

## Overview of the ACUPCC

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Thank you for your interest in the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC). With over 650 institutions, representing all 50 states and 5.4 million students (one-third of the total student population in the US), the ACUPCC is a high-visibility effort led by presidents and chancellors to address global climate disruption.

Signatories of the ACUPCC have agreed to create Climate Action Plans for accelerating research and educational efforts to equip society to re-stabilize the earth's climate, and reducing their campus greenhouse gas emissions. They have also agreed to publicly report their plans and subsequent progress reports and adaptations to the plan.

The following resources will be helpful in better understanding the specifics of the ACUPCC and why it is so important for schools to join this initiative:

- **Commitment Document** (a 2-page document stating the actions presidents and chancellors are agreeing to take: (1) create a Climate Action Plan within two years, (2) report publicly on progress made on that plan, and (3) complete two tangible actions while the plan is being developed) <http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/commitment.php>
- **Success Stories** (the 2007 and 2008 Annual Reports outline progress to date and highlight success stories told by presidents from a variety of ACUPCC institutions) [http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/reporting/annual\\_report.php](http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/reporting/annual_report.php)
- **Implementation Guide** (a 33-page 'handbook' for the ACUPCC, providing more detail on the specific obligations in the Commitment, explaining technical issues related to implementation, and outlining key policies) [http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/pdf/ACUPCC\\_IG\\_Final.pdf](http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/pdf/ACUPCC_IG_Final.pdf)
- **ACUPCC Implementation Progress Reports** (an online reporting system where ACUPCC institutions submit their institutional information, GHG inventories, Climate Action Plans, and ongoing progress updates) <http://acupcc.aashe.org>
- **Climate Action Planning Wiki** (a comprehensive, online 'how-to' guide on campus climate action planning where users can learn and share experiences and best-practices) <http://www.aashe.org/wiki/climate-planning-guide>
- **ACUPCC Implementer Newsletter** (a free, monthly email to stay up-to-date on the latest developments in the ACUPCC) Subscribe: <http://acupcc.aashe.org/newsletter.php>

The ACUPCC provides a framework for reducing greenhouse gas emissions that is both flexible and effective. Each school sets its own target date for achieving climate neutrality and agrees to develop an adaptive plan within two years that can be modified as circumstances change. In this way, each school ensures that their emissions-reduction actions are feasible, cost-effective, and beneficial to the institution over the long-term.

The ACUPCC offers a unique opportunity for higher education to lead by example, setting climate neutrality as the end-goal and role-modeling solutions for the rest of society. Using the campus as a learning lab, and taking actions to incorporate climate and sustainability issues into curriculum, ACUPCC institutions are delivering the education needed to equip graduates with the knowledge, values, and skills to enable the rest of society to follow suit. Doing so fits squarely into the education, research, and public service missions of higher education, and the urgency of the crisis requires this bold leadership now.

The *collective action* that the ACUPCC represents is necessary *in addition to* the great individual efforts that are happening on campuses, and is designed to complement, not replace existing or planned climate initiatives. The collective nature of the ACUPCC has led to exciting opportunities that would not have been possible if each school were working in isolation, including:

- **“Education for Climate Neutrality”**: a collaborative effort by signatories and sustainability experts to create a guidance document on strategies for fulfilling the academic aspects of the ACUPCC. [http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/solutions\\_academics.php](http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/solutions_academics.php)
- **“Leading Profound Change”**: a resource from the ACUPCC Steering Committee for presidents on their role in creating the big-picture strategies for fulfilling the ACUPCC. [http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/leading\\_profound\\_change.php](http://www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/leading_profound_change.php)
- **“ACUPCC Carbon Offset Protocol”**: a collaborative effort by signatories and offset experts to establish principles and guidelines for if, how, and when to invest in high-quality offsets. <http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/offsetprotocol.php>
- **Clinton Climate Initiative**: a partnership to accelerate energy efficiency through performance contracting and provide ACUPCC institutions with advisory services, a how-to toolkit on Energy Performance Contracting, best practices for working with energy service companies, and price discounts on a variety of energy efficiency and renewable energy technologies. [http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/solutions\\_cci.htm](http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/solutions_cci.htm)
- **US Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement**: a partnership under development to support mayors and college and university presidents in working together to meet their respective commitments, tackle tough infrastructure challenges, and improve town/gown relationships. <http://www.usmayors.org/climateprotection/>

Having your institution’s participation would be a great boost to the initiative and would enhance the effort to engage a large number of presidents. Signatories have found the ACUPCC to be a great vehicle to build a more vibrant campus community with a sense of shared purpose across their institutions. They also believe that sustainability leadership will be increasingly important in attracting the best and brightest students, faculty and staff.

By making this commitment you readily tap and share expertise with other institutions and contribute to a powerful collective effort that is prompting the markets, policy makers, and other sectors to accelerate progress towards a climate neutral, sustainable future.

Thank you for your interest and leadership in addressing this critical challenge. If you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact the supporting organizations at [ACUPCC@secondnature.org](mailto:ACUPCC@secondnature.org). Please join the growing ACUPCC network on behalf of your institution soon!