

Summary of Presidential Climate Change Agreements: ACUPCC and Talloires Declaration

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Overview of the Agreements

The ACUPCC is the American College & University Presidents' Climate Commitment. It is a pledge made by university presidents to act as leaders in the response to climate change. It was initiated in 2006 by twelve university presidents; as of fall 2010, 673 presidents have signed it. All the institutions in the Florida State University System are signatories except four: UNF, University of West Florida, Florida State University and Florida Agricultural and Mechanical University. All the institutions in the group of UNF's peer aspirants are signatories except two: Miami University-Oxford, and University of North Carolina-Wilmington.

The Talloires Declaration is an international agreement of university presidents to lead a global effort toward sustainable development. This agreement includes climate change, but it also encompasses several other areas such as pollution, forest depletion, and biodiversity. It was first written in 1990 at a conference on the role of university campuses in environmental management and sustainable development in Talloires, France, and is administered by a U.S.-based organization called the Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF). Within a year of its writing, 125 institutions had signed it. As of fall 2010, it has been signed by 421 university presidents around the world. The only SUS institution to have signed is the University of Florida. Two peer aspirants are also signatories: Appalachian State University and James Madison University.

Benefits of Signing

The benefits of signing these agreements arise from both specific and intangible gains. The climate action plans that accompany these agreements generate cost savings and strategic investment in new technologies. Recruitment of students is demonstrably higher at institutions that are committed to green initiatives. From a broader perspective, a university president who signs these agreements takes a strong leadership role in expressing the importance of sustainability to and for the campus community. A signatory campus will join the ranks of many peers, peer aspirants, and sister campuses in its state university system.

Commitments Entailed by Signing

The commitments entailed by signing these agreements are essentially actions conducted by campus personnel. No cost or membership is required to sign these agreements.

The ACUPCC document describes a set of steps and tangible actions to pursue climate neutrality for the campus. Climate neutrality is defined as the production of zero net greenhouse gas

emissions. These steps are listed below, along with any actions UNF has taken or planned to implement those steps.

ACUPCC Actions	UNF Progress
<p>Within two months of signing, create institutional structures to guide the development and implementation of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality.</p>	<p>Completed - UNF has already created the Campus Sustainability Committee, with representation from faculty, staff and students. Physical Facilities and Facilities Planning are represented. One mission of the Committee is development of the climate action plan.</p>
<p>Within one year of signing this document, complete a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions and update the inventory every other year thereafter.</p>	<p>Completed - The UNF Environmental Center has completed the greenhouse gas emissions inventory, and it will be released in October 2010. The Center will take responsibility for the regular inventory updates.</p>
<p>Within two years of signing, develop an institutional action plan for becoming climate neutral, including</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A target date for achieving climate neutrality. Interim targets for goals and actions that will lead to climate neutrality. 	<p>The Campus Sustainability Committee will work on the climate action plan once the inventory is final. This plan will contain interim and final targets.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Actions to make climate neutrality and sustainability part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students 	<p>Discussions on making sustainability part of the educational experience are ongoing and will be included in the Faculty Forum on Teaching and Research on the Environment in October 2010.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Actions to expand research or other efforts necessary to achieve climate neutrality. 	<p>The Center and the Committee will pursue actions to expand research or other actions.</p>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. Mechanisms for tracking progress on goals and actions. 	<p>The Center and the Committee will create mechanisms for tracking progress.</p>
<p>Initiate two or more tangible actions, from a list provided, to reduce greenhouse gases while the more comprehensive plan is being developed.</p>	<p>One of two completed - UNF has already performed one of the two required actions: it has participated in the Waste Minimization Component of the national RecycleMania competition and has adopted 3 or more associated measures to reduce waste. Second action underway – The Center is developing methods to encourage use and provide access to public transportation for all faculty, staff, students, and visitors. A student commuting study has been completed, and a</p>

	survey of commuting preferences has received funding support to start in Fall 2010.
Make the action plan, inventory, and periodic progress reports publicly available through AASHE.	UNF is a member of AASHE and its STARS program, a reporting system for inventories and progress reports.

The ACUPCC’s approach is to support campuses in their journey toward climate neutrality. Their staff noted that it is acceptable not to know exactly how climate neutrality, or zero net carbon emissions, will be achieved. The campus can simply describe its journey in that direction, and still be a member in good standing of the ACUPCC community.

Regarding the requirement of including sustainability in the curriculum for all students, ACUPCC provides freedom for each campus to determine how best to implement this item. The commitment contains no mandated endpoint or timeline. Further detail is provided in the companion document “Academic and Curricular Components of the Presidential Sustainability Commitments Under Consideration at UNF.”

