Focus Group: sustainability.uark.edu

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Contents

Executive Summary .......................................................................................................................... 3
Navigation of the Website and Related Sites .............................................................................. 3
  Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 3
Content ........................................................................................................................................ 4
  Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 4
Social Media .................................................................................................................................. 4
  Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 4
Misleading Information .................................................................................................................. 5
  Recommendations ....................................................................................................................... 5
Detailed Findings ............................................................................................................................ 5
Action ........................................................................................................................................... 5
Question – Were you able to locate the annual report? ............................................................... 5
Question – Do you think the report was easy to find? ............................................................... 6
Action – Find a blog post written by Marty Matlock. ................................................................. 6
Question – Was this publication easy to find? ............................................................................. 6
Question – Were you already aware of this publication? ............................................................ 6
Question – Would the content in this publication bring you back to this site? ....................... 6
Question – What content would you like to see? ......................................................................... 7
Action – Find the list of courses for the Sustainability minor ..................................................... 7
Question – From one to three, three being the most important, how important is this information? ........................................................................................................................................... 7
Question – Should this information be more prominent? ..................................................................... 7
Question – What are some reasons people might come to the website? ......................................... 8
Question – What is your impression of the website? ...................................................................... 8
Question – After viewing the content, what, to you, is the purpose of this website? ................. 8
Question – Does this purpose satisfy your needs or expectations? ............................................. 9
Question – How often do you visit this website? .......................................................................... 9
Question – Would the content you just viewed bring you back to the website? ....................... 9
Question – Are you happy with the layout of the homepage? ...................................................... 9
Question – Do you most often visit this site from a desktop, smartphone or tablet? ............... 9
Question – What are some reasons you would visit this site? .................................................. 10
Questions – Does the content match your reasons for visiting this website? What content do you expect to find? ........................................................................................................... 10
Questions – Are you able to easily find information you are looking for? If not, is there too much, too little or missing information? ......................................................................... 10
Question – Do you feel that social media integration on this page would be beneficial like a Facebook or Twitter feed? ........................................................................................................... 11
Question – Should the day-to-day aspects be posted on social media, the homepage slider or both? ........................................................................................................................................... 11
Question – What are some of the positive experiences of this website and what made these experiences positive? ........................................................................................................... 12
Question – Is there anything about sustainability.uark.edu that you found confusing? ... 12
Question – What are some negative experiences about this website? ................................ 12
Question – What suggestions do you have to improve this website? ................................. 13
Question – Is the ‘About’ section more important than getting involved and the actual product? ........................................................................................................................................... 13
Handout One ...................................................................................................................... 15
Research Methods............................................................................................................. 17
Research Goal: .................................................................................................................. 17
Research Design: .............................................................................................................. 17
How the Information Will Be Used: ................................................................................... 17
How This Project Fits Into Our Department: ..................................................................... 17
Expected Results: ............................................................................................................. 17
Why This Method Was Chosen: ......................................................................................... 18
Focus Group Agenda: ....................................................................................................... 18
Strategy for Analysis .......................................................................................................... 19
Specifications for Time and Location ................................................................................ 20
Who Fulfilled the Leadership Roles of the Focus Group? .................................................. 20
Appendix A ......................................................................................................................... 21
Google Search Console ..................................................................................................... 21
Appendix B ......................................................................................................................... 22
Google Analytics ............................................................................................................... 22
Executive Summary

Navigation of the Website and Related Sites

All four participants were able to locate the annual report and thought it was easy to find. On the other hand, all four participants thought the article written by Marty Matlock was difficult to locate. Three out of four participants used a search engine to locate a story written by Marty Matlock. All participants stated that not all stories had the author listed by the article and that made finding the article more difficult.

All participants agreed that the structure of the blog was not clear. All participants agreed that the search bar was difficult to locate and should stand out.

Three out of four participants thought navigating to the sustainability minor was difficult and should be made easier to find.

All participants agreed that the events are disorganized and should be listed in chronological order.

All participants agreed that the tab labeled ‘Our Commitment’ is misleading. All participants thought this would lead to a mission statement.

All participants agreed that ‘Zero Waste’ was misleading and they did not know what this was. All participants agreed that this item would make more sense located with the other items in the drop-down under ‘Projects.’

All participants stated that the ‘About’ page was the first thing they looked for and should be given more prominence.

