

ABSTRACT

DISSERTATION: GETTING TO GREEN: AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INSTITUTIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND SUSTAINABILITY ACHIEVEMENT AT FOUR-YEAR U.S.-BASED COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

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DATE: May, 2014

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This study presents an examination of how institutional characteristics might influence a four-year institution of higher education's achievement in sustainability, as measured by the Sustainability Tracking, Assessment, and Rating System (STARS). Specifically, it examined the potential role Carnegie classification, sector, location, number of students, and number of tenure-track faculty might play in an institution's Education & Research, Operations, and Planning, Administration, & Engagement scores on the STARS instrument. Multivariate regression analysis and Classification and Regression Tree (CART) modeling were both administered to a data set of 204 U.S.-based four-year institutions. Results suggested that the number of tenure-track faculty did have a significant, positive, influence on an institution's Education & Research and Planning, Administration & Engagement scores. In addition, the CART analysis provided a number of organizational profiles that suggested the types of institutions that achieved significantly higher STARS scores, mainly those considered "liberal arts" and "research intensive". A discussion on the role of faculty members in sustainability planning is provided as well as recommendations for campus sustainability leaders.