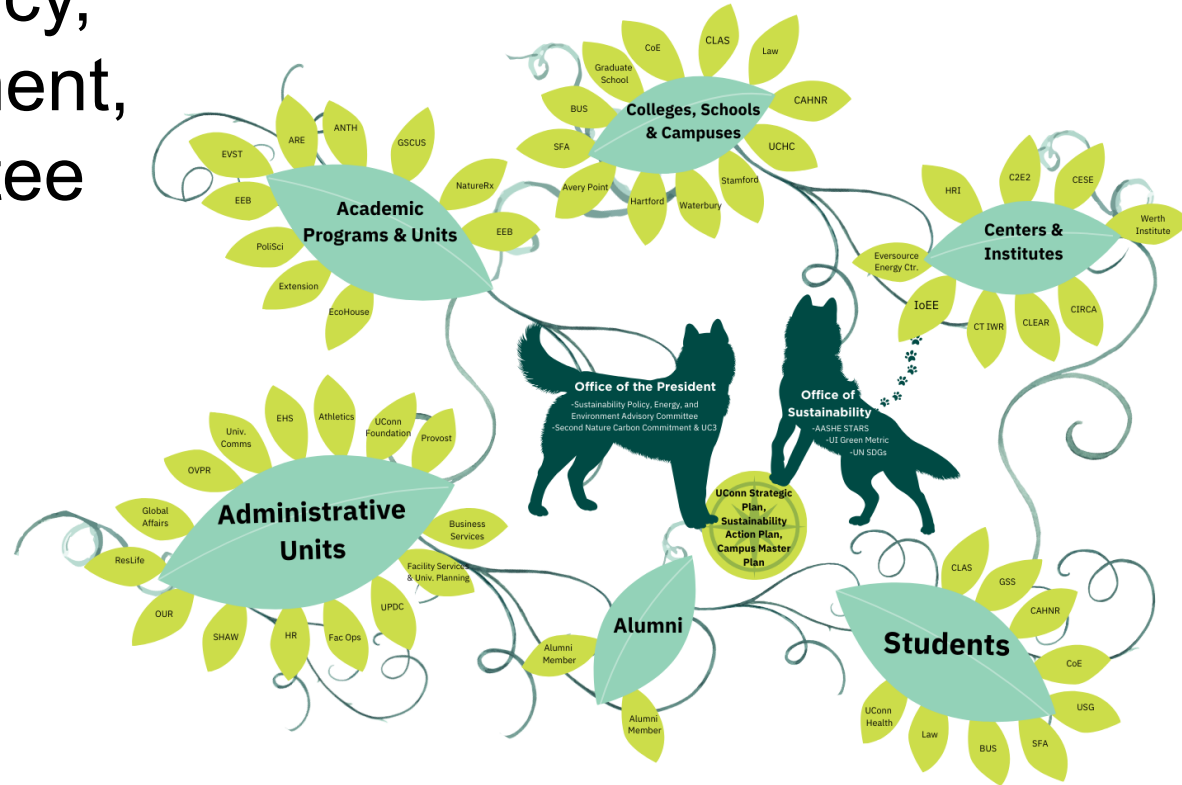


Sustainability Policy, Energy, Environment, Advisory Committee (SPEEAC)

Kickoff Meeting

Chair: Patrick McKee,
Director, Office of
Sustainability



April 25th, 2025

UConn

Welcome

Patrick McKee

- Director, Office of Sustainability
- Chair. SPEEAC
- Co-lead UConn@COP Fellowship Program
 - Joined UConn in 2018



patrick.mckee@uconn.edu

(860) 486-9414

Agenda

- Background – 11:00 – 11:15 AM
- Membership Structure & Introductions – 11:15 – 11:45 AM
- Mission & Charter – 11:45 AM – 12:00 PM
- Subcommittee & Working Group Discussion – 12:00 – 12:30 PM
- Next Steps – 12:20 PM
- Adjourn – 12:30 PM

Background - EPAC

Environmental Policy Advisory Council (EPAC)

- Formed in 2004
- Focus on operational efficiencies and regulatory compliance
- 25 members



Environmental Policy Statement – (2004, updated 2007)

In fulfilling its mission as Connecticut's land grant, public research university and its corresponding obligation to protect and preserve natural resources for an environmentally sustainable future, the University of Connecticut commits to the following principles of environmental leadership:

Performance: The University will institutionalize best practices, comply with environmental laws, regulations and standards, and continually monitor, report on and improve its environmental performance.