Recommendations

- Include the author name for every story to improve the navigation of the publication.
- Make SEO improvements considering participants are using search engines to locate the site. See Appendix A.
- Consider condensing certain topics in the navigation for a more refined purpose on the blog.
- Make the search bar easier to locate on the publication.
- Make the content pertaining to the sustainability minor more prominent. See Appendix B.
• List the events in a chronological order on the events page.
• The suggestion to give more prominence the participants made about the ‘About’ page goes against best practices in UX and is not supported by analytics. See Appendix B.

Content

All participants agreed that a series pertaining to social, economic and environmental issues would bring them back to the publication. None of the participants were aware the publication existed before the focus group. Further, all four participants agreed that the content on the publication would bring them back to the website.

On a scale of one – the least important – to three – most important – all participants agreed that information pertaining to the sustainability minor was a three. Further, all participants agreed that content demonstrating how the sustainability minor could be used would be helpful.

All participants agreed that an alumni video series would be valuable for the website and publication. They also stated this information could be used to show how the sustainability minor can be used.

All participants agreed that the ‘Get Involved’ page needs to be more appealing. The participants agreed that a two to four minute video showing how students can become involved would help this page as well as the use of images similar to other pages on the site.

Recommendations

• Create ongoing series of articles and videos for the publication.
• Spread the word about your publication on social media, because all four participants stated this content would bring them back to your website.
• Again, the sustainability minor is very important to the participants and should be made more prominent with content demonstrating how the minor can be used once attained. See Appendix B.
• Start a series spotlighting alumni in the publication and use video of this content on the main website.
• Create a video showing how students can become involved in sustainability on the ‘Get Involved’ page.

Social Media
All participants agreed that more emphasis should be given to social media and moved above the ‘Recent Headlines’ section on the homepage.

**All participants agreed that social media should be used for events and news.** Participant one stated that social media should provide project updates and about RSOs.

**Recommendations**

- Consider moving social media icons higher on the page.
- Use social media for events and news from the publication.
- Consider providing RSO updates on social media and these RSO’s are involved in sustainability. Be sure to connect with these RSO’s on social media to improve social media reach.

**Misleading Information**

All participants agreed that the tab labeled ‘Our Commitment’ is misleading. All participants thought this would lead to a mission statement.

All participants agreed that ‘Zero Waste’ was misleading and they did not know what this was. All participants agreed that this item would make more sense located with the other items in the drop-down under ‘Projects’.

**Recommendations**

- Consider renaming the section ‘Our Commitments’ to avoid confusion for the user.
- Consider nesting ‘Zero Waste’ under ‘Projects’ unless this is not considered to be a project.

**Detailed Findings**

**Action** – Find the 2015 Annual Report.
Sustainability1: 01:09

**Question** – Were you able to locate the annual report?
Sustainability1: 02:24
• All four participants said yes.
• Participant four typed in Sustainability.uark.edu and went to the side navigation, reports.
• Participant one went to the UARK homepage search for Annual Report 2015
• Participant two Googled Sustainability UARK and used side navigation once on page.
• Participant three typed website reports in search and located the sustainability report in the list.

Question – Do you think the report was easy to find?
Sustainability1: 03:35

• All four participants found the report easy to find.

Action – Find a blog post written by Marty Matlock.
Sustainability1: 03:53

Question – Was this publication easy to find?
Sustainability1: 06:19

• All participants found finding the publication somewhat difficult.
• Three out of four participants used a search engine to find Marty Matlock.
• All agreed that because not all stories had the author in the listings made it difficult.

Question – Were you already aware of this publication?
Sustainability1: 10:09

• None of the participants were aware of the publication before the focus group.

Question – Would the content in this publication bring you back to this site?
Sustainability1: 10:21
• All participants agreed that the content in this publication would bring them back to the site.

• Participant four described it as a quick and easy read and adaptable to any audience with links to further information.

• Participant two liked how it connected everything from sustainability to the impact like wages which makes it relatable to everyone. Participant three agreed.

**Question – What content would you like to see?**

Sustainability1: 13:09

• All agreed that a series relating to the three pillars would be nice and would bring them back to the publication.

• Participant three suggested content on economic impact.

• Participant four suggested more data and information on social justice as well as more sources.

**Action – Find the list of courses for the Sustainability minor.**

Sustainability1: 16:26

**Question – From one to three, three being the most important, how important is this information.**

Sustainability1: 17:09

• All participants ranked this information as a 3, most important.

**Question – Should this information be more prominent?**

Sustainability1: 17:25

• Participant one thought the information could be easier to find.

• Participant three thought the information is easy to find if you are looking for it but if you are just visiting it may be difficult. Participant four agreed.

