

# The University of Winnipeg's 2024 Sustainability Knowledge and Culture Survey: Summary Report

*Prepared by the University of Winnipeg Campus Sustainability Office*

## Introduction

This document reports the results of the University of Winnipeg 2024 Knowledge and Culture Survey. It was undertaken to fulfill the requirements for the following credits from the

and Tracking System (AASHE STARS):

- ◁ AC 6: Sustainability Literacy Assessment
- ◁ EN 6: Assessing Sustainability Culture

In addition to fulfilling STARS requirements, this survey has captured some of the information the University has set out to collect in the Institutional Sustainability Strategy. This includes data to direct Goal 3, Target 2, which states that the University should using appreciative inquiry to better understand the learning process, learning outcomes, and interests of students who act and lead.

what students may respond to in the appreciative inquiry process. Goal 4, Target 3 also calls for the University to engage faculty, staff and students with relevant expertise to develop workshops and courses that support campus community members in better understanding how their day-to-day work on campus relates to, and can impact positively or negatively on, key sustainability issues. Data captured can tell Campus Sustainability Office (CSO) staff what areas students and staff are most interested in, where knowledge gaps exist, and levels of engagement both on and off campus.

This is the first time this survey has been administered. The CSO intends to administer a similar survey in two years to see the affects of sustainability programming and sustainability course uptake, as well as follow any changes in student cohorts as the progress through the University.

## Methods

The survey was available from January to April 2024. It was advertised across campus e-mails as well as in the CSO newsletter and social media. Respondents had the option to be entered into a draw for one of five \$100 Amazon gift cards. The survey had 65 questions total and used conditional branching to save respondents time and effort where possible. A list of all survey questions (and correct answers for knowledge-testing questions) can be found in the Appendix. 793 respondents finished the survey and consented to have their answers used in this report; this

Questions 7-19 and questions 25-27 were considered knowledge testing questions, or questions for which a correct answer could be assigned. Each question was assigned a value of 1, and respondents were given a Sustainability Knowledge Score percentage value based on how many questions were answered correctly. Questions left blank were assigned a value of

Remaining questions that did not collect demographic information were considered sustainability culture questions. Questions 20, 22 and 31 explored individual actions taken by respondents, and questions 30 and 32-37 looked at involvement in environmental groups and activism. Finally, questions 21, 23, 28, and 29 examined and respondent famili 792mty KnwW\*n6y8.00000912 0 612 792 reW\*nBT/F5 12 Tf1 0 0 1 220.85 602.95 Tm0 g0 G(a)-13(m)70

The average Sustainability Knowledge Score for all employees was 61%, with the majority of scores concentrated between 60-70% (see Figure 1). Questions 27, 15, and 7 were answered correctly by the most respondents, and questions 17, 25, and 19 were answered incorrectly by the most respondents (Figure 1). The average Sustainability Knowledge Score for students was also 61%, but a wider range of scores can be observed across student respondents (Figure 2).

