American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment

Kathy Schatzberg Challenge Instructions

Four Simple Steps

Step One: Enlist Help from Your Team
- Engage help from your assistant, ACUPCC liaison, and/or communications department

Step Two: Identify Your Targets
- Identify five or more colleagues to reach out to
- Check your colleagues names against the ACUPCC signatory list* to make sure they are not already signatories
- Check the list of institutions that have not joined* to get inspired on others you can reach out to
- Work with your team to fill out KS Challenge Tracking Sheet* and send it back to Georges Dyer at gdyer@secondnature.org

Step Three: Send the Cover Letter and Email
- Send colleagues personalized letters on your letterhead using our template as a guide. Please feel free to add examples of what you are doing and why you signed on.
- Mark your calendar seven days out to send follow up email
- Seven days later send colleagues personalized emails using our template as a guide

Step Four: Call Your Targets
- Call colleagues to confirm receipt and discuss participation the day after you send the email
- If they have further questions, direct them to Tony Cortese, President of Second Nature, acortese@secondnature.org, 617-224-1611

*All resources can be found at www.presidentsclimatecommitment.org/challenge

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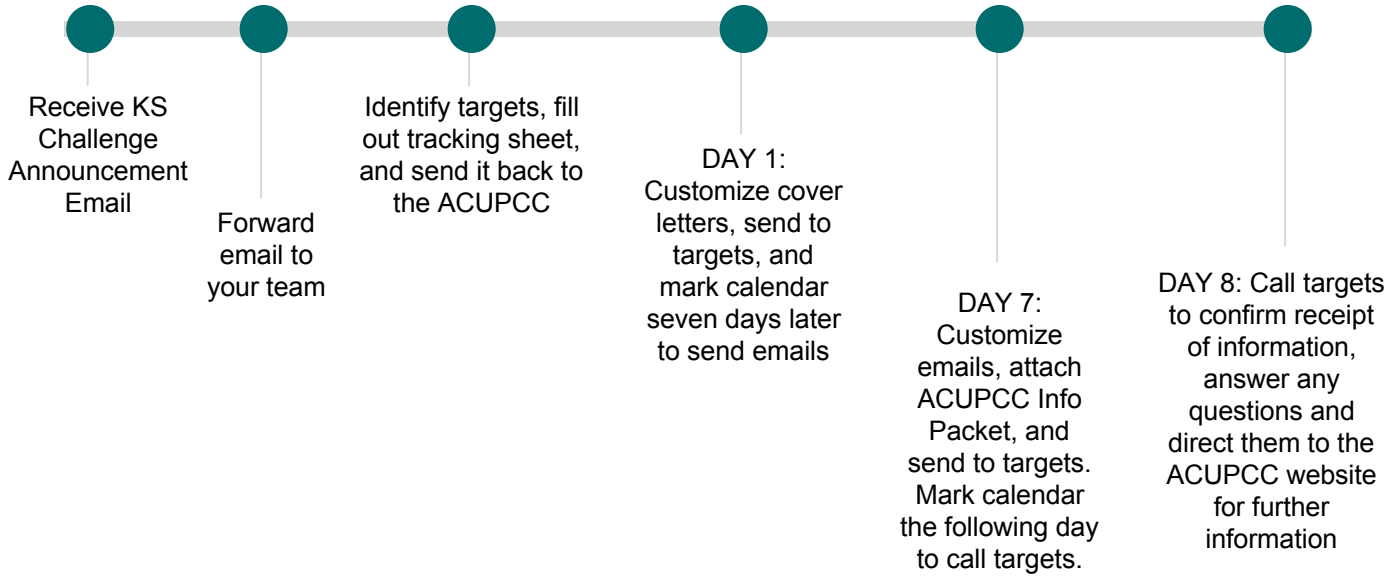
Kathy Schatzberg Challenge Timeline



Frequently Asked Questions

Q: Why "climate neutrality" and why act now?

A: Re-stabilization of earth's climate is the defining challenge of the 21st century. The unprecedented scale and speed of global warming and its potential for large-scale, adverse health, social, economic and ecological effects threatens the viability of civilization**.** The scientific consensus is that society must reduce the global emission of greenhouse gases by *at least* 80% by mid-century at the latest, in order to avert the worst impacts of global warming and to reestablish the more stable climatic conditions that have made human progress over the last 10,000 years possible. Without preventing the worst aspects of climate disruption, we cannot hope to deal with the other social, health and economic challenges that society is facing and will face in the future.

The signatories recognize achieving climate neutrality will be very hard, but are responding to the data – much of which comes from independent scientists within higher ed – in a responsible way. The earth does not recognize how hard it is for humans to change. It will respond to the physical changes caused by humans on its own schedule and in its own ways. It doesn't have the cognitive ability to say that it must wait for humans to figure out how they can change to preserve themselves and their way of life.

