A. S. Connection

Connecting Academic Staff to Useful Information

Fall 2021

UWM DEVELOPS CLIMATE ACTION AND RESILIENCY PLAN

"Climate change poses a risk to our natural environment, infrastructure, financial system and human capital. The goal of this plan is to assess our strengths on campus and within the region, as well as our vulnerabilities as they relate to climate resiliency. The plan will delineate carbon mitigation strategies, manage risks through resilience actions, and position UWM to proactively address a changing climate in Southeastern Wisconsin. By engaging an informed advisory team at UWM and within the region, the intent is to best determine and rank our risks and plan according to our strengths. The plan will set our priorities, targets, and alternative strategies according to our mission and resources."
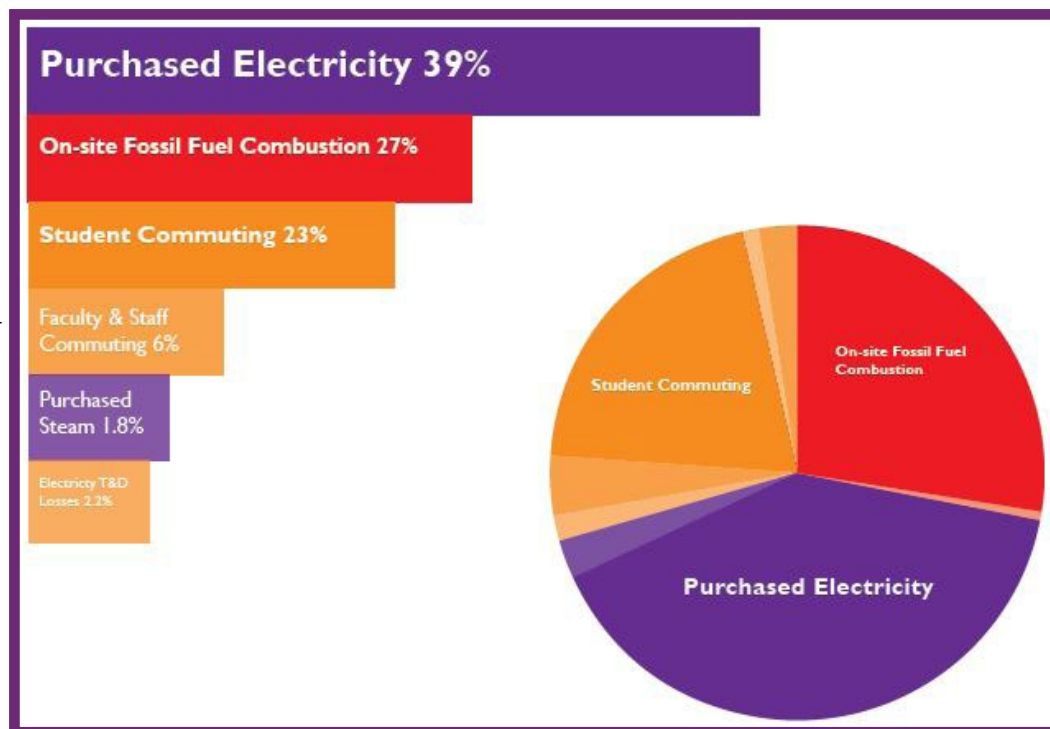
- UWM Project Charter

UWM is ramping up efforts to address climate change and build resilience in the face of growing climate threats. Throughout spring 2021, the UWM Office of Sustainability organized a series of virtual working groups to discuss climate change mitigation and adaptation as it relates to operations, curriculum and research, and community partnerships. Nearly ninety UWM community members participated in sessions to identify potential strategies to limit campus emissions, reduce vulnerabilities and reinforce strengths for climate action and resiliency.

Climate action can take the form of mitigation efforts, which involves reducing emissions to minimize future impacts of climate change. Mitigation actions will be weighed by the time frame to implement them, approximate cost, maintenance requirements, and the level of emission reduction they can achieve. Actions can also focus on adaptation, or efforts to craft responses to any climate impacts that have become unavoidable.

