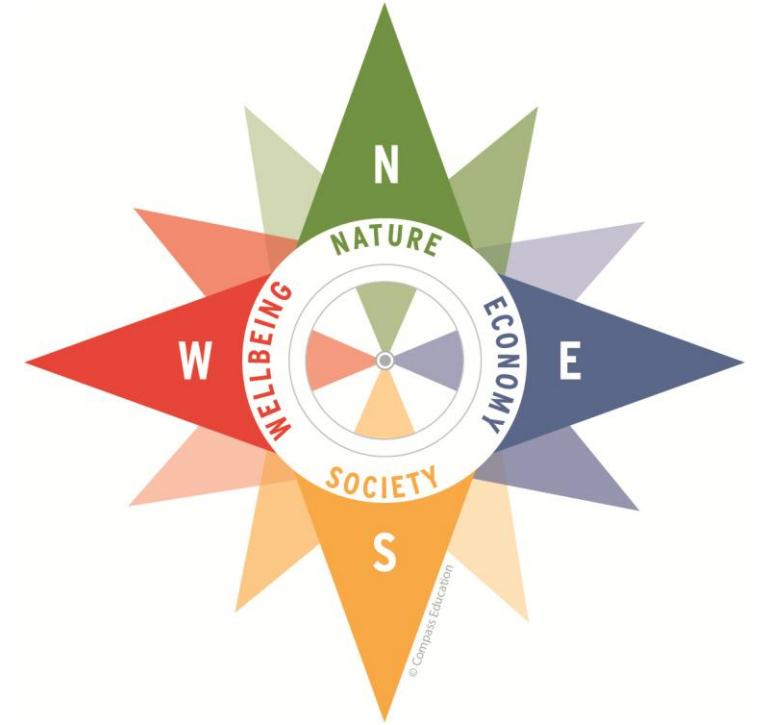


# Current and Future Importance of Sustainability Office to Auburn University

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Resilience, Innovation, Sustainability and  
Engagement (RISE) Committee

February 18, 2025



AUBURN  

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SUSTAINABILITY

# Auburn University Sustainability Policy

**Policy Statement:** Auburn University commits to integrating sustainability into all aspect of the university. Auburn University considers sustainability a core value and strives for excellence in sustainability through continuous assessment and improvement.

# RISE and the Sustainability Office

- RISE Committee works closely with Sustainability Office
- Current Director set to retire in July 2024
- Position is critical to maintaining sustainability on campus and for the RISE Committee

# Role of the Sustainability Office

- Works with every campus unit (both academic and non-academic) on teaching, research, outreach, operations, and policy
- Collaborates on symposia, conferences, and guest speakers
- Provides a resource for sustainability information and contacts
- The Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System (STARS) is a transparent, self-reporting framework for colleges and universities to measure their sustainability performance. A global sustainability standard created by and for higher education

# Auburn's Sustainability Performance: Sustainability Tracking Assessment & Rating System

- Categories of Measurement:
  1. Academics
  2. Engagement
  3. Operations
  4. Planning & Administration
- Four Levels of Performance Rating:
  - Bronze / Silver / Gold / Platinum
- **Auburn has been Silver five times since 2012**



# Sustainability at Benchmark Institutions

- Arizona State, Purdue, Rice, Texas, UVA, and Virginia Tech
- **All have greater institutional commitments to sustainability**
  - Sustainability Institutes and Centers
  - Sustainability Strategic Plans for academics and operations
  - Sustainability Certificate programs for undergraduates and grad students
  - Sustainability Majors and Graduate Degrees
  - Higher performance on the STARS sustainability rating system
- Sustainability Offices have larger staffs:

<b>Auburn: 3 Full Time</b>	ASU: 13 FT	Purdue: 9 FT
Rice: 6 FT	Texas: 5 FT	UVA: 17 FT

# SEC Schools with Sustainability Offices

- Alabama, Arkansas, **Auburn**, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, LSU, Mississippi, Mississippi State, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Texas A&M, Vanderbilt
- Only Missouri is absent

# ROI of Sustainability Office

- STARS ranking, sustainable campus initiatives, and sustainability courses/majors are a large motivating factor for students applying to AU, particularly amongst the highest achieving applicants and international students, which ultimately can affect university ranking
- Instrumental in working to improve efficiencies on campus, resulting in long-term financial savings
- Provide match on projects and grants
- Student interest in sustainability minor and courses is a driver of credit hour production
- Princeton Review: 75% of prospective college students and their parents say sustainability matters in deciding where to go
- Sustainability is a top 5 consideration for international students



# Future of Sustainability Office

- Relevant to AU's status amongst peer institutions
- Relevant to AU's ranking
- Key office for working with all campus units on sustainability and the RISE committee

## RISE Committee Motion

**The RISE committee moves that our committee be involved in discussions about the future of the Sustainability Office here at Auburn University prior to the retirement of the current director.**