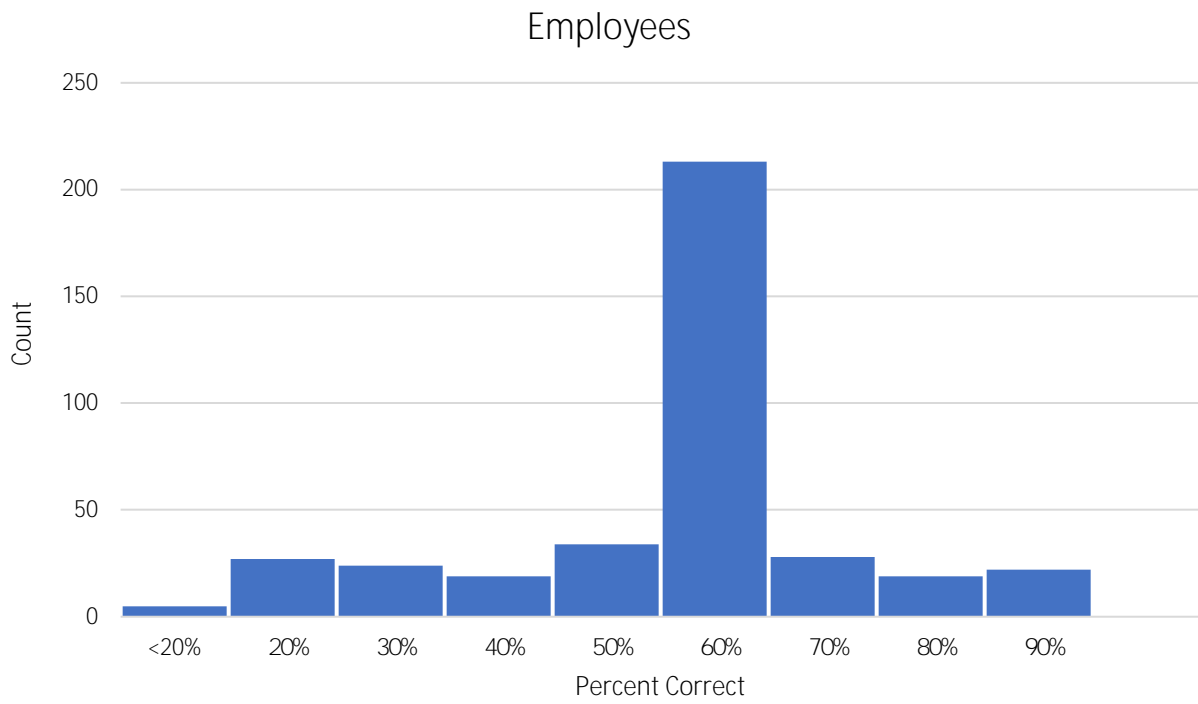


Figure 1. Sustainability Knowledge Score distribution among employees.

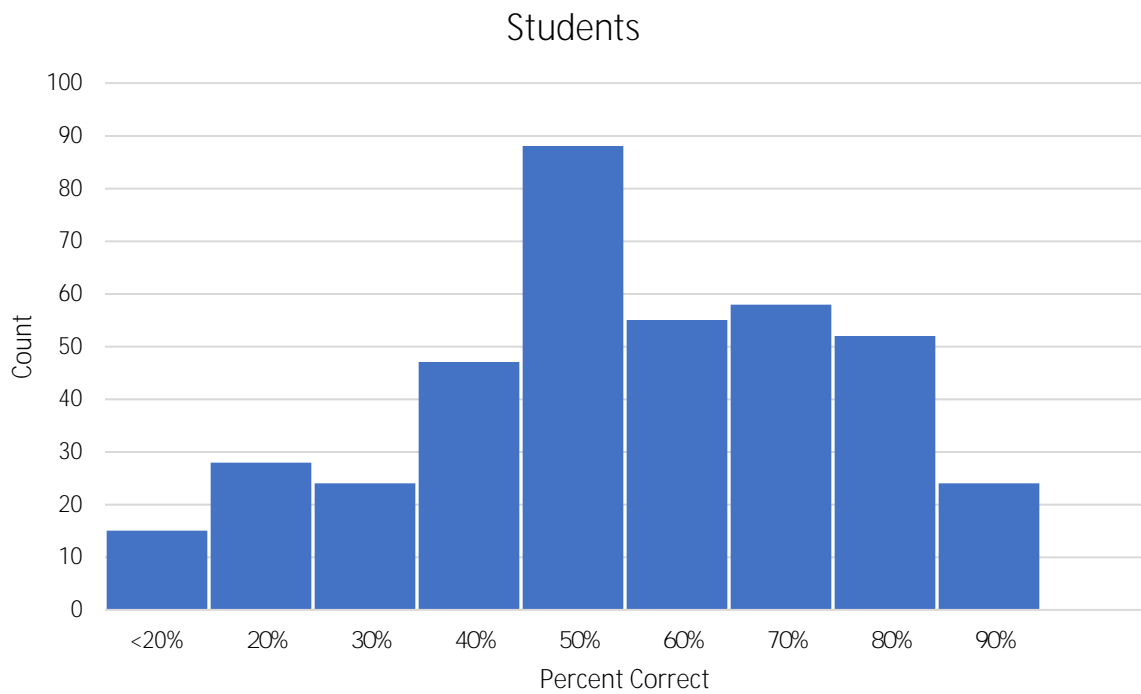


Figure 2. Sustainability Knowledge Score distribution among students.

Table 2. Knowledge testing questions pertaining to Indigenous issues and reconciliation on campus. Percent correct answers are shown for both employees and students.

| Question   | % Correct Employees | % Correct Students |
|--|---------------------|--------------------|
| The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous (q. 8)                  | 77%                 | 57%                |
| Where does the City of Winnipeg source its water? (q. 11)                          | 27%                 | 38%                |
| Within which Treaty Territory does UWinnipeg reside? (q. 25)                       | 15%                 | 46%                |
| Which of the following best fits the description of land acknowledgements? (q. 26) | 26%                 | 68%                |
| Does the University of Winnipeg have a formal land acknowledgement? (q. 27)        | 86%                 | 87%                |

Student answers were further broken out by faculty (Table 3) and year in school (Table 4). No apparent difference was observed between faculties. Students did exhibit a range of average Sustainability Knowledge Scores, with a 14% difference between the lowest average score for a cohort (second year) and the highest (fourth year or higher). Fourth year had the highest average Sustainability Knowledge Score, which could be related to sustainability education at the University, among other factors.