• All participants agreed that a tab under ‘Academic Programs’ about how the minor could be used (education and employment) would be helpful.
Question – What are some reasons people might come to the website?
Sustainability2: 01:46

- Participant one feels people would visit the site for ways to get involved or for information on minors, academic coursework or volunteer opportunities.
- Participant one feels people might visit if they have an interest in the environment.

Question – What is your impression of the website?
Sustainability2: 04:08

- All participants agreed that the site was easy to navigate, clean, appealing to the eye and simple.
- All participants liked that the slider reaches different audiences.
- All participants agreed that an alumni video series lower on the page would be nice to show what the minor could be used for or a call to action.
- All agreed that the only navigation issues were with the blog.
- Participant one liked the different variety of pictures and iconography on the site.
- All participants like the placement of items on the homepage.
- All participants agreed that the ‘Get Involved’ page needed to be more appealing through the use of images to match the other pages of the site. Possibly the use of a 2-4 minute video showing how people could get involved.

Question – After viewing the content, what, to you, is the purpose of this website?
Sustainability2: 09:29

- Participant two thought the purpose of the site was to get campus to be more sustainable and informative. Also a call to action to get the campus to be more sustainable.
- Three out of four participants thought the purpose of the site was for people who want to know more about sustainability.
- All agree the call to action is in a good place. Not the first thing or in your face.
Question – Does this purpose satisfy your needs or expectations?
Sustainability2: 17:33

- All participants agreed that the purpose of this site satisfied their needs and expectations.

Question – How often do you visit this website?
Sustainability3: 00:04

- Only one out of four participants had visited the site previous to the focus group.

Question – Would the content you just viewed bring you back to the website?
Sustainability3: 01:03

- All agree that the content would bring them back.
- Participant two thought that the blog posts would bring her back.
- Participant four felt that the involvement opportunities would bring them back.
- All participants agree that the call to actions would bring them back.

Question – Are you happy with the layout of the homepage?
Sustainability3: 01:29

- All agree that they are happy with the layout of the homepage.
- Participant one felt like the goals should be higher on the page maybe under the pictures up near the get involved. Participant two agree.
- Participant two didn’t know why some items were on left navigation like Council Meetings but would be more interested in the goals that the office has.
- Participant four likes how the homepage is sectioned off into blocks and text. Visually appealing.

Question – Do you most often visit this site from a desktop, smartphone or tablet?
Sustainability3: 04:07
Three out of four participants agreed that they would visit this site on a laptop because it is spread out, easier for tabs and easier for research.

Participant four stated that they would visit the site from their phone for quick checks.

All participants are more inclined to do research on a laptop and quick lookups on a phone.

Question – What are some reasons you would visit this site?

Participant one would visit the site due to interest in the environment and the community.

All participants agreed that they would visit this site to find out about events.

When asked about how they find out about events all participants agreed that they usually find out through Facebook or word of mouth and sometimes Newswire.

All agree that they would go to website about events if event in Facebook linked to the website.

Participant two likes that the website has ‘Get Updates’ in green on the page for those who want to know and be involved.

Two participants stated that they would visit for information on a sustainability minor.

Participant three would return to the site to read the blog.

Three out of four participants agreed that ‘Our Community’ should be replaced with ‘Goals’ or should be higher up on the list.

Questions – Does the content match your reasons for visiting this website? What content do you expect to find?

All participants said the content of the site matches their reasons for visiting.

Questions – Are you able to easily find information you are looking for? If not, is there too much, too little or missing information?
• Participant two stated that the site is not too cluttered and if you want more information you can find it in the side navigation.
• All participants agreed that the information they were looking for was easy to find.
• Participant four didn’t like that the events and blog take you to another site. It is understandable with the blog but not the events. Events site is a little busy. Participant two agrees. Format is busy. Events should be chronological.
• All participants agreed that they would come to the site for information about events but that the events page is unorganized and you go out of the website to view it or even a calendar. Events should be listed in chronological order and by current events and past events.
• All participants feel that the events page is necessary.

Question – Do you feel that social media integration on this page would be beneficial like a Facebook or Twitter feed?
Sustainability3: 16:31
• Participant four thought the social media icons should be closer to the ‘Connect’ section or higher on the page perhaps right above the headlines.
• All participants agree that moving the social media icons to the top is important and be one of the first things you see.
• Participant two thinks information on social media about the day to day things sustainability is doing like project updates or event coverage would be good.
• Participant four follows on social media for reminders about things.
• All agreed that social media should be used for updates, events and news.