Equity is a central focus of UWM's climate action and resiliency planning, recognizing that climate change often exacerbates existing disparities in society. The plan under development at UWM will align with other local efforts (such as MMSD's 2019 Resilience Plan for the Greater Milwaukee Metropolitan Area and the City of Milwaukee's Climate and Equity Plan) which attempt to address not only the environmental impacts of climate change, but the social and economic implications as well. The plan will identify challenges posed by our changing climate to housing, food security, health and other issues

Purchased Electricity 39%

On-site Fossil Fuel Combustion 27%

Student Commuting 23%

Faculty & Staff Commuting 6%

Purchased Steam 1.8%

Electricity T&D Losses 2.2%

that could negatively impact students, faculty and staff as well as the broader Milwaukee community.

For example, climate change can have multiple impacts on public health including reduced access to clean drinking water due to flooding and contamination, heat stress, vector-borne diseases and illnesses resulting from exposure to smog. Working groups identified a number of ways UWM could play a role in addressing these needs, including research on climate-related health issues or on relevant policy and infrastructure changes, educational campus and outreach programs on nutrition and preventative health, and partnerships with groups that specialize in disaster response.

The plan is intended to be comprehensive and participatory, engaging as many stakeholders on and off campus as possible. Once completed, the plan will outline the following path forward:

- Target date for achieving carbon neutrality as soon as possible (Carbon neutrality means no net greenhouse gas emissions (GMG) achieved by either: eliminating net GHG emissions, or minimizing GHG emissions as much as possible and using carbon offsets or other measures to mitigate the remaining emissions)

- Interim target dates for meeting milestones that will lead to carbon neutrality and increasing resilience

- Mechanisms and indicators for tracking progress

- Actions to make carbon neutrality and resilience a part of the curriculum and other educational experiences for all students

- Actions to expand research in carbon neutrality and resilience

Next Steps

In fall 2021, the Office of Sustainability will engage governance groups and students to inform the next phase of the planning and implementation process. Working groups will continue to develop strategies in the areas of curriculum, research, outreach and facilities.

The success of this effort will depend on the active participation and creative ideas from individuals and groups across campus. If you are interested in getting involved, please contact John Gardner at gardne37@ uwm.edu or Kate Nelson at knelson6@uwm.edu.

A Look Back AT UW-MILWAUKEE

15 YEARS AGO - 2006
UWM celebrated its 50th anniversary during the 2006-2007 academic year, celebrating the first Founders Day on September 25. A new addition to the Klotsche Center opened in January including the fitness center, gym, and track. The university began a major fundraising campaign, securing a $10 million gift from Sheldon Lubar that led to renaming the School of Business. Smoking was banned in the Student Union in April, and in December the university was approved to create a school of public health.

30 YEARS AGO - 1991
The year began with the jarring news of war in Iraq; a February tally noted 128 student reservists called to active duty including the Student Association VP. There were peace rallies and teach-ins in the spring, and in the fall a boost to tuition reimbursement for National Guard reservists. The Schools of Business and Architecture and Urban Planning gained approval and funding for new buildings. The AIDS Memorial Quilt was exhibited at the Student Union in November.

Reflections WITH TWYLA KAWPEL MCGHEE

When asked 'who was someone you directly worked with who influenced your college career?' the answer for many UWM alumni is Twyla Kawpel McGhee, Director of Multicultural Relations in the Department of Global Inclusion and Engagement. That may be her title today, but over the years, McGhee has worn several hats at UWM, always in the realm of helping students.

Before McGhee was employed at UWM, she was the director of the Ko-Thi Dance Company, a studio that offers classes in African dance and music. At the time, classes were hosted out of a local church on Wisconsin Avenue and were open to community members of all fields. Ko-Thi hired McGhee immediately after she graduated from Columbia College's dance program in 1982. McGhee takes pride in the fact that even as she has transitioned into her many roles at UWM, she has always been able to balance dance with her career.

