

Climate Change Commitment Task Force Charter

Purpose:

To advise the President on strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions generated by the campus community, to engage the campus community in efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to promote and support instruction and research on the impact of greenhouse gas emissions.

Background:

In August, President Hrabowski signed the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment (ACUPCC), with the long term goal of UMBC becoming “climate neutral” as it relates to greenhouse gas emissions. The ACUPCC acknowledges “a deep concern about the unprecedented scale and speed of global warming and its potential for large-scale, adverse health, social, economic and ecological effects”. The presidents who have signed the commitment on behalf of their institutions have agreed that “colleges and universities must exercise leadership in their communities and throughout society by modeling ways to minimize global warming emissions, and by providing the knowledge and the educated graduates to achieve climate neutrality. Campuses that address the climate challenge by reducing global warming emissions and by integrating sustainability into their curriculum will better serve their students and meet their social mandate to help create a thriving, ethical and civil society.”

Governor O’Malley signed an Executive Order last April that created a Statewide Climate Change Commission to advise the Governor and General Assembly on matters related to climate change. They are to (1) develop a plan of action to address the drivers and causes of climate change; (2) prepare for the likely consequences and impacts of climate change to Maryland; and (3) establish firm benchmarks and timetables for implementing the Plan of Action.

To provide advice and expertise on ways to achieve the Commitment goals and to effectively engage the entire campus community in this effort, President Hrabowski has formed the Campus Climate Change Commitment Task Force. In addition, the Functional Sustainability Team has been formed, with membership from all major UMBC departments with day-to-day responsibility for implementation of climate change initiatives. This document outlines the charge to the Campus Climate Commitment Task Force.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Provide oversight and guidance in meeting the requirements of the American College and University Presidents Climate Commitment, especially as follows:
 - a. Advise and oversee the completion of a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions by August 15, 2008, and updating the inventory on an annual basis thereafter.
 - b. By April 15, 2009, submit recommendations for an institutional Climate Neutrality Action Plan, including the following:

- i. An analysis of costs and contributions to achieving climate neutrality for each action recommended.
 - ii. A proposed timeline, including interim goals and milestones, for achieving climate neutrality.
 - iii. Recommendations on ways to make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experiences for students.
 - iv. Recommendations for expanding research on climate issues, sustainability, and greenhouse gas reduction.
 - v. A set of measures for tracking progress on goals and actions.
 - c. Consider and advise the President on specific interim actions and goals, as listed in item 2 of the Presidents Climate Commitment statement.
 - d. Support efforts to make the Climate Neutrality Action Plan, inventory, and periodic progress reports publicly available by providing them to the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) for posting and dissemination.
2. Establish mechanisms for regular communications to the campus community regarding efforts of the Task Force, and to engage the campus community in the goals and actions in the Climate Neutrality Plan.
3. Receive regular reports from and make recommendations to the Functional Sustainability Committee regarding implementation of the Climate Neutrality Action Plan.

Membership:

Co-Chair, Virginia McConnell, Professor, Economics
Co-Chair, Lynne C. Schaefer, Vice President for Administration and Finance
Robert Burchard, Professor Emeritus, Biological Science
Warren DeVries, Dean, College of Engineering and Information Technology
Michael Dick, Library, NEESS representative
James Donlan, Director, Facilities Management
Jeff Halvorson, Associate Director, JCET
Patricia La Noue, Director, Interdisciplinary Studies
Eleanor Lewis, Director, Institutional Communications
Dannielle Lipinski, SGA, Students for Environmental Awareness
Michelle Massey, GSA representative
Rob Neff, Asst. Professor, Geography and Environmental Science
Franc Nunoo-Quarcoo, Chair, Visual Arts
Sandy Parker, Chair, Geography and Environmental Science
Valerie Thomas, Asst. Vice President, Human Resources
Tim Topoleski, Professor, Mechanical Engineering
Beth Wells, Asst to the Provost, Professional staff representative
Moncie Wright, President, Campus Climate Initiative and UMBC Student

Length of Appointment:

These are two-year appointments.

Meeting Schedule:

Monthly meetings, December 2007 through April 2008, schedule to be determined.
Future meetings will be scheduled as needed.