Responsible management and growth: The University will endeavor to design, construct and maintain its buildings, infrastructure and grounds in a manner that ensures environmental sustainability and protects public health and safety.

Outreach: The University will promote environmental stewardship in Connecticut and embrace environmental initiatives in partnership with its surrounding communities.

Academics: The University will advance understanding of the environment through its curriculum, research and other academic programs, and will employ an ethic of environmental stewardship in all intellectual pursuits.

Conservation: The University will conserve natural resources, increase its use of environmentally sustainable products, materials and services, including renewable resources, and prevent pollution and minimize wastes through reduction, reuse and recycling.

Teamwork: The University will encourage teamwork and provide groups and individuals with support, guidance and recognition for achieving shared environmental goals.

Background - SPEEAC

Research conducted in Summer 2024 on 30 peer and aspirant universities

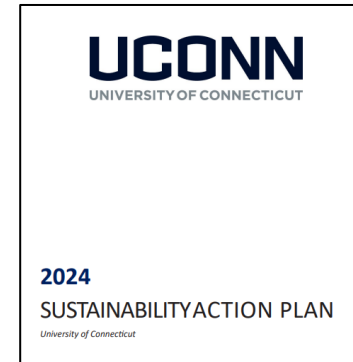
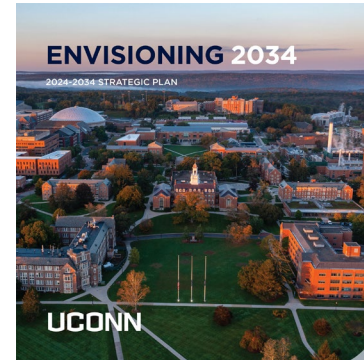
- Small committee comprised of former EPAC members and students
- Provided recommendations based on findings for revised sustainability advisory committee
 - Broad-based, inclusive membership model
 - Focus on sustainability leadership rather than efficiencies and compliance
 - Advisory AND action oriented

Key Findings

1. Nearly every school examined has a **decarbonization goal** endorsed by their President
 - Most have a stated date for achieving carbon neutrality and are signatories to one of **Second Nature's climate leadership pledges**
2. Nearly every school has an **Office of Sustainability** which coordinates university-wide strategic sustainability initiatives, reporting efforts, outreach and engagement
3. Nearly all have sustainability **advisory committees comprised of students, faculty, admin, staff**
 - Membership sizes ranged from 12 - 150+
4. Nearly every school examined **utilizes the AASHE STARS** framework as a guide and evaluation tool to measure progress toward common, comprehensive sustainability indicators
 - Progress toward the categories outlined in STARS is an important component of most strategic sustainability plans.