Q: What exactly are presidents and chancellors committing to?

A: Presidents signing the Commitment are pledging to eliminate their campuses' greenhouse gas emissions in a reasonable period of time as determined by each institution. This involves:

- Setting up a mechanism (committee, task force, office, etc.) within 2 months to guide the process.
- Completing an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions within 1 year, from the subsequent of the three annual start-dates: September 15, January 15, or May 15.
- Creating and implementing a climate neutral plan (that includes a target date and interim milestones for achieving campus climate neutrality) within 2 years.
- Taking 2 of 7 immediate steps specified in the commitment to reduce greenhouse gas emissions while the more comprehensive plan is being developed.
- Integrating sustainability into the curriculum and making it part of the educational experience.
- Making the action plan, inventory and periodic progress reports publicly available.

Read the Commitment at http://presidentsclimatecommitment.org/html/commitment.php

Q: How much will this cost?

A: There is no financial obligation associated with signing the ACUPCC. The costs for achieving climate neutrality will vary greatly depending on the approach the institution chooses to take. Many actions that move an institution towards climate neutrality can have attractive returns on investment, which can then be re-invested in further actions towards neutrality, ensuring that the process is financially beneficial in both the short and long term. Some important factors to consider:

- With volatile and increasing prices for fossil fuels, not taking a proactive approach to conservation, efficiency and alternative energy is a financial risk. Having a long-term strategic plan will avoid significant future costs
- Efforts to reduce GHG emissions should be viewed as investments, not costs, as they improve quality of life and the educational experience, and avoid long-term costs
- With established international carbon markets, the development of regional GHG markets in the US, and plenty of pending legislation at the federal level, it is highly likely that there will be a price on carbon soon – again, planning now will reduce financial risk. This also represents an financial opportunity for schools that are ahead of the curve and well positioned as these markets emerge
- Creating a long-term plan that is right for your campus and situation is the best way to ensure that these efforts are as cost-effective as possible. Without the kind of comprehensive planning that brings in perspectives from all parts of campus (operations, academic, student life, etc.) – which only the president can call for – there is the risk that *ad hoc* efforts are more costly and time consuming, can lead the school down the wrong path, and generally be less effective

Q: Why should we commit to 'climate neutrality' and just buy offsets? Offsets don't work and are a waste of money.

A: The ACUPCC does not necessarily require the purchase of offsets. Schools are committing to making a plan to reduce, and eventually eliminate or 'neutralize', GHG emissions. It may be very difficult to imagine how to do this without purchasing offsets, particularly for certain emissions sources, such as air travel. However, it is possible through teleconferencing, rail and road travel to greatly reduce if not eliminate air travel, and there are already efforts underway to develop non-carbon airplane fuels. These developments can be factored into long-term plans, and moreover, many universities can actually drive the research and development of these types of technologies as part of their plan. If offsets are part of the plan, they should be viewed as a last resort after all on-campus reductions that are feasible at the time have been made.

Q: Isn't a "one-size-fits-all" approach to this challenge misguided given the diversity of institutions and complexity of the problem?

A: The structure of the ACUPCC is specifically designed to avoid a one-size-fits-all approach, allowing each school to make a plan that is feasible, cost effective, and right for their given circumstances. Working within a common framework to develop these unique plans will provide the benefits of benchmarking, developing common standards, sharing best practices, avoiding repeating costly mistakes, and creating resources that can be useful in a variety of situations.

Q: Isn't this list of "tangible actions" far too burdensome and prescriptive?

A: The "tangible actions" aspect of the commitment is intended to ensure that there is some early action on campuses that sign, particularly those that have not done much to date on sustainability. They were developed with the great diversity of schools in mind and with the belief that at least two would be feasible and appropriate on any campus. Remember you are only required to complete at least ***two*** of the seven options. Most campuses should be able to identify two options from that list that feasible and beneficial in the short term – if they haven't completed two of them already.

Q: How can I sign this institutional commitment without knowing how, *or if*, we'll be able to reach climate neutrality? What are the legal and financial implications of this obligation?

A: The ACUPCC calls for creating a long-term plan within two years and reporting annually on progress. Of course, signatories make this commitment in good faith that every effort will be made to carry out that plan on schedule, but there are no legal or financial obligations to do so. The accountability for the ACUPCC comes through the public reporting on progress. If schools get off schedule, it is expected that their students, alumni, and community will encourage them to get back on track. Most schools will likely develop plans with many incremental steps and strategies for revision of the plan over the 20-40 year time period they cover. In the long-run, if for whatever reason, a school misses its target date or adjusts its plan, it is unlikely that anyone will fault the school for trying. They may however, if they don't try.