Question – Should the day-to-day aspects be posted on social media, the homepage slider or both?
Sustainability4: 02:21
• Participant two suggested that the content on social media be more up-to-date than the slider and constantly updated.
• Participant one stated that the slider is for major stories and projects and social media is for quick updates on projects and maybe info on what the RSOs or students are doing.
• Participant four feels that social media should be more for event reminders and keep the website and slider as is with big events and projects.
Question – What are some of the positive experiences of this website and what made these experiences positive?
Sustainability4: 04:51

- Three out of four participants agreed that the blog was a positive experience of the website.
- Participant two suggested having different, varied types of stories.
- All participants agreed that a series of stories would be good covering big events.
- All participants agreed that the structure of the blog was not clear. Perhaps categorize topics into one tab (energy, climate, waste, water) in a dropdown.
- Search is difficult to see and it doesn't have a cursor icon when you hover over it.
- Participant four stated that the site was all inclusive, academics and get involved had great info.
- Two out of four participants would be okay with a dropdown navigation for the story topics on their phone.
- All participants either read blog posts through phone or laptop.

Question – Is there anything about sustainability.uark.edu that you found confusing?
Sustainability4: 011:33

- Participant four thinks the web address ‘sustainability.uark.edu’ is easy to remember. Participant two agreed.
- All participants agree that the website is pretty easy to navigate.

Question – What are some negative experiences about this website?
Sustainability4: 012:40

- All participants agreed that the blog and events on the site would be good instead of leading to another page.
- All participants agreed that more information about how the minor could be used would be helpful.
- All participants agreed that the tab labeled ‘Our Commitment’ is misleading. All assumed that it would lead to a mission statement but instead lead to collaborations. Because this, the tab should be changed to ‘Our Commitments’.
• All agreed that moving carbon neutral or goal information to the top so you know immediately what the page is about.
• All participants agreed that ‘About’ tab should be moved to the top. Having about at the top would make sense to any user and ‘About’ would keep them looking through the site.
• All participants agreed that ‘Zero Waste’ was misleading and they were not sure what it was. All thought it would make more sense as a drop-down item under ‘Projects.’
• All participants agreed that the arrangement of the navigation is an issue.

Question – What suggestions do you have to improve this website?
Sustainability5: 04:19

• All participants agreed that adding a little bit more color and photos to the ‘Projects’ and ‘Academic Programs’ pages would improve the look of those pages and keep it consistent with the site.

Question – Is the ‘About’ section more important than getting involved and the actual product?
Sustainability5: 05:35

• All participants agreed that ‘About’ should be at the top for first time users.
• All participants agreed that ‘About’ is more important than majors, cost and would be the first thing they look at.
• All participants agreed that ‘Contact Us’ should be at the bottom of the page or the bottom of the left navigation.
• Participant three stated that ‘Events’ and ‘Services’ is what makes them stay on a site but ‘About’ is important for first time users and is also a convenience factor to get quick, overall feeling of the site/program. All participants agreed.
• Participant two stated that about is equally as important as specific product. Participant one agreed.
• Participant four stated that the mission creates a brand and makes it official. Participant four also stated that the ‘About’ page was nice looking.
• Participant two stated that the content of an ‘About’ page wouldn’t be a determining factor but would be a factor.
• Participant four stated that an event may have gotten them to the page but would go to find background information in the ‘About’ section before exploring the site.
• Participant four stated that if they are on the home page of a website I am looking to leave it or look further but if I go to the About page it is for information.
• All agree that the ‘About’ not being at the top would not be a detriment.
• All agree that first-time users look for what the program is about before anything else.
Handout One

Demographics

Sustainability.uark.edu Focus Group

**Participant Demographics**

Participant number: ___

Age: ______________

Gender: __________

Participant type

a) Freshman
b) Sophomore
c) Junior
d) Senior
f) Other __________

Familiarity/Involvement with Sustainability:

a) Not familiar/involved
b) Slightly familiar/involved
c) Familiar/involved
d) Very familiar/involved

How comfortable are you at using the internet:

a) Very comfortable
b) Moderately comfortable
c) Not comfortable
Participant One
Age: 20
Gender: Female
Participant type: Junior
Familiarity/Involvement with Sustainability: Slightly familiar/involved
How comfortable are you at using the internet: Very comfortable

Participant Two
Age: 20
Gender: Female
Participant type: Junior
Familiarity/Involvement with Sustainability: Slightly familiar/involved
How comfortable are you at using the internet: Very comfortable

Participant Three
Age: 24
Gender: Female
Participant type: Grad student
Familiarity/Involvement with Sustainability: Not familiar/involved
How comfortable are you at using the internet: Very comfortable

Participant Four
Age: 24
Gender: Female
Participant type: Grad student
Familiarity/Involvement with Sustainability: Familiar/involved
How comfortable are you at using the internet: Very comfortable
Research Methods

Research Goal:

To improve website usability for students.