Primary Objective

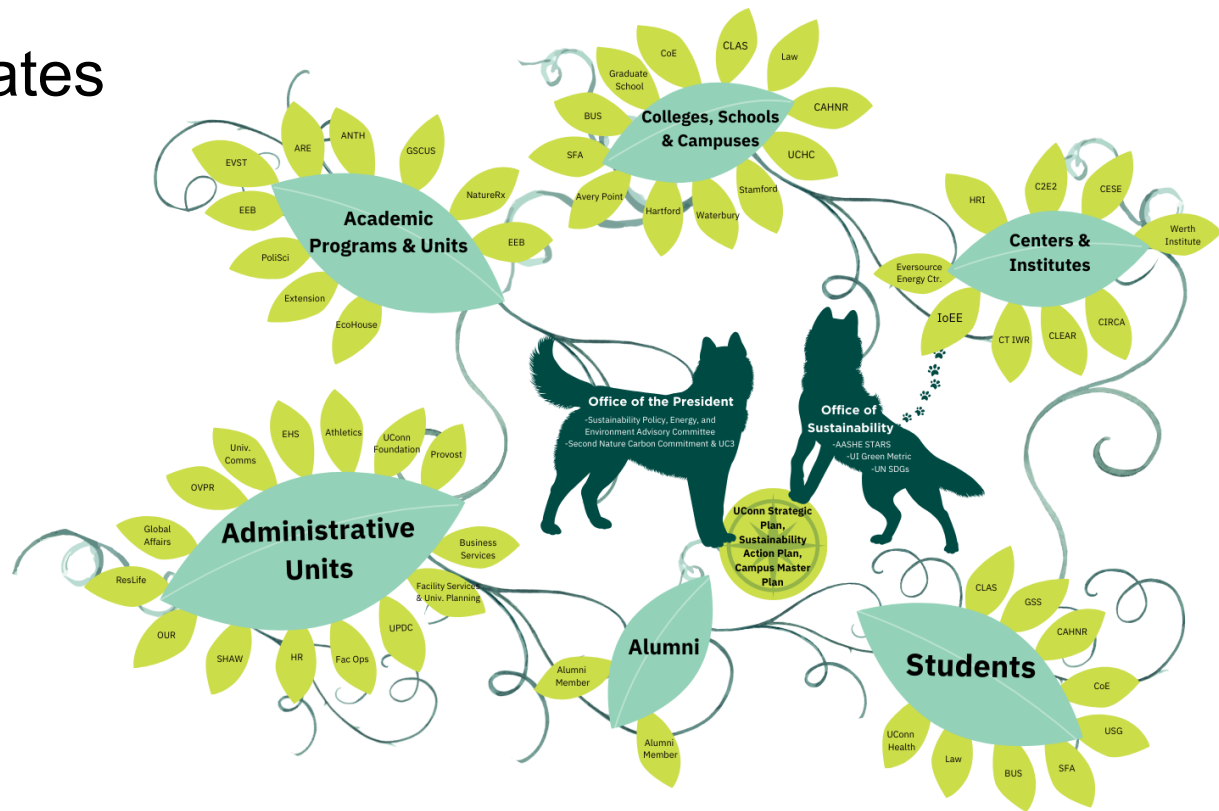
Unify UConn's sustainability efforts by bringing together talented research faculty members, passionate students, administrative leaders, and project managers to advise on and transparently lead progress toward ambitious sustainability goals aligning with:



Membership Structure

62 Members & Delegates

- Students – 9
- Alumni – 2
- Colleges, Schools & Campuses – 13
- Administrative Units – 18
- Centers & Institutes – 9
- Academic & Educational Programs – 11



Committee Membership

- The SPEEAC shall be chaired by the Director of the Office of Sustainability.
- The committee's composition is intended to bring together the diverse perspectives of major stakeholder groups, including students, faculty and staff members, and alumni. The committee shall consist of representatives from all relevant colleges, schools, and campuses, institutes and centers, operational and administrative units, students and alumni.
- Updates to the membership may be made per the recommendation of the SPEEAC Chair, with approval by the President, to ensure inclusive representation of all relevant university stakeholder groups.
- Membership is comprised of both appointed representatives of relevant university units and student and alumni members with established terms.
- **Appointments are made by the President.** Recommendations for membership are made by the Chair of the SPEEAC to the President upon the completion of appointment terms or as necessary to ensure inclusivity of relevant stakeholder groups or to replace members who have transitioned out of their roles. Membership may be renewed upon the completion of a term.
- Senior level positions (i.e. Dean, AVP, VP, EVP, Director, and higher) may appoint delegates at will to serve as representatives for their units. **Delegates should be committed to the role for at least one academic calendar year.**
- **Full-committee meetings are held once per academic semester.** Committee members and/or delegates should in good faith make every attempt to attend and participate in the meetings, providing updates from their respective units.
- Subcommittees and Working Groups may meet more frequently as needed.