Table 3. Average

for helping to mitigate environmental and social harm through choices and actions in everyday life (Figure 3).

Figure 3. Responses to question Do feel you are personally responsible for helping to mitigate environmental and social harm through your choices and actions in your everyday life?

The survey also examined respondent confidence in taking everyday actions towards sustainability (Question 20). Answers were assigned a value of 0-4, where Very Average values for all actions fell between 2 and 3, with respondents feeling most confident in recycling plastic, glass, and paper, and least confident recycling special items like printer ink and batteries (Table 5).

### *Involvement in Environmental Groups and Activism*

Three questions (30, 32, 33) asked respondents to gauge their interest and concern around large-scale sustainability and environmental issues generally. Approximately three-quarters of students consistently answered that they were very or somewhat



Table 6. Percentage of students, employees, and all respondents that responded questions 32 and 33.

Next, the survey explored ways respondents engage with their communities (Question 35) on environmental issues, as well as their drive to become more involved both on (Question 36) and off campus (Question 37). In this section, we report student responses only by year.

**Response**

**First**



Table 8. Average score for respondents on question 21 (answers range from 0-3, with higher values indicating higher awareness).

Respondents were also asked how often they encounter a range of sustainability-related situations on campus. Answers were assigned a scale of 0-  
close to 2

Finally, the survey asked questions to gauge satisfaction with

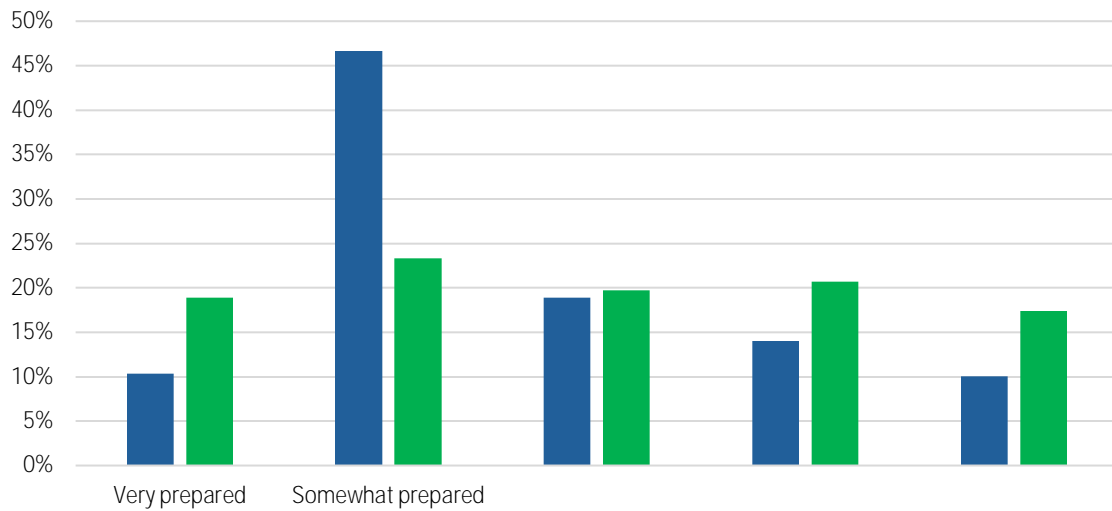


Figure 6. Student and employee responses to question 29, How well prepared do you feel to address environmental and sustainability issues that may emerge in your current or future career?

## Conclusion

The 2024 Sustainability Knowledge and Culture Survey has provided valuable insights into the current state of sustainability literacy and culture among students, staff, and faculty at the University. By evaluating both knowledge and attitudes towards sustainability, this survey

### Sustainability Strategy.

The findings reveal a mixed picture of sustainability knowledge. With an average Sustainability Knowledge Score of 61%, respondents demonstrated a solid foundation of knowledge in key areas, though notable gaps remain, particularly concerning Indigenous issues and campus-specific sustainability practices. For instance, while awareness of formal land acknowledgements and general sustainability goals is relatively high, there are significant gaps in knowledge related to waste management and settler-Indigenous relationships.

In terms of sustainability culture, respondents exhibit a generally positive attitude towards personal responsibility for sustainability. Many report feeling confident in their ability to engage in sustainable practices, although actual behavior shows room for improvement. Engagement with environmental and sustainability organizations is higher among students, with varying levels of involvement across different years. This variability suggests that as students progress

through their studies, their engagement and knowledge about sustainability may evolve, potentially influenced by their academic and extracurricular experiences.

The survey also highlights areas where the University can enhance its sustainability efforts. Respondents show varying degrees of awareness and involvement in University-led sustainability initiatives, indicating a need for more effective communication and integration of sustainability practices into daily campus life. The differences in satisfaction and preparedness between students and employees underscore the importance of tailored approaches to sustainability education, career preparation, and employee training.