Thirty-five years ago, McGhee started as an advisor to the African American Student Academic Services Office, working with African American students on campus. A goal and objective at UWM at the time was the recruitment and retention of African American students. In order to retain students, says McGhee, the skills most needed for an advisor were great listening and great critical thinking. She attributes her success in advising students to these skills because with a student population as diverse as UWM's, a solution that works for one student may not work for another, depending on their background and economic status. Therefore, says McGhee, a good advisor needs to be sensitive to that and find the best solution for each individual.

Beyond this, McGhee has a personal touch she adds to her work that speaks to students. For example, she says, she knew with the African American community that coming to campus would be like coming to a foreign country, and this required being strategic and very sensitive when inviting African American students to campus. This meant anticipating they might be taking public transportation to campus and enclosing bus schedules when corresponding with them. McGhee would even go so far as to meet students at the bus immediately when they got off to help lessen the anxiety of coming into a new space and to make them feel welcome as they entered UWM's campus. Last year when McGhee was honored for her 35th anniversary, a former student wrote McGhee a letter describing how this experience made her feel welcome on her first day at campus.

From this position, McGhee transitioned to serving as a student advisor in the College of Letters and Science, the Business School, the School of Information Studies, and finally to her position today. In her current position, she is responsible for building a healthy rapport with the community, as well as supporting the four cultural centers on campus: the American Indian Student Center, the Black Student Cultural Center, the Roberto Hernández Center, and the Southeast Asian American Student Center. Her position also involves outreach to the community, doing what she can to keep it connected to the university.

Over the years, McGhee has been able to experiment with many programs and advises staff to not limit themselves. "There is support out there for your new ideas."

When asked about her favorite part of her tenure at UWM, McGhee stated, "UWM has some amazing talented people that work for them. My network at UWM is priceless."

UWM Health and Wellbeing Events

Join us for some of the first of many health and wellbeing opportunities for faculty and staff. See the entire list of events at: https://uwm.edu/news/health-and-wellbeing-events-offered-for-faculty-and-staff/

SUPPORTING UWM INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

UWM launched a UWM welcomes hundreds of international students each year to our campuses, each with their own language and culture. We all know that diversity in the classroom is important and offers unique perspectives that benefit both domestic and international students. However, some international students may need extra support, especially in writing, while studying in a non-native language. Therefore, the English Language Academy (ELA) works hard to make sure these students get the support they need.

What is the English Language Academy? The ELA is the department on campus whose purpose is to make sure UWM's international students have the English skills they need to be successful in their degree study. The ELA is divided into two sections, the Intensive English Program (IEP) and the English for Academic Purposes (EAP) program. The Intensive English Program (IEP) is offered to international students who have not yet proved their English proficiency to begin their degree study. The EAP offers classes to non-native English speakers who have been admitted into their degree programs at UWM. Depending on the proof of English proficiency a student provides for admission, they may or may not be required to enroll in EAP classes. These classes are open to all non-native English speakers regardless of whether student is required to enroll in the EAP or not.

Many International students never enroll in any EAP classes, but that does not mean that the English Language Academy isn't dedicated to finding ways of supporting them. For example, ELA organizes the Conversation Partner Program that pairs international students with American students to foster cross cultural exchange and offers movie nights for international students to learn American culture. ELA also gives a yearly presentation to tutors in the Writing Center on campus so they can recognize common errors and how to correct them.

The English Language Academy is also available to help instructors who have international students in their classrooms. Brooke Haley, ELA Interim Director, offers a 1-hour professional development workshop to departments upon request. This presentation gives instructors the knowledge and tools to recognize and solve some of challenges international students face in the classroom. As an added bonus, any accommodations that you make for international students will likely benefit your domestic students as well.

If you would like to schedule a presentation for your department, please reach out to Brooke Haley at haleyb@uwm.edu.

If you are interested in learning how to better serve the international students in your classroom please see the ELA website for online resources: Supporting International Students in Your Classroom | English Language Academy (uwm.edu)

ACCESSIBILITY TIP
EMAIL ACCESSIBILITY

Get the most out of your emails. Remove any barriers to make emails readable by everyone. Here are some tips and best practices:

1. Choose HTML or Plain Text format

2. Choose Sans Serif fonts like Arial or Verdana and 12 Point font size

3. Use descriptive subject lines

4. Avoid image-only emails like posters or fliers – text on the images cannot be read by a screen reader. Provide a text-based equivalent.