Students

Undergraduate Student Government – **Andy Zhang**,
President

Graduate Student Senate – **Alaa Selim**, Vice President

At-Large College of Liberal Arts & Sciences Student –
Claire Lawrence

At-Large College of Agriculture, Health, and Natural
Resources – **Anna Woelk**

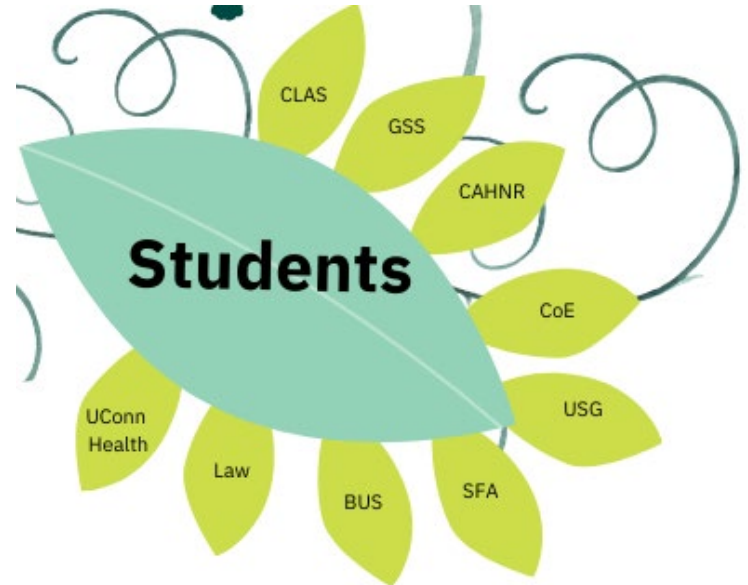
At-large College of Engineering Student – **Antigoni
Konstantinou**

At Large School of Fine Arts Student – **Lilli Hanlon**

At-Large School of Business Student – **Tina Ngo**

At-Large School of Law Student – **Riley Morrill**

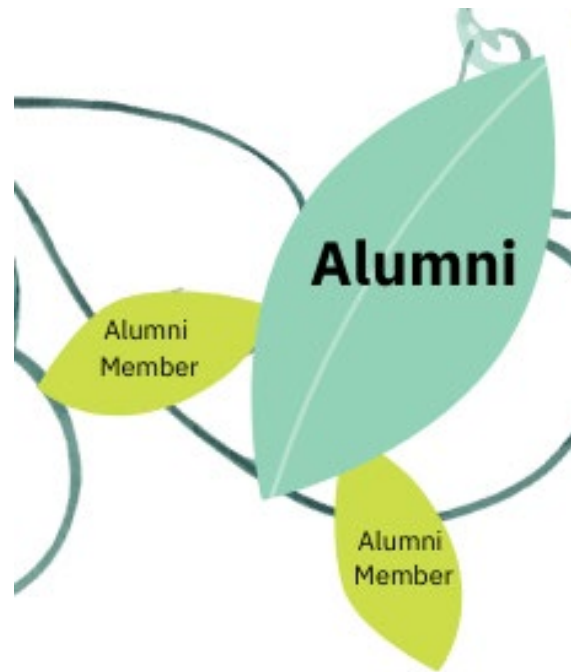
At-Large UConn Health Center Student – **Kelly Yuequing
Zheng**



Alumni

Alumni Member – **Brian Paganini**,
Vice President and Managing Director,
Quantum Organics, (BUS '03)

Alumni Member – **Alysse Lembo-
Buzzelli**, Director of Program
Development and Origination, CT
Green Bank, (CAHNR '09)



Colleges, Schools, & Campuses

College of Liberal Arts & Sciences - **Ofer Harel**, Dean

College of Engineering - *Delegate:* **Jasna Jankovic**, Professor

College of Agriculture, Health & Natural Resources - *Delegate:* **Mike Dietz**

School of Fine Arts –*Delegate:* **Anna Lindemann**, Assistant Professor,
Motion Design & Animation

School of Business - Co-Delegates: **Arminda Kamphausen**, Director Global
Sustainability, **Stephen Park**, Associate Professor, Marketing

