



Develop a Sustainability Workshop Series

SUSTAINABILITY COMMITMENT(S) THIS INITIATIVE SUPPORTS

- **7 - Sustainability Literacy**

INITIATIVE ALIGNMENT WITH THE CHARGE

- **Eliminate Emissions:** Speakers focus on the “why” this action must be taken and engage viewers to take basic steps in everyday life to reduce greenhouse gases and find energy alternatives.
- **Build Community:** Virtual, and possibly hybrid, sessions will encourage discussion of the basics and will be viewable by the entire Tucson community.
- **Be Actionable:** Using training technology and practices we already utilize, a timeline can be set up for the most impactful topics, with appropriate instructors recruited. Having hybrid or fully remote sessions makes this attainable to all, and each episode will finish with interactive sharing of ideas and tried and true steps to help reduce emissions, reduce waste, conserve, etc. for people to incorporate into homes, dorms, classrooms, offices, and businesses.
- **Inspire Adaptive Management:** Recorded sessions can be a model for other programs and can be incorporated into lesson plans of all majors. The public recordings make the university’s Sustainability & Climate Action Plan goals transparent and sharable.
- **Demonstrate Leadership:** The Action Plan will select skilled speakers from a variety of departments and partner agencies to keep the audience engaged and material relevant and applicable to all community members. The University of Arizona would become the go-to for sustainability literacy in Tucson.

INITIATIVE DETAILS

Initiative Summary

This initiative proposes to establish the Sustainability Workshop Series, a monthly event aimed at educating students, employees, and community members in sustainable practices. It will address concerns from a campus-wide survey about climate change and sustainability by providing actionable steps and highlighting success stories. These will also enhance campus sustainability literacy and address practical methods to reduce waste, lower carbon emissions, and conserve water, with recordings available online. Actionable items include:

- Initiate a monthly workshop series focusing on actionable steps individuals can take to contribute to carbon neutrality and sustainability goals.
- Implement recurring features in newsletters and university publications to highlight successful sustainability initiatives, fostering inspiration and community engagement.

- Create climate-forward announcements for the university's online learning platforms (e.g., D2L) to educate faculty and staff on sustainability achievements and opportunities.
- Integrate sessions within workshops that address social equity, environmental justice, and diversity-related sustainability issues, enhancing the intersectionality of sustainability efforts.

Proposed Initiative & Background

Data from the April 2023 Community Input Survey Analysis shows that of the 312 respondents, 250 did not self-identify as an “expert” in climate change/sustainability. Comparing that to the 143 respondents who were not passionate about the issue of climate change/sustainability, we see that many people could potentially change habits to protect the climate if given education on the need for, and impact of, behavior change.

An accessible and repeating series will inform the campus community of actionable steps to take to contribute to reaching carbon neutrality. For the university to reach its sustainability goals, all campus community members need to understand specific steps they need to take to contribute to the goal.

The Sustainability Workshop Series is a live, virtual, monthly activity with the intent to engage and inform individuals on the actionable steps they can take that will assist the university in reaching its sustainability and climate goals.

There are many misconceptions and oversights around sustainability but by adding engaging and social monthly trainings to the university’s established online learning practices and resources, all university community members will learn the basics of sustainability and climate action. The Office of Sustainability will pre-select inclusive topics that meet the criteria of educational and actionable, enlist appropriate leaders/educators/experts to develop episode content, and then work with those facilitators to prepare an engaging and interactive program with easy, actionable behaviors to take away and provide resources for further action such as clubs, websites, advocacy groups, partnering agencies or campaigns in alignment with the Action Plan, etc.

Amplifying **success stories** and opportunities empowers the entire University of Arizona community to do more, therefore we recommend that we synergize efforts across the university community via dedicated and recurring spotlight and news features devoted to sustainability success stories where we can highlight opportunities, champions of change, innovators, collaborations, and actions. If we see others taking action, it helps us to know we can do things too! The university should implement a monthly/bi-monthly newsletter or series highlighting sustainable projects, research, and community efforts done in partnership or by the University of Arizona (or just happening in the surrounding area) to continually amplify success and opportunities. Additionally, the university should generate D2L-ready climate-forward announcements that can be used by faculty and staff to highlight success and opportunities on their D2L pages and devote a section of University of Arizona News and the Daily Wildcat dedicated to climate/sustainability success to highlight these same projects/initiatives.

