Carnegie application in their application for recognition under this milestone
Infrastructure Adaptation Initiatives	Section 9.2	250	What specific campus operations and infrastructure initiatives have your institution undertaken to adapt to changing climate conditions (e.g., green infrastructure, water management systems, heat mitigation strategies)?		Recognizes institutions for working collaboratively with community stakeholders to increase adaptive capacity. Could include: vulnerability assessment, resilience plan, or resilience innovation that advances your community capacity.
Resilience in Curriculum, Research & Training	Section 9.3	500	How are resilience and adaptation integrated into curriculum, research, or training programs for students, faculty, and staff? Describe the specific metrics or indicators used.		
Support for Marginalized Communities & Climate Resilience	Section 9.4	500	What specific programs or initiatives support marginalized communities in building climate resilience? How does your institution share data, resources, or expertise with local organizations to support climate adaptation efforts? Describe the specific metrics or indicators used.		
X. Reflection & Additional Information					
Misaligned Practices	Section 10.1	250	Identify any current practices or programs on your campus that are not fully aligned with sustainability principles. Describe the context in which these practices occur, the challenges in addressing them, and any actions or strategies that have been attempted to improve or replace them. What lessons have been learned, and what opportunities exist for future improvement?		
Reflection - Who Was Around the Table	Section 10.2	250	Reflect on your self-study process. Who was around the table and who was missing? How could including more and different perspectives enhance sustainability efforts?		
Additional Space (Optional)	Section 10.3	250	Use this space to elaborate on any question for your you need more space. Specify the corresponding section and question number.		