Graduate School - **Leslie Shor**, Vice Provost for Graduate Education, Dean

UConn Health – *Delegate:* **John Lombardi**, Director of Facilities

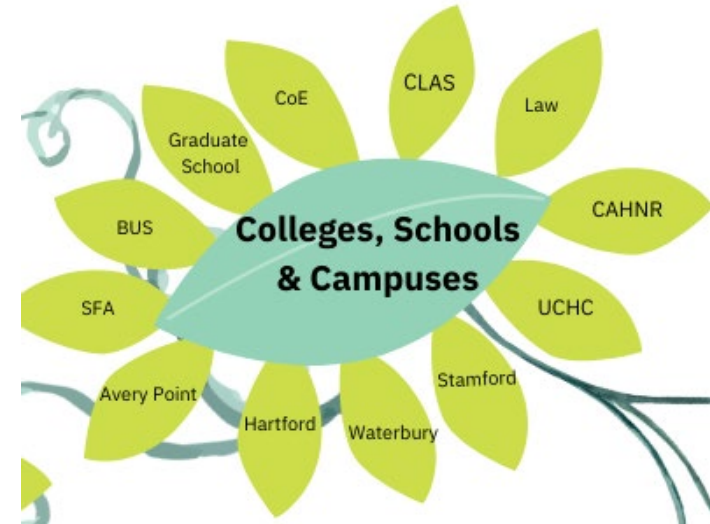
School of Law - *Delegate:* **Joseph MacDougald**, Professor In-Residence and
Executive Director, Center for Energy and Environmental Law

Avery Point Campus - *Delegate:* **Michael Whitney**, Associate Professor,
Marine Sciences

Hartford Campus - *Delegate:* **Nadine Brennan**, Associate Director

Waterbury Campus - **Fumiko Hoefft**, Campus Dean & CAO Professor,
Psychological Sciences

Stamford Campus - **Jennifer Orlikoff**, Campus Dean & CAO



Administrative Units

Office of the President – **Michelle Williams**, Chief of Staff

Office of the Provost – **Amy Gorin**, Vice Provost for Health Sciences and Interdisciplinary Initiatives

UConn Foundation – **Amy Yancey**, President and CEO

University Business Services – *Delegate:* **Chris Robinson**, Director of Procurement

Facility Services and University Planning – **Eric Kruger**, Executive VP Finance and CFO

- **University Planning, Design, and Construction** – *Delegate:* **Sean Vasington**, Director of Site Planning, University Landscape Architect

- **Facilities Operations** – *Delegate:* **Stan Nolan**, Interim Associate VP

Dining Services – **Michael White**, Executive Director

Residential Life – **Amy Crim**, Director

Athletics – *Delegate:* **Jessica Chrabaszcz**, Executive Associate AD, Competitive Excellence

University Communications – **Michael Kirk**, VP

Office of the VP for Research – *Delegate:* **Lindsay DiStefano**, Associate VP for Research Development

Human Resources – *Delegate:* **Gil Milone**, Director

Global Affairs – **Dan Weiner**, VP

Office of Diversity & Inclusion – **Jeffrey Hines**, Interim VP and Chief Diversity Officer

Office of Undergraduate Research – **Micah Heumann**, Director

Student Health and Wellness – *Delegate:* **Karen McComb**, Director of Health Promotion and Community Impact

Environmental Health and Safety – **Brent Lewchik**, Director, Chemical Hygiene Officer



Centers & Institutes

Werth Institute - Delegate: **Kathy Rocha**, Director of Operations,

Institute of the Environment – **Manos Anagnostou**, Executive Director

Office of Sustainability – Patrick McKee, Director, Chair.