5. Don't use color only to convey meaning

6. Add alternative text for all images

7. Provide meaningful names to hyperlinks to describe them – not just "click here" or "read more"

8. Provide structure in the email – use headings and styles

9. Make sure all attachments are accessible and use descriptive file names

10. Use plain backgrounds

For more information on making emails accessible, see the Microsoft Outlook Accessibility information at https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/office/make-your-outlook-email-accessible-to-people-with-disabilities-71ce71f4-7b15-4b7a-a2e3-cf91721bbacb.

ZOOM VS. TEAMS

Zoom is a tool newly licensed to all UWM staff starting this fall, with both similarities to and differences from Teams, which has already been available to us. Knowing these similarities and differences would be helpful in determining which one to use to meet your specific needs. Since Zoom is a cloud solution for web conferencing and distance learning, it can easily run on multiple platforms: on mobile devices, desktops, telephones, and room systems. The biggest change is that Zoom is now available in Canvas as the major video conferencing tool, replacing Collaborate Ultra. Like Collaborate Ultra, Zoom in Canvas allows instructors to schedule meetings, to record sessions, and to have break-out rooms. There are several options for recording to cloud (Gallery view, Active speaker view, Shared Screen view). There is no quota limit on cloud recording, but the recordings will be automatically deleted after 120 days.
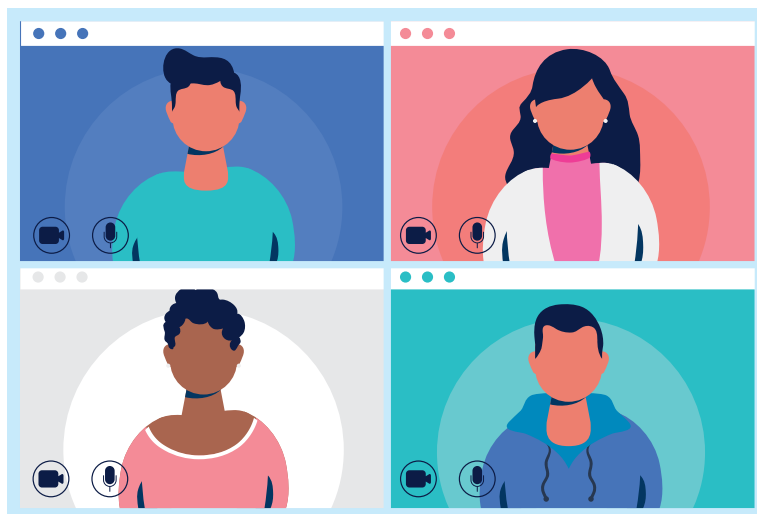
In addition, Zoom has two unique features that could be useful to some users. "Remote Control" allows participants to take control of someone else's screen with permission. This feature makes it possible to help students troubleshoot or to demonstrate activities on others' screens. "Poll" in Zoom can send out yes/no questions or multiple-choice questions to participants, then display overall responses. Users could pop open check-point questions, surveys, or reminders throughout a session.

Microsoft Teams is also available to the UWM community through Office 365. It is not linked to Canvas. It has a robust video conferencing functionality that is similar to Zoom and Collaborate Ultra. In Teams, participants can have an organizer role, presenter role, or attendee role. Attendees need to be made a presenter if they need to share content. In Zoom, there are host, co-host, and participant roles. If permitted by the host, participants can share, chat, draw on whiteboard, and record sessions without changing roles.