By setting out an inspirational, meaningful goal, history shows that devoted communities can achieve incredible feats. When JFK announced the challenge of putting a man on the moon before the 60s were done – it seemed impossible and know one know how it would be done – but it was that vision and leadership, that enabled people to align efforts around a common cause and pull it off.

Q: We'll be better off going it alone – our institution just doesn't join these types of initiatives. What do we have to gain?

A: First, it's important to recognize the power of a high-profile, collective action of this kind. The ACUPCC is sending strong signals to other sectors of society, driving technology and service providers to develop new offerings because they can more clearly see the size of the market. The ACUPCC is a powerful show of leadership by example, demonstrating to businesses, governments, and communities that this is an important issue that can be effectively addressed with strong leadership.

Signatories also benefit from being part of a learning community, where they can share best-practices, resources and success stories, and have a meaningful voice in improving standards and protocols in the space. The fact that over 400 schools have signed on is driving new technologies and tools, enabling economies of scale, and allowing schools to address this challenge with less capital up front. This challenge is too large and complex for any one campus to solve on its own – the important individual efforts must be complemented and enhanced through collective action.

Q: How does this effort dovetail with ongoing efforts to address climate disruption?

A: Signing the ACUPCC is not intended to be an alternative to any current plans for greenhouse gas reductions on a campus. The ACUPCC creates a larger context for a campus's current plans – one that acknowledges what science tells us - that we must neutralize greenhouse gas emissions by mid century. All current and planned initiatives at your institution are important elements of the comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality and will enhance the ability of the institutions achieve the ultimate goal.

Q: What is climate neutrality?

A: For purposes of the ACUPCC, climate neutrality is defined as having no net greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, to be achieved by eliminating GHG emissions, or by minimizing GHG emissions as much as possible, and using carbon offsets or other measures to mitigate the remaining emissions.

Q: What emissions sources are included, and how are they calculated?

A: At a minimum, participating campuses should include in their inventories emissions produced through on-site combustion of fossil fuels (known as "Scope 1 emissions"); electricity consumption ("Scope 2"); student, faculty, and staff commuting; and institution-funded air travel ("Scope 3"). As the inventory methodology develops and to

the extent practical, participating institutions should also endeavor to evaluate embodied emissions in purchased goods and services, including food.

Q: What types of carbon offsets count toward achieving climate neutrality?

A: Generally speaking, there are two categories of offsets: those generated from projects that reduce or avoid GHG emissions at another site, and those from projects that remove or *sequester* carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. While some technical means of removing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere are under development, at the moment, the only feasible way to do so is to preserve and enhanced the ability of natural systems (e.g. soils, trees, and plants) to do so. Under the ACUPCC, offsets from both categories count toward achieving climate neutrality.

Since there is currently no established certification system for carbon offsets, the program has not adopted any specifications for what type of offsets count. As certification systems for offsets and other greenhouse gas products develop, we will consider the adoption of standards for offsets.

Q: Does carbon sequestration on campus-owned land count toward achieving carbon neutrality?

A: Institutions are generally discouraged from counting sequestration by institution-owned land as an emissions reduction unless they clearly meet "additionality" requirements – that the offset would *not* have occurred in the absence of the institution's action. In the case of forest sequestration, it is quite possible that the sequestration would have happened even if the institution didn't exist. Likewise, emissions produced from natural features on campuses (e.g., methane emissions from wetlands) should also be excluded.

Q: How was the ACUPCC formed?

A: After program and planning sessions among a group of college and university presidents and their representatives at the AASHE conference in October 2006 at Arizona State University, 12 presidents agreed to become Founding Members of the Leadership Circle and launch the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment. In early December 2006, these presidents sent a letter to nearly 400 of their peers inviting them to join the initiative.
By March 31, 2007, 152 presidents and chancellors representing the spectrum of higher education had become charter signatories of the ACUPCC. 95 of them joined the Leadership Circle, agreeing to promote the initiative among their peers, serve as representatives to the press, and participate if possible in the public launch of the Presidents Climate Commitment in June. In late March, the expanded Leadership Circle

sent a packet of information to their peers at over 3,500 institutions, asking them to sign the Commitment.

Q: Who are the co-organizers?

A: Coordination and support for the American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment has been provided by AASHE, ecoAmerica and Second Nature. These three non-profit organizations collectively provide the infrastructure for the initiative, including the website, outreach, tracking and financial management.

Contact:

- Tony Cortese, President of Second Nature, acortese@secondnature.org
- Judy Walston, Acting Executive Director of AASHE, judy@aashe.org
- Lee Bodner, Executive Director of ecoAmerica, lee@ecoamerica.net