Finally, the periodic reports consist of an ongoing two-year cycle in which an inventory is submitted in the first year, followed by a progress report the second year. Goals set in early years may be revised. The Environmental Center is assuming responsibility for these reports.

The Talloires Declaration includes a Ten Point Action Plan, which is attached, but does not have a specific set of responsibilities. It is intended to be general in nature, so that each campus is free to interpret each of the actions and implement changes that are suitable to its unique circumstances.

Consequences of Not Meeting Commitments

Neither of these agreements has any effect on or implications for accreditation of the university, sound business practices, or any other legal or financial matter.

ACUPCC staff emphasized that they place priority on the journey toward neutrality, and not on compliance or enforcement measures. They wish to support participating campuses, not penalize them. The ACUPCC requires regular submission of an inventory and a progress report. If an institution does not submit three consecutive reports, it is placed on a list of Inactive Institutions and removed from the website and reporting system.

The Talloires agreement is nonbinding and voluntary. Their stance is supportive and encouraging of campuses. They do not have a mechanism for enforcement or sanction. In a symbolic sense, presidents are accountable for moving the campus in the general direction described by the Talloires agreement.



American College & University Presidents Climate Commitment

We, the undersigned presidents and chancellors of colleges and universities, are deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of global warming and its potential for large-scale, adverse health, social, economic and ecological effects. We recognize the scientific consensus that global warming is real and is largely being caused by humans. We further recognize the need to reduce the global emission of greenhouse gases by 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.

While we understand that there might be short-term challenges associated with this effort, we believe that there will be great short-, medium-, and long-term economic, health, social and environmental benefits, including achieving energy independence for the U.S. as quickly as possible.

We believe 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. These colleges and universities will be providing students with the knowledge and skills needed to address the critical, systemic challenges faced by the world in this new century and enable them to benefit from the economic opportunities that will arise as a result of solutions they develop.

We further believe that colleges and universities that exert leadership in addressing climate change will stabilize and reduce their long-term energy costs, attract excellent students and faculty, attract new sources of funding, and increase the support of alumni and local communities.

Accordingly, we commit our institutions to taking the following steps in pursuit of climate neutrality:

1. Initiate the development of a comprehensive plan to achieve climate neutrality as soon as possible.
 - a. Within two months of signing this document, create institutional structures to guide the development and implementation of the plan.
 - b. Within one year of signing this document, complete a comprehensive inventory of all greenhouse gas emissions (including emissions from electricity, heating, commuting, and air travel) and update the inventory every other year thereafter.
 - c. Within two years of signing this document, develop an institutional action plan for becoming climate neutral, which will include:
 - i. A target date for achieving climate neutrality as soon as possible.
 - ii. Interim targets for goals and actions that will lead to climate neutrality.
 - iii. Actions to make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students.
 - iv. Actions to expand research or other efforts necessary to achieve climate neutrality.
 - v. Mechanisms for tracking progress on goals and actions.

(continued...)

2. Initiate two or more of the following tangible actions to reduce greenhouse gases while the more comprehensive plan is being developed.
 - a. Establish a policy that all new campus construction will be built to at least the U.S. Green Building Council's LEED Silver standard or equivalent.
 - b. Adopt an energy-efficient appliance purchasing policy requiring purchase of ENERGY STAR certified products in all areas for which such ratings exist.
 - c. Establish a policy of offsetting all greenhouse gas emissions generated by air travel paid for by our institution.
 - d. Encourage use of and provide access to public transportation for all faculty, staff, students and visitors at our institution.
 - e. Within one year of signing this document, begin purchasing or producing at least 15% of our institution's electricity consumption from renewable sources.
 - f. Establish a policy or a committee that supports climate and sustainability shareholder proposals at companies where our institution's endowment is invested.
 - g. Participate in the Waste Minimization component of the national RecycleMania competition, and adopt 3 or more associated measures to reduce waste.
3. Make the 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.

In recognition of the need to build support for this effort among college and university administrations across America, we will encourage other presidents to join this effort and become signatories to this commitment.

Signed,

President/ Chancellor Signature

President/ Chancellor Name

College or University

Date

Please send the signed commitment document to:

Presidents' Climate Commitment
c/o Second Nature
18 Tremont St., Suite 1120
Boston, MA 02108

or fax to: 320-451-1612
or scan & email to: ACUPCC@secondnature.org

Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future

The Talloires Declaration 10 Point Action Plan

We, the presidents, rectors, and vice chancellors of universities from all regions of the world are deeply concerned about the unprecedented scale and speed of environmental pollution and degradation, and the depletion of natural resources.

