

STARS Action Research Team
Executive Summary
Institute of the Environment

UCLA has been advancing sustainability on campus for many years, as can be seen through the Southern California Environmental Report Cards put out by the Institute of the Environment and the Climate Action Plan. The recent appointment of Nurit Katz as Sustainability Coordinator ensures and exemplifies UCLA's commitment to sustainability. UCLA has not yet completed a Sustainability Assessment, and this is key to figuring out where UCLA stands across all measurements of sustainability: environment, equity, and economy. The Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education recently created a guideline for higher education institutions to compare themselves against each other on their sustainability efforts through a rating system. This guideline is the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). Researching 16 other universities, comparable to UCLA in size and structure, we found STARS to have many merits and be the best option for UCLA's sustainability assessment. UCLA's Campus Sustainability Committee formally decided STARS would be used to measure sustainability on UCLA's campus. Through a grant of \$32,000 from The Green Initiative Fund, 7 student interns (5 Undergraduate, 2 Graduate) were hired to complete the assessment during Summer 2009, under the guidance of Nurit Katz. STARS was in a pilot phase in the past, but this Fall 2009 STARS will be available for all universities to utilize. From the data gathered during Summer 2009, UCLA will be able to complete the first Sustainability Assessment scrutinizing all areas of campus, including curriculum, research, building, dining services, materials & waste minimization, purchasing, transportation, investment, sustainability infrastructure, community relations, and diversity.