Eversource Energy Center – **Diego Cerrai**, Interim Director

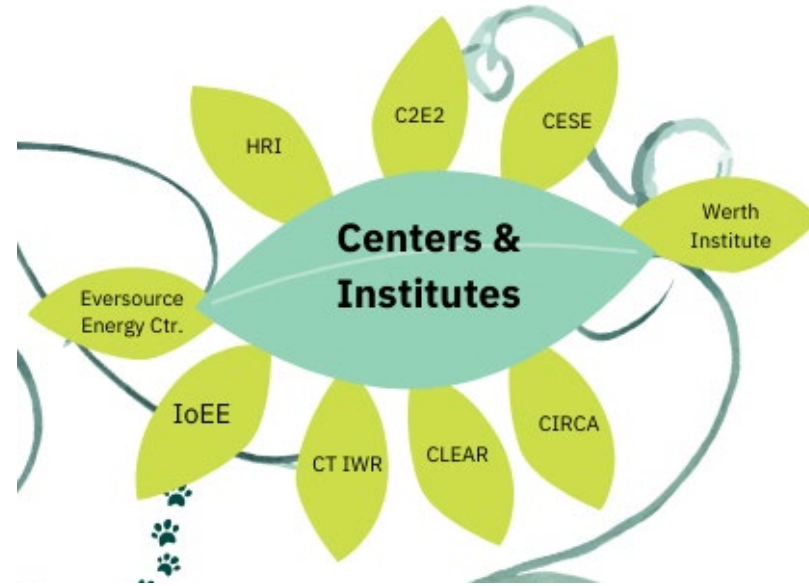
Center for Clean Energy Engineering – **Xiao-Dong Zhou**, Director

CT Institute of Water Resources – **Michael Dietz**, Director

Center for Land Use Education & Research – **David Dickson**, Director

CT Institute for Resilience and Climate Adaptation – **Jim O'Donnell**, Executive Director

Gladstein Family Human Rights Institute – **Kathryn Libal**, Director



Academic Programs & Units

Spring Valley Student Farm - **Jessica Larkin-Wells**, Farm Manager

NatureRX – **Kimberly Kleszczynski**, Director

Natural Resources & the Environment - **Jason Vokoun**, Dept. Head, Professor

Environmental Studies – **Thomas Bontly**, Director, Associate Professor Philosophy

Anthropology – **Eleanor Ouimet**, Assistant Professor

Political Science - **Oksan Bayulgen**, Dept. Head, Professor

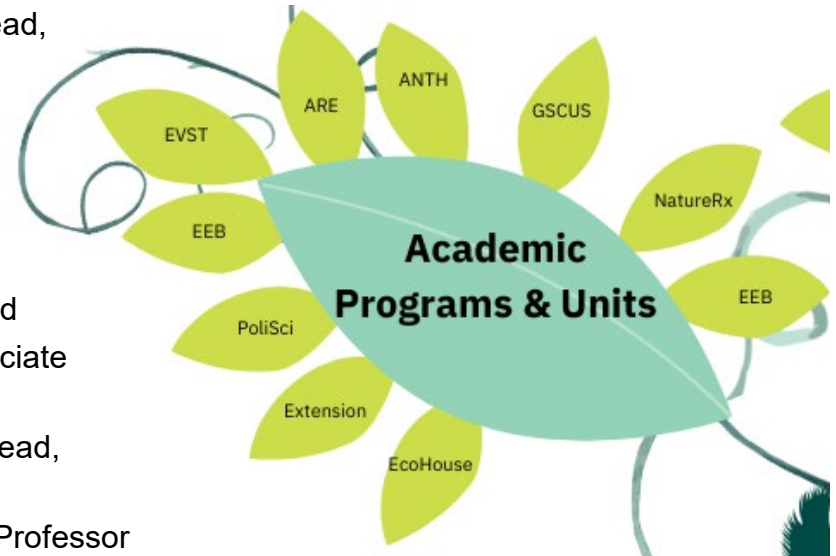
UConn Extension - **Bonnie Burr**, Assistant Director and Dept. Head

EcoHouse Learning Community – **Thomas Hayes**, Director, Associate Professor

Agricultural & Resource Economics – **Kimberly Rollins**, Dept. Head, Professor

Ecology & Evolutionary Biology – **Mark Urban**, Arden Chair and Professor

Geography, Sustainability, Community, and Urban Studies – **Anji Seth**, Dept. Head, Professor



Mission

The SPEEAC provides strategic review and advice on issues related to the integration of sustainable practices, programs, and projects across the **Six Cross-Cutting Initiatives** outlined in the University Strategic Plan.

