

UBC Geography

Climate Action Plan

Passed at department meeting, Feb 27, 2020

The following are actions planned from April 2020 - April 2021, at which time the plan will be re-assessed.

Teaching

- Host a departmental workshop for instructors and students on coping with [climate change anxiety](#), with resources and best practices.
 - *Student services will put together a workshop for October 2020*
 - *Inquire with [CTLT](#), [UBC Student Services](#), and [UBC Climate Hub](#) to compile information for instructors to include in their course syllabus. This will include student resources on coping with anxiety issues that may arise around the discussion of climate change and other uncertainties.*
- Introduce a [joint human and physical geography graduate seminar](#) with some focus on climate change.
 - *Planned for September 2020*
- Develop a new undergraduate course in [climate justice](#), including Indigenous perspectives on climate change.
 - *Forward a syllabus this spring (2020) with aim for course publication in the 2021/22 UBC Calendar*
- Explore development of an [interdisciplinary minor in climate change](#) with the Faculty of Arts.
 - *Work to be initiated in 2020, in close conversation with relevant departments and faculties like EOAS, IRES, etc. Coordinated by student services, Head of Department, undergraduate committee*



- Create a [climate change studies concentration](#) to provide students with a pathway through their existing Geography degrees that can focus on climate change.
 - *Placed on website and advertised to students by end of summer 2020, publish in calendar in 2021*
- Offer a 4th year seminar focused on [climate-related research projects](#) in 2021/22, in collaboration with the [UBC Climate Hub](#).
 - *Faculty and in discussion with UBC Climate Hub and SEEDS*
- Include [climate change relevant case studies](#) in existing courses when relevant.
 - *Faculty and sessional lecturers*

Research

- Half day [climate change department retreat](#): presentations on what we are teaching and researching and how we might work together.
 - *Faculty and postdoctoral fellows*
- Pursue an '[Excellence](#)' chair to focus on climate change studies, with potential focus on migration, energy transitions, climate justice, water and food security, landscape impacts.
 - *Faculty and Head of Department*
- Host [one colloquium event per year via video conferencing](#) to demonstrate low-carbon research dissemination. The event will be recorded and made available online.
 - *Colloquium committee*
- [One colloquium panel per term](#) for the next three years will be directly related to climate change issues. This panel will be hosted within an undergraduate class, recorded and made available online.
 - *First event to be held in Geography 102 in Fall 2020*
- Pursue a [climate justice position / Indigenous environmental justice position](#).
 - *Faculty and Head*



- Fundraise for a climate change research or undergraduate scholarship with [focus on supporting BIPOC students](#) or on communities impacted by climate change and/or by climate change mitigation.
 - *Head and relevant faculty in conversation with Arts and beyond*

Travel

- Encourage department members to [reduce travel-related emissions](#) through information about alternatives.
 - *Faculty and staff*
- Encourage department members to [reduce commuting emissions](#) by supporting carpooling, bike commuting and revisions in teaching schedule once in-person classes resume.
 - *Faculty and staff*
- Send a department letter to UBC, Metro Vancouver and Translink to pressure for increased bus capacity and [expansion of rapid transit to UBC](#) once in-person classes resume.
 - *Faculty and staff*
- Advocate for UBC-wide changes that [support a low-carbon research environment](#), including revision of merit and tenure criteria to support a low-carbon research footprint
 - *Faculty and Head*
 - Department sign on to [this open letter](#)
- Advocate for scientific societies (AAG, CAG, AGU) to move to biennial meetings, reducing international travel.
 - *Faculty*

Advocacy & Communication

- Dedicate a [section of the department website](#) to climate issues; hosting information, research and a list of faculty researching climate change.
 - *Faculty and staff*



- Incentivize [public communication](#) by faculty on climate change.
 - *Faculty and Head*

Building / Facilities

- Invest in [further video conferencing facilities](#) in the building, including in room 229 and room 100.
 - *Submit within Academic Equipment Fund, May 2020*
 - *Faculty, staff, Head*
- Purchase a [video-conferencing subscription](#) for department use.
 - *Staff and Head*
- Explore [covered bike storage](#) for the building.
 - *Staff and Head*
- Improve plumbing facilities to [reduce excessive water use](#).
 - *Staff and Head*
- Install [programmable thermostats](#) (both temperature and time of day settable) so that heating can be turned down/off outside office hours.
 - *Staff*
- Obtain the current [electricity, heating and water usage](#) of the building and track the department's reduction in usage.
 - *Staff*

Events and purchasing

- Prioritize [plant-based food](#) for events, and use caterers committed to reducing food waste.
 - *Faculty, staff and Head*
- Use the [UBC Sustainable Event Checklist](#)
 - *Faculty, staff and Head*



- Use the [UBC Sustainable Purchasing Guide](#)
 - *Faculty, staff and Head*