Research Design:

Cassandra Gronendyke recruited the participants for this focus group. The focus group was about one and a half hours in length. This focus group had four participants and the participants were provided pizza and drinks.

How the Information Will Be Used:

The research will be used for the targeted audience to improve usability on University of Arkansas websites. This includes students, faculty, staff, the Fayetteville community and legislative members. Reports from the findings will be sent to departments, webmasters and be made available on the digital publication WebFirst.

How This Project Fits Into Our Department:

As a content strategist, one main focus of this job is to use qualitative and quantitative data to improve the usability of the University of Arkansas’ websites. Currently, this is accomplished primarily through Google Analytics and the Google Search Console. Focus groups are another piece to the usability puzzle that will create a better user experience. Focus groups allow digital design and development to interact directly and observe students to see how they use University of Arkansas websites and what they would like to see improved. From this information, changes can be implemented after cross-referencing the data from the focus groups with our existing sources of data.

Expected Results:

Based on data accumulated from the Google Search Console for external searches and the Google Search Application for internal search results, we expect the majority of participants will push for changes to be made on both landing and interior pages varying in significance from website to website. Often, search queries collected from the Google Search Console suggest that users are not able to quickly locate information and instead will search for the information.
Why This Method Was Chosen:

The Digital Design and Development team uses Google Analytics, the Google Search Console and the Google Search Application that provide quantitative analysis. So, the Digital Design and Development understands the “what?” question through the data already obtained, but the focus groups will explain the “why?” question. For instance, if a specific page has a high bounce rate, a focus group will essentially act as a real-time heatmap that will provide answers as to why users choose to leave a page or continue on to other internal pages.

Focus Group Agenda:

Welcome

Thank you all for agreeing to participate in this focus group for sustainability.uark.edu.

My name is Chad Woodard and I am the Content Strategist for University Relations.

Kelly Bostick will assist me today.

This is a focus group designed to improve the usability of sustainability.uark.edu. Please feel free to give your honest opinion throughout the course of this focus group as it pertains to sustainability.uark.edu.

Guidelines

- There are no right or wrong answers. We value everyone’s opinion as it pertains to sustainability.uark.edu.
- We hope to have many opinions throughout this focus group, so speak up if you agree or disagree.
- We would like everyone to participate. You could be called on if you have not spoken often.
- We will be video recording this focus group. We will not call you by your name and you will remain anonymous in our report.

Action-Item Questions: 45 minutes

Questions: Were you able to locate the annual report? Did you think the report was easy to find? How did you navigate to the annual report?

Action: Find a blog post written by Marty Matlock.

Questions: Was this publication easy to find? Were you already aware of this publication? How often do you visit this publication? Would the content on this publication bring you back to this site? What content would you like to see?

Action: Find the list of courses for the Sustainability Minor.

Questions: From one to three, three being the most important, how important is this information? Should this information be more prominent?

General Questions: 45 minutes

1. What is your impression of this website?
2. After viewing the content, what, to you, is the purpose of this website?
3. Does this purpose satisfy your needs or expectations?
4. How often do you visit this website?
5. Do you most often visit this site from a desktop, smartphone or tablet?
6. What are some reasons you visit this website?
7. Does the content match your reasons for visiting this website? If not, what content do you expect to find?
8. Are you able to easily find information you are looking for? If not, is there too much, too little or missing information?
9. What are some positive experiences of this website and what made these experiences positive?
10. Was there anything about this website you found confusing?
11. Is this website easy or difficult to navigate and what makes it easy or difficult to navigate?
12. What suggestions do you have to improve this website?
13. Would you be interested in a social media feed of sustainability content on the homepage?
14. Is there anything we have not discussed pertaining to this website that you think should be addressed?

Food is distributed.