1. **Student Success Journey to Academic Excellence**: Integrating sustainability across academic programs, research endeavors, and experiential learning opportunities, empowering students to become leaders in sustainable practices and innovation.
2. **Excellence in Research, Innovation, and Engagement**: Fostering interdisciplinary research initiatives and innovation hubs focused on sustainable solutions to address pressing environmental challenges.
3. **Wellness of People and Planet Community Engagement**: Engaging with local and global communities, cultivating partnerships, and advancing initiatives that promote environmental stewardship and social responsibility leveraging UConn expertise and resources for broader impact.
4. **Seven World-Class Campuses, One Flagship University**: Facilitating interdisciplinary multi-campus academic opportunities to develop sustainable systems and processes to increase climate resiliency and improve operational efficiency.
5. **Stronger, More Inclusive University**: Ensuring equity, inclusion, and environmental justice within sustainability efforts, providing equitable access to resources, and fostering a diverse and inclusive sustainability-focused community.
6. **Husky Pride & Resilience**: Celebrate faculty, staff, and student contributions amplifying our nationally recognized Green University rankings, leverage engaged alumni philanthropic support for sustainability research and innovation and pursue industry partnerships or synergistic joint ventures expanding commercialization and startup creation.

Mission (cont.)

It serves as a body to recommend and advise on goals, metrics, and key performance indicators and to review progress toward implementation in relationship to university strategic sustainability plans and initiatives.

SPEEAC provides regular progress updates on these targets and objectives to senior leadership and the greater University community.

“The Sustainability, Policy, Energy & Environment Advisory Committee (SPEEAC) provides a **forum for all university departments to report on their contributions** to moving this Strategic Action Plan implementation forward.” – UConn Sustainability Action Plan, 2024

Responsibilities

Recommend, and implement comprehensive institutionally adopted sustainability goals and key performance indicators in alignment with university strategic plans and guiding documents, as well as global and national higher education standards and frameworks for advancing sustainability, such as the [AASHE STARS](#), [UI GreenMetric](#), the [Second Nature Climate Leadership Network](#), and the [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#).

Advise the President, Provost and other senior administrators on matters pertaining to sustainable practices in operational and academic pursuits, including:

- Formulation of university policies and compliance with environmental and energy regulations
- Decarbonization and energy efficiency strategies, implementation plan, and goals
- Energy security and resilience
- Operational resource efficiency
- Waste minimization and diversion from landfill and incineration facilities
- Equity, inclusion, and environmental justice within sustainability efforts
 - Protecting the rights of UConn students, staff, faculty, and surrounding communities to a healthy, safe environment.
 - Preventing the unequal distribution of the benefits or burden of a sustainable campus.
 - Ensuring representation, voice, and participation in environmental decision-making for students, staff, faculty, and community members.

Responsibilities (cont.)

- Sustainability research and innovation
- Educational outreach and engagement and using campus as a living laboratory
- Engage with the breadth of UConn's stakeholders on implementation strategies to advance sustainability goals through the creation of topic-specific subcommittees and working groups.
- **Review and discuss ongoing sustainability initiatives, monitor trends, and regulatory matters and identify gaps in performance.**
- Ensure coordination with other relevant university advisory committees and task forces.
- **Compile an annual sustainability progress report** for the President, Provost, and other senior administrators.
- Promote UConn's sustainability vision and its successes throughout the university and beyond through community-engaged research, experiential learning activities, and workforce development opportunities.
- **Coordinate an annual end of year engagement event** to highlight progress and create networking and collaborative opportunities for students and employees at UConn.
- Provide oversight and recommendations as necessary to UConn's Environmental Policy Statement.
- **Recognize environmental leaders within the university population**
- Assess and report on committee performance annually.
- Regularly review and update the [charter](#).

