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*Campus Environmental Sustainability Team  
Tracy Dixon, Director – University Sustainability Office*

The spring 2014 Advanced Auditing classes in the Masters of Accounting Program (MAC) at Poole College of Management performed limited procedures to assess the North Carolina State University 2012-2013 Annual Sustainability Report. This letter provides our assessment of the Annual Sustainability Report and recommendations for enhancing the report.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this effort is to provide students with the opportunity to apply auditing skills learned in class to a real world scenario and to expand their knowledge about sustainability. The end result is the University obtains an independent assessment of the University's process and procedures in developing the Sustainability Report. The services provided under this arrangement do not constitute an audit, attest, or assurance engagement performed in accordance with the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants Professional Standards. As this service is provided as part of the Advanced Auditing class and is therefore a learning experience for the students, there is no assurance that all areas for improvement in the Sustainability Report will be identified under this arrangement.

**Procedures**

Accordingly, the students performed the following limited procedures:

1. Gained an understanding and documented the processes and controls used in the development of information contained in the Sustainability Report.
2. On a select basis, compared information contained in the Sustainability Report with available supporting documentation.
3. Compared the Sustainability Report with 15 other university sustainability reports to identify similarities and potential areas for improvement.
4. Performed analysis of the University's sustainability website to identify areas for potential enhancement.
5. Held discussions with representations from other universities and external consultant to identify areas for potential enhancement.
6. Met with the Campus Environmental Sustainability Team on April 22, 2014 to share a high-level summary of the procedures performed, observations and recommendations.

**Observations**

As a result of the above procedures, the students identified the following areas which they concluded represent strengths of the Sustainability Report:

1. Orientation of Sustainability Report around the strategies put forth in the University's Sustainability Strategic Plan.
2. Reporting accomplishments toward tactics contained within each strategy.
3. Monthly coordination meetings held by the Campus Environmental Sustainability Team to improve communication and implementation across the campus.
4. Use of checklists in preparing information presented in the Sustainability Report.
5. Good use of pictures, graphics and color in preparing the report.

### **Recommendations**

Likewise, the students identified the following opportunities for improving the Sustainability report:

1. Implement standard processes and checklists for developing and reporting information contained in the Sustainability Report.
2. Implement independent processes to review the accuracy of the underlying support for all information presented in the Sustainability Report.
3. Implement record retention and back up processes to ensure information is retained for future reference.
4. Enhance the Sustainability Report by adding a letter from the Chancellor, providing a summary of the university-wide sustainability efforts and results, utilizing STAR scores to provide comparability to other institutions, and striving to obtain a more balanced view when reporting results with goals.
5. Expand the extent, method and frequency of sustainability reporting capability on the sustainability website.

In addition to the presentation made to the Campus Environmental Sustainability Team and the preparation of this summary report, detailed summaries and recommendations, organized by the focus area contained in the University's Sustainability Strategic Plan, were provided the Director of University Sustainability Office to aid in future enhancements to the Sustainability Report.

The students acknowledge the significant efforts put forth by the University in developing and publishing the Sustainability Report and thank the University for the opportunity to assess the Sustainability Report and provide recommendations.

*ACC 550, Advanced Auditing Students  
Spring 2014*