Strategy for Analysis
After the focus group, the responses will be gathered and transcribed from an audio and video capture. From here, comments from the participants, as well as nonverbal communication, will be tracked to reveal common themes about the experience of the particular website in the focus group. The data, once transcribed and grouped by theme and trend, will be cross-referenced with Google Analytics, Google Search Application and the Google Search Console to find common themes with all of these tools and the focus groups. A written report will then be created after the common themes from all of the resources are compiled. The written reports will provide recommendations for change based on the findings from the focus groups and the other data tools. Each question asked will be addressed in the written report and contain themes and trends with quantitative data from Google Analytics, Google Search Application and the Google Search Console. The recommendations will be sent to the departments and webmasters to implement the changes. The results of this analysis will also be made available on the digital publication WebFirst.

Specifications for Time and Location

The focus group took place at 2 p.m., August 12 in room A354 in the Arkansas Union. The room consisted of computers for the participants and the ability to project the website onto a larger screen.

Who Fulfilled the Leadership Roles of the Focus Group?

Cassandra Gronendyke gathered the participants for this focus group. Sustainability provided food for the participants. Chad Woodard led the focus group and interviewed the participants. Kelly Bostick took notes of nonverbal communication of the participants during the focus groups. Kelly Bostick transcribed the responses from the participants. Chad Woodard and Kelly Bostick grouped the information into common themes and trends for the written report as well as published a report of the findings on WebFirst.
Appendix A
Google Search Console

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Queries</th>
<th>Clicks</th>
<th>Impressions</th>
<th>CTR</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Clicks</td>
<td>Impressions</td>
<td>CTR</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

The Google Search Console provides what search queries a person used to reach sustainability.uark.edu. A search query is a search entered in a search engine, such as Google, that leads the user to the search engine results page.

Definition of categories in the report:

**Clicks**: The number of people who visited sustainability.uark.edu based on a specific query.

**Impressions**: The number of people who saw sustainability.uark.edu as an option based on a search query in the Google search engine results page.

**CTR (Click-through Rate)**: The number of clicks divided by the number of impressions.

The top ten impressions are shown in this report and the only two search queries with clicks are also displayed. This report shows that users are largely not reaching this website through a search engine. Keyword research and improving search engine optimization would help this website reach a wider audience in search engines.
### Appendix B

**Google Analytics**

#### Pages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Page Description</th>
<th>Pageviews</th>
<th>Unique Pageviews</th>
<th>Avg. Time/View</th>
<th>Entrances</th>
<th>Bounce Rate</th>
<th>% Exit</th>
<th>Page Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. sustainability.uark.edu/index.php</td>
<td>23,402</td>
<td>18,000</td>
<td>00:01:30</td>
<td>6,003</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. sustainability.uark.edu/academics/minor/index.php</td>
<td>1,700</td>
<td>1,272</td>
<td>00:01:27</td>
<td>588</td>
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<td>17.03%</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. sustainability.uark.edu/academics/minor/courses.php</td>
<td>1,340</td>
<td>961</td>
<td>00:03:57</td>
<td>267</td>
<td>37.27%</td>
<td>10.93%</td>
<td>$0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. sustainability.uark.edu/academics/index.php</td>
<td>1,099</td>
<td>833</td>
<td>00:03:57</td>
<td>267</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. sustainability.uark.edu/academics/undergraduate-courses.php</td>
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<td>804</td>
<td>00:02:02</td>
<td>152</td>
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<td>27.13%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. sustainability.uark.edu/academics/graduate-certificate/index.php</td>
<td>941</td>
<td>818</td>
<td>00:01:44</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. sustainability.uark.edu/sustainability-council/index.php</td>
<td>730</td>
<td>516</td>
<td>00:01:39</td>
<td>165</td>
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<td>22.16%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. sustainability.uark.edu/about/index.php</td>
<td>610</td>
<td>518</td>
<td>00:03:44</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>48.94%</td>
<td>26.26%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. sustainability.uark.edu/about/index.php</td>
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<td>455</td>
<td>00:01:01</td>
<td>34</td>
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<td>15.22%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. sustainability.uark.edu/projects/index.php</td>
<td>569</td>
<td>452</td>
<td>00:03:34</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>41.13%</td>
<td>12.11%</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. sustainability.uark.edu/student-waste/index.php</td>
<td>597</td>
<td>470</td>
<td>00:03:24</td>
<td>111</td>
<td>48.65%</td>
<td>21.11%</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note:** This data was filtered with the following filter expression: sustainability.uark.edu
The majority of users for sustainability.uark.edu want information about the sustainability minor, so making this information more prominent is supported by user behavior and the responses from the participants.

The responses from the participants pertaining to the ‘About’ page do not reflect user behavior in analytics. Take note of the responses, but analytics do not suggest changing the placement of the ‘About’ page in the navigation of the website.