Communications

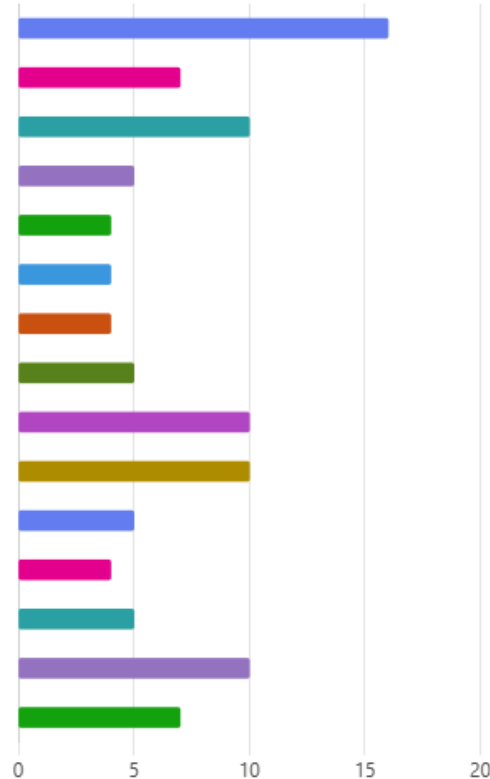
- The SPEEAC charter and membership information will be housed on both the Office of the President and the Office of Sustainability's webpages.
 - Meeting minutes will be made publicly available at:
<https://sustainability.uconn.edu/speeac/>
- Requests for meeting agenda items, progress updates, and other suggestions by SPEEAC members should be directed to the Chair **at least two weeks** before a scheduled meeting.
- Questions, requests for involvement, support, policy change, or presentations should be sent to sustainability@uconn.edu.

Subcommittees & Working Groups

- Subcommittees or working groups may be created to provide advisory over specific focus areas and may be formed at any time.
 - **Subcommittees**: provide topic specific research, expertise, and advisory, and support on long-term projects or goals.
 - **Working Groups**: provide short-term support in executing task-oriented projects on a specific topic.
- All subcommittees and working groups must have at least **one faculty, staff, and student** representative.
- Subcommittees and working groups must be **chaired by an appointed member or delegate** of the SPEEAC but can be comprised of non-members who are topic experts or uniquely positioned within the University to advance progress in specific areas of interest.
- Reports and recommendations of a subcommittee or working group will be brought to the SPEEAC by the respective subcommittee chair.
- A **SPEEAC Organizing Subcommittee** will be formed comprised of members appointed by the Chair. The Organizing Subcommittee will be responsible for meeting coordination, event planning logistics, and reporting exercises.
- Additional subcommittees and working groups will be established to advance the implementation of sustainability related key performance indicators in the University Strategic Plan and the [2024 Sustainability Action Plan.pdf](#).

Potential Subcommittee & Working Groups Topics

● Energy, Climate, and Adaptation	16
● Zero Waste	7
● Environmental Justice	10
● Campus As a Living Laboratory	5
● Sustainable Procurement	4
● Water Quality and Conservation	4
● Biodiversity	4
● Curriculum	5
● Community Outreach and Engagement	10
● Building Design and Operation	10
● Food and Dining	5
● Active Transportation	4
● SPEEAC Organizing Subcommittee	5
● Investment and Finance	10
● Health and Wellbeing	7



- Other Recommendations:
 - Corporate Sponsorships
 - Mitigation
 - Data Collection & Reporting Standardization
 - Student
 - Fundraising, Partnerships, Philanthropy

STARS Rating



84.74 / 100 Points
16th / 390 schools

Strengths

- Engagement
- Curriculum
- Research
- Water

Weaknesses

- Renewable Energy
- GHG Emissions
- Building Energy Use Intensity
- Investment & Finance

What do you hope can be achieved by SPEEAC?



Next Steps - Summer

- Build subcommittees and working groups
 - Can be comprised of non-members
- Perform topic specific gap analyses, peer and aspirant research, review best practices, etc.
- Meet to discuss goal and KPI recommendations
 - In alignment with UConn Strategic Plan, Sustainability Action Plan, STARS, Green Metric, UN SDGs
- Propose goals and KPIs at full SPEEAC meeting in fall 2025
 - Final recommendations sent to President's Office for review