Both Teams and Zoom have "Chat" features, but in Teams messages can be assigned different urgency levels. Features such as "Raise hand," "Breakout rooms," "Share screen," "Whiteboard," and "Record meeting" are also available in both applications. For those who are looking for closed captioning, Teams automatically generates closed captions with a text-to-speech feature, whereas in Zoom, the host could select one of the participants to "Assign to Type Closed Caption". In addition, Teams offers unique features such as "Meeting Notes" and "Together Mode." Meeting Notes takes organized notes during meetings that everyone can see, contribute to, and access after the meeting. Together Mode can put attendees' profile images into a virtual lecture hall image.

Unlike Zoom or Collaborate Ultra, Teams has an array of asynchronous work management tools that could be utilized not only in teaching and learning, but also in administrative tasks. Channels organize posts and files into categories or modules. Tabs add different kinds of applications into each channel. "Add a Tab" allows one to add MS apps or external apps such as Adobe Creative Cloud, YouTube, Calendar Pro, etc. to the channel. Files add Microsoft Word, PowerPoint, Excel, or other files to the channel. Posts are where participants could chat asynchronously, view meeting history, make announcements, etc. in the channel. Users may also view and edit meeting notes taken during synchronous meetings.

In general, Zoom works well, even on low bandwidth. It has a simple and intuitive interface. Teams has superior audio quality and a large variety of tools available.

LEARNING IN COMMUNITY: UWM'S RACIAL JUSTICE AND EQUITY TRAINING

During Spring 2021, UWM launched a new Racial Justice and Equity Program to provide employees with anti-bias, antiracist training. While all program materials were online, allowing for self-paced completion of the training, employees could also choose to participate in facilitated cohorts. Professor Elizabeth Drame, a member of the training development team, explained the motivation for offering these cohorts: "We're trying to create a culture shift…. It was really important to dialogue about this [because] learning doesn't happen in isolation; it needs to happen in community."

The facilitated cohorts were a popular option. Some units on campus organized their own informal group discussions. In addition, eleven volunteer facilitators offered a total of fourteen different six-week cohorts that any UWM employee could sign up for—and nearly all these cohort slots filled within a week after the sign-up was announced. Among those who chose to join a cohort, the desire to learn alongside others was a common theme. As Rachel Baum, Senior Lecturer in Jewish Studies, observed, "Racism is a social problem, and it needs social solutions. I didn't believe that thinking alone in my office was the best way to engage with the material…. Learning from people's different contexts was really helpful to think through these issues."

In the campus-organized cohorts, participants came from across the university, representing varied units and roles, backgrounds and identities. Many didn't know their fellow group members very well, if at all, prior to the first group meeting. This might seem a challenging setting in which to talk openly about charged topics like racism and white privilege. Yet several participants identified this opportunity to have such discussions with new acquaintances as a valuable part of their antiracism learning. Victoria

Robison, Assistant Director of UWM's planetarium, noted, "It was like a scenario in real life, where you would be interacting with people you don't know, and you need to learn how to approach topics that are really loaded." Mat Houser, who works in University Information Technology Services, likewise appreciated "having those conversations with people I had not met before…. It's useful to learn how to talk about [race] with people in a space where it's not judgmental."

Many cohort participants expressed appreciation for how their facilitators structured the dialogue space to encourage authentic sharing and mutual learning. Maurina Paradise, Finance and Operations Manager in the Division of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI), led three cohorts. Reflecting on her experiences as a facilitator, she stressed the need "to acknowledge that we're all struggling through this together, and to give grace to each other as we continue to learn and strive to dismantle" racism. As someone who has engaged in DEI programming for years at UWM, Paradise was "beyond excited" to support this new training, and she's eager for antiracism work on campus to grow.

Chia Vang, Professor of History and Interim Chief DEI Officer, led the team that developed the Racial Justice and Equity training and is now leading efforts to create further opportunities for meaningful engagement. Plans are underway for a new discussion series called "Dialogue Across Differences," and on September 21st, Ibram X. Kendi, author of *How to Be an Antiracist*, will be UWM's next Distinguished Lecturer. Vang urges the UWM community, "How do we continuously think about 'What does radically inclusive mean?' For whom, and by whom, and who's responsible for that?… We are *all* responsible… So let's embrace that we're here and we're responsible [because] the power that we each have is what we do each day."