The presentations can be in person and recorded on Zoom (the recordings could be part of a website and YouTube series). Topics would be planned by committee, with subject area experts from across campus and the greater community engaged to make the presentations. Possible topics to cover might include understanding the waste collection stream in our city, how to properly dispose of different kinds

of household waste, social equity & justice, sustainable household items that can replace plastic in your home, introduction to canning, understanding solar energy (and how to build a solar oven), how to improve the energy efficiency of your home, transportation options, and so on.

Facilitators will share science-based facts on the impact these steps will have on the environment, and challenge viewers to take what they have learned and enact it in class, at work, and at home. Workshops should also include social justice episodes that specifically focus on social equity, environmental justice, diversity-related sustainability issues, and the intersectionality of sustainability and social justice.

University students and employees, campus visitors, and members of the Tucson and Arizona community will be welcomed by online facilitators and presented topics that will increase sustainability literacy by presenting a variety of experts to educate on practical and achievable ways to reduce waste, decrease carbon emissions, reduce water use, etc. The university could promote easy actions we can all implement to support the implementation of the Action Plan or ways to be more sustainable (digital products e.g., QR codes and web-based information to not waste ink or paper) through these sessions. The recordings will be live webinars that are then posted on the Office of Sustainability YouTube channel. Each webinar challenges viewers to act on the takeaways and allows them to ask questions about how these steps help reach carbon neutrality and get tips on how to enact them on the grassroots, and individual level, as opposed to an institutional level. Experts in each field will serve as facilitators, using science-based information to relay the importance of the individual missions of sustainability, working with Office of Sustainability staff to create programs that are fun to watch and easily understand by the general population, inspiring viewers to make the

Sample episode for eliminating emissions – Why do we need to do this? What is the science that shows eliminating emissions will improve the environment? How do you, as an individual, make an impact on this target goal? What steps can you take today?

Sample episode for sustainable dining practices – Why do we need to reduce the amount of beef we consume? What is the data showing that eating beef/livestock is not sustainable? How can one person make an impact by reducing their meat consumption? What is the data backing one person and the levels of reduction?

These suggested episodes, the topics listed previously, and the concerns of the University of Arizona population expressed in the initiative concerning establishing a Campus-Wide Sustainability Survey, will drive the topics to address and provide the backing science and actionable items.

Data Analyses to Support Initiative

Results from the initiative to establish a Campus-Wide Sustainability Survey, will drive the content selected for ongoing episodes, as well as existing surveys distributed throughout the Climate Action Planning process.

Resource Requirements & Return on Investment

Resource Requirements

- A team to promote the workshops, schedule facilitators, and review their presentations before broadcast to ensure actionable and charge-related topics are covered.
- Video production and marketing time expenses would have to be considered.

- There could be incentives for faculty and staff that give presentations. This could take the form of a stipend, green certification that leads to a pay increase, etc.
- University of Arizona News and the Daily Wildcat have existing funds for staff and production of digital content, we anticipate minimal costs for shifting focus to sustainable and climate-forward thinking spotlight news sections as these leverage existing activities.
- The Office of Instruction and Assessment and Digital Learning is already designing materials to be used in digital format and also offers a wide range of assessment tools, we see UCATT as a centralized place where knowledge and expertise on how to deliver high-quality content for extracurricular events can be advertised and spotlighted and assessed using the pool of talent available at UCATT who are already doing these types of activities.

Return on Investment

- Required financial investment is minimal but this initiative has the potential to improve the sustainability literacy of students, employees, and community members alike.

Potential Funding Sources

- Long-term stable grant donations
- Provost's Fund

Accountable Division(s) & Department(s)

- Office of Sustainability
- Appropriate colleges/departments provide content (School of Natural Resources & the Environment, the Water Resources Research Center, Eller College of Management, College of Public Health, etc.)
- Life & Work Connections

Partners & Collaborators

- Faculty
- Research staff
- City of Tucson
- Outside agencies with shared sustainability goals
- Wilbur & Wilma to promote series and help drive attendance.

Implementation

Length of Time to Implement

- Less than one year
- One to five years
- More than five years

Difficulty of Implementation

- Low
- Medium
- High
- Extremely High

Relative Timing

- Begin within two years
- Begin in three to five years
- Begin in six years or later

Metrics for Success

- Attendance at live workshops.
- Viewership of promoted recordings.
- Follow-up surveys for attendees to see what changes they might suggest.
- Online registration forms would have required fields to self-identify as a University of Arizona student, employee, or community member, age range, and other demographic data to track participant diversity.