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Resolution to Reaffirm a Commitment to Achieving Net-Zero Carbon Emissions

Academic Senate

April 1, 2019



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Contributors

- Associated Students of the University of Utah
- Academic Senate Executive Committee
- Sustainability Office
- Facilities, Sustainability and Energy



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Background

- President Michael Young signed the American College and University Presidents' Climate Commitment (ACUPCC) in 2008.
- Since then, the University of Utah has been on a path toward achieving carbon neutrality by 2050 (see last month's sustainability update).



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Why this resolution?

- Calls for a recommitment to achieving carbon neutrality by no later (and potentially sooner) than 2050.
- Calls for a commitment to the revised ACUPCC, which includes new requirements for universities to build their climate resiliency.
- Calls for the creation of a Presidential Task Force, which can aid in breaking down campus silos and promoting collaborative strides toward carbon neutrality.



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What will the Task Force do?

- Determine whether the 2050 deadline is still appropriate in light of new science, technology, and developments at peer institutions.
- Study mechanisms for further reducing and offsetting the U's carbon footprint.
- Consider how to foster sustainability-related education and decision-making.
- Evaluate how to best communicate its and the University's work to the community.
- Many other things!



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Why now?

- October 2018 report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.
- New University administration.
- Lots of student support.
- Similar calls to action from PAC-12 and USHE peers.