Local, regional, and global air and water pollution; accumulation and distribution of toxic wastes; destruction and depletion of forests, soil, and water; depletion of the ozone layer and emission of “green house” gases threaten the survival of humans and thousands of other living species, the integrity of the earth and its biodiversity, the security of nations, and the heritage of future generations. These environmental changes are caused by inequitable and unsustainable production and consumption patterns that aggravate poverty in many regions of the world.

We believe that urgent actions are needed to address these fundamental problems and reverse the trends. Stabilization of human population, adoption of environmentally sound industrial and agricultural technologies, reforestation, and ecological restoration are crucial elements in creating an equitable and sustainable future for all humankind in harmony with nature.

Universities have a major role in the education, research, policy formation, and information exchange necessary to make these goals possible. Thus, university leaders must initiate and support mobilization of internal and external resources so that their institutions respond to this urgent challenge.

We, therefore, agree to take the following actions:

1) Increase Awareness of Environmentally Sustainable Development

Use every opportunity to raise public, government, industry, foundation, and university awareness by openly addressing the urgent need to move toward an environmentally sustainable future.

2) Create an Institutional Culture of Sustainability

Encourage all universities to engage in education, research, policy formation, and information exchange on population, environment, and development to move toward global sustainability.

3) Educate for Environmentally Responsible Citizenship

Establish programs to produce expertise in environmental management, sustainable economic development, population, and related fields to ensure that all university graduates are environmentally literate and have the awareness and understanding to be ecologically responsible citizens.

4) Foster Environmental Literacy For All

Create programs to develop the capability of university faculty to teach environmental literacy to all undergraduate, graduate, and professional students.

5) Practice Institutional Ecology

Set an example of environmental responsibility by establishing institutional ecology policies and practices of resource conservation, recycling, waste reduction, and environmentally sound operations.

6) Involve All Stakeholders

Encourage involvement of government, foundations, and industry in supporting interdisciplinary research, education, policy formation, and information exchange in environmentally sustainable development. Expand work with community and nongovernmental organizations to assist in finding solutions to environmental problems.

7) Collaborate for Interdisciplinary Approaches

Convene university faculty and administrators with environmental practitioners to develop interdisciplinary approaches to curricula, research initiatives, operations, and outreach activities that support an environmentally sustainable future.

8) Enhance Capacity of Primary and Secondary Schools

Establish partnerships with primary and secondary schools to help develop the capacity for interdisciplinary teaching about population, environment, and sustainable development.

9) Broaden Service and Outreach Nationally and Internationally

Work with national and international organizations to promote a worldwide university effort toward a sustainable future.

10) Maintain the Movement

Establish a Secretariat and a steering committee to continue this momentum, and to inform and support each other's efforts in carrying out this declaration.



ULSF

Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future

**HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTION
SIGNATORY FORM**

As an institution of higher education concerned about the state of the world environment and the advancement of sustainable development, we shall strive to promote actions that will achieve a sustainable future. We endorse the Talloires Declaration and agree to support environmental citizenship at all levels including senior managers, administrators, faculty, staff, and students. Together we shall endeavor to advance global environmental literacy and sustainable development by implementing the ten-point action plan of the Talloires Declaration.

**Talloires Declaration Signatory
Chancellor/President/Rector/Provost**
(please type or print)

_____	_____
Name	Title

Institution	
_____	_____
Signature	Date

Mailing Address: _____

City: _____ State/Province: _____ Postal Code: _____

Country: _____ E-Mail: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____

[Please send signed copy to ULSF at 45 Forty Acres Dr., Wayland, MA 01778, USA]

Academic and Curricular Components of the Presidential Sustainability Agreements Under Consideration at UNF

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This document describes the academic and curricular aspects of two presidential sustainability agreements under consideration for signature by President John Delaney. These agreements are entitled the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) and the Talloires Declaration. Further details on the agreements are found in a companion summary document. The Talloires Declaration contains no specific actions to be conducted at UNF.

The focus of this item is the ACUPCC statement that signatory institutions should include sustainability in their educational offering. The purpose of this document is to explain that statement, provide context, and initiate a dialogue on faculty opinion regarding this component of the agreement.

Details of the Commitment

The ACUPCC language describing the curricular component follows:

“Within two years of signing this document, develop an institutional action plan for becoming climate neutral, which will include...[a]ctions to make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students.”

