

October 17, 2013



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

Mike Wallace
Director, Focal Point USA & Canada
Global Reporting Initiative
1918 Oxley Street
South Pasadena, CA 91030

Dear Mr. Wallace,

As Director of the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Focal Point USA and Canada, you should be pleased to hear that Ball State University will publish its fourth GRI sustainability report in December 2013. In fact, the latest report will be in accordance with the new G4 guidelines.

Ball State University has been a leader in sustainability on a number of fronts for many years; as a result, we have quite a story to tell. Our GRI sustainability reports have allowed us to communicate our numerous sustainability-related activities to our stakeholders. These activities include our energy-efficiency improvements in pursuit of climate neutrality, integration of sustainability in the curriculum, and engagement in sustainability research. As a founding signatory in 2006 to the American College & University Presidents' Commitment to Climate, I committed the university to pursue climate neutrality. We are making progress on this commitment with the installation of our district-scale ground-source geothermal heat-pump-chiller system, which will reduce our carbon emissions by nearly half. In 2012, as external validation of our achievements, Ball State was awarded the International Sustainability Campus Network (ISCN) Excellence in Integration Award; this was the first-ever recognition of a university that has successfully integrated specific sustainability initiatives into the campus-constituent culture, and day-to-day operations and statewide stakeholder communities.

In our hallmark immersive learning program, numerous professors and students have engaged in sustainability-related projects that have benefited the university, our local community, and/or communities throughout the state of Indiana. One such immersive learning project is note-worthy for its direct involvement in the university's sustainability reporting. Under the leadership of Dr. Gwendolen White, Ball State University students have prepared three consecutive Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) sustainability reports. Our students are engaging in "real world" experiences by creating sustainability reports comparable to those produced by large international corporations. These reports are being used in a variety of ways. For example, this past summer the university submitted our 2012 GRI report as evidence of our progress in sustainability-related activities when we joined the ISCN. In addition, the ISOS Group, an international sustainability consultancy, uses our reports in their Certified GRI Training to illustrate quality reporting by a university. Ball State's GRI reports are distinctive not only for their quality but also for their references to our related reports prepared under the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking, Assessment and Rating System (STARS). Ball State uses both reporting frameworks to monitor our sustainability progress as a way to speak to our numerous stakeholders.

Ball State continues to lead in sustainability through our curriculum, research, operations, and reporting. Our reporting is an integral part of what we do; moreover it has brought us international and national recognition for our commitments and actions. In this way, we seek to serve as a role model to other institutions of higher learning.

Sincerely,

Jo Ann M. Gora, Ph.D.
President