Green Campus Community Checklist

A Practical Tool for Universities to Measure Community Building Through Green Spaces

Prepared by: _____

Date: _____

Introduction

Green spaces on university campuses play a crucial role in shaping student wellbeing, fostering social interaction, and strengthening community bonds. This checklist is designed to help institutions evaluate whether their green areas effectively contribute to building meaningful student connections.

Well-planned natural spaces improve relaxation, reduce stress, and provide opportunities for open communication. Modern campus sustainability practices emphasize the social value of green areas, aligning with global frameworks such as LEED for Neighborhood Development, the WELL Community Standard, and AASHE STARS.

This tool enables universities to routinely monitor, assess, and enhance their outdoor environments to support student engagement.

Instructions for Use

- This checklist is intended for facilities teams, sustainability offices, student affairs departments, and campus planning architects.

- Score each item as follows: Yes = 2 points, Partial = 1 point, No = 0 points.

- Review and update this assessment every 6 months to track improvements.

Main Checklist

A. Accessibility & Design

Checklist Item	Score (Yes / Partial / No)	Notes
Are green areas easily accessible from major academic buildings?		
Are pathways safe, well-lit, and wheelchair-friendly?		
Is there adequate seating that encourages small-group conversations?		
Are green areas evenly distributed across campus for fair student access?		
Are outdoor spaces designed to accommodate diverse student activities?		

B. Social Interaction & Community Building

Checklist Item	Score (Yes / Partial / No)	Notes
Do students regularly use the green areas for study groups?		
Are there dedicated social or informal meeting zones?		
Do these spaces encourage interaction among students from different departments?		
Are student clubs or societies using these areas for events?		
Does the environment support both small and large gatherings?		

C. Environmental Quality & Comfort

Checklist Item	Score (Yes / Partial / No)	Notes
Is there sufficient shade from trees or built structures?		
Are noise levels appropriate for relaxation and conversations?		
Is heat moderated through trees, grass, or water features?		
Is air quality enhanced by proper vegetation?		
Are comfortable seating and resting zones available year-round?		

D. Safety, Maintenance & Management

Checklist Item	Score (Yes / Partial / No)	Notes
Are green spaces regularly cleaned and maintained?		
Is there proper waste disposal and recycling?		
Is campus security present or easily reachable from these areas?		
Are walkways and seating free from hazards?		

Is there a system for collecting student feedback about these green spaces?		

Scoring Summary

Total Points Earned	
Maximum Points	40
Overall Rating	
Rating Guide	85–100% Excellent	70–84% Good	50–69% Needs Improvement	<50% Poor

Recommendations

Improving the community impact of campus green spaces does not always require large investments. Simple enhancements such as adding shaded seating areas, encouraging student-led outdoor events, and improving pathway accessibility can significantly increase student   engagement.

For long-term improvements, campuses may consider redesigning landscapes to include wellness gardens, interactive nature trails, outdoor classrooms, and multi-purpose social zones. Such upgrades not only enhance aesthetic value but also strengthen community building.

References

- AASHE. (n.d.). STARS Sustainability Tracking, Assessment & Rating System.
- International WELL Building Institute. (2020). WELL Community Standard.
- U.S. Green Building Council. (2009). LEED for Neighborhood Development.
- World Health Organization. (2017). Urban Green Space Interventions.
- University Sustainability Best Practices Guidelines.