The ACUPCC contains no mandated endpoint or timeline for these actions. They have no enforcement mechanism. Their only form of sanction is placement on an “Inactive Signatories” list. This placement results from an institution’s failure to submit regular reports, not from failing to reach any specified goal for curriculum or other aspects. Reporting will be carried out by the UNF Environmental Center.

Context from ACUPCC

ACUPCC has created a guidance document to address these matters; an excerpt is included with this document. Their approach is that each institution may decide how to implement this action, depending on its own needs and interests. Their stance is to support campuses on a journey toward increased awareness and practice of sustainability, not to create mandates for required sustainability courses or other curricular changes. So a willingness to pursue this aim at our own pace is the true commitment made here by UNF faculty, administration, students, and staff.

Implementation

Some activities described in the academic area are already underway at UNF. The ACUPCC provides a sample model of student experiences in sustainability that begins with student involvement in greening the campus, and moves on to course or programmatic offerings in sustainability. Student involvement in greening the campus has been happening for the past several years, through student club activities, the UNF Environmental Center, and volunteer opportunities. This commitment needs to be fulfilled within two years of signing the agreement, and it has essentially been completed.

Further dialogue on this subject is ongoing. This topic will be discussed at the Faculty Forum on Teaching and Research on the Environment (FFTRE) on Thursday, October 28, 2010.

Progressive enhancements of sustainability education offerings will be fostered by the UNF Environmental Center; such activities are part of the Center’s mission. Its seed grant program may be used to develop sustainability experiences for students. Center faculty and staff are seeking funding support for sustainability education for all students.

Sample Goal for UNF

The ACUPCC has no required course or offering. A sample of what UNF might offer in a 5-10 year timeframe might include the following palette of activities:

- student extracurricular activities in clubs and events related to sustainability
- a section of freshman orientation focusing on sustainability
- integration of sustainability topics into existing courses
- electives in sustainability topics in all interested colleges

Further discussion of faculty interests and goals for sustainability/environmental education will take place at FFTRE and into the future, facilitated by the Environmental Center.

Fulfilling the Educational Component of the Commitment

What is the scope of the Commitment?

Because there are no easy or commonly agreed-upon measures of what it means to “*make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students,*” each school will make its own determination of how to fulfill this commitment. Participating institutions will develop their own creative and unique approaches, in a manner that fits their own context and teachable perspective. They will create a means of reviewing progress and expanding their reach over time, and through the public reporting process and other networking avenues, they will share their strategies with other signatories so that all of the institutions will be able to meet the ultimate goal of producing graduates with the knowledge and skills to help all of society re-stabilize the earth’s climate and achieve sustainability over several generations.

What does “for all students” mean?

The phrase “for all students” signifies the importance the ACUPCC places on the unique role of higher education in training future professionals, leaders, and citizens in all disciplines.

Introducing some students to the concepts and practices of sustainability through an elective course in the topic or by offering a major/minor in sustainability can be useful and provide an important educational experience for those students. However, because addressing society’s great sustainability challenges will require skills represented by a wide variety of professions, as well as sustainable behaviors by individual citizens, sustainability specialists are necessary but they will not be sufficient. The ACUPCC signatories have committed to finding creative ways to introduce all students to these concepts and practices, through traditional and non-traditional education offerings, and by creating implicit and explicit learning opportunities. While participation in the ACUPCC does not require a major re-orientation of a school’s academic programs, some institutions are choosing to take this path because they believe it to be necessary to create a better society.

The pace and scope of this work will be different among institutions. No particular sequence of steps is the right progression, and there are many possible entry points. For example, a college or university that is in the early stages of integrating sustainability and climate neutrality into educational experiences may choose to follow the path outlined in Figure 1 *while continuously assessing progress and building the capacity* to move along the continuum:



Figure 1. One of the many possible progressions over time toward full-integrated education for sustainability.

How should this section of the climate action plan be organized and submitted?

The Curriculum and Other Educational Experiences section of the climate action plan will be highly institution-specific and should take into account the institution's particular strengths. It should start by describing the institution's current educational offerings (both curricular and co-curricular) related to climate change and sustainability. It should then set out planned actions to make climate neutrality and sustainability a part of the curriculum and other educational experience for all students.

This section of the plan should also explain how the implementation of the ACUPCC will be integrated into the institution's educational efforts (e.g., by having students or classes perform the campus GHG inventory), as well as how the entire campus community including alumni will be made aware of the institution's participation in and progress toward implementing the ACUPCC.