

Environmental Action Committee (DRAFT, September 2024)

Recognition of the global context in which we exist is key to all effective efforts to improve sustainability and take meaningful action to mitigate environmental impact. Our global interdependence is referenced in College of Marin's Board Policy on Environmental Responsibility (BP 6560), which acknowledges the core, interrelated elements of sustainability—biodiversity, climate change, and pollution.

The California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office has established system-wide Climate Action & Sustainability Goals to dramatically reduce greenhouse gas emissions, natural gas usage, energy and water consumption, waste, and other environmental impacts at the system's colleges. These goals are an attempt to ensure community colleges comply with the State of California's deadline to achieve carbon neutrality by 2045. Additionally, the state of California has also given direction in the other two major areas of sustainability. The California Biodiversity Initiative directs all state agencies to safeguard biodiversity and form appropriate partnerships to advance their efforts. In the area of pollution, California pioneered waste reduction with AB 939, whose goal was to reduce all waste by 50%. SB 1383 mandates further recycling of organic waste. SB 54 aims to further reduce plastic waste.

These State mandates and the CCCCCO goals require colleges to conduct emissions inventories, benchmark energy use, and establish baseline information across a series of climate-impact categories and then set institution-specific reduction/improvement targets.

Given College of Marin's commitment to equity, anti-racism, and social justice, the College acknowledges the accelerating effects of climate change detrimentally impact communities and their residents, with disproportionate negative impact on communities such as Marin City, San Rafael's Canal neighborhood, Novato, and West Marin. College of Marin's efforts to meet its mission of providing equitable opportunities and fostering success for all members of our diverse community are tied to the College's ability to reduce its environmental impact, both on its campuses and as it brings students, employees, and community members together to tackle issues of social justice—including climate justice.

Charge

The Environmental Action Committee (EAC) operates as a subcommittee of the Planning and Resource Allocation Committee (PRAC). To ensure College of Marin does its part not only to comply with State requirements and goals, but to be a leader in Marin for education on climate action and the importance of personal and institutional responsibility, the EAC ensures faculty, staff, and student involvement with providing feedback, making recommendations, sharing information, tracking progress, and establishing accountability measures related to achieving net-zero greenhouse gas emissions in alignment with State expectations and BP 6560. This work is guided by the College's environmental action roadmap, which categorizes and chronicles the various areas needing attention and the College's current environmental impact in each area. The EAC is responsible for using the roadmap to develop, track, and revise an Environmental Impact Mitigation Plan, designed to achieve net zero GHG emissions and address environmental justice by connecting the social, racial, and environmental issues in which our climate crisis is deeply entangled to our institutional equity efforts.

Within the mitigation plan will be strategic objectives and action steps for each area within the CCCCCO goals and referenced in BP6560. The EAC will ensure the Plan's action steps are tied to the larger College planning efforts and connected to future policy and resource decisions.

Responsibilities

1. Use the College's baseline inventory of emissions, waste, and other data to inform the development and implementation of the Environmental Impact Mitigation Plan to achieve climate neutrality.
2. Prioritize and recommend Environmental Impact Mitigation Plan action steps for resource allocation based on established goals and in coordination with Facilities & Landscape Plan priorities.
3. Provide input on District projects, including construction, renovation, landscaping, and purchasing, to assure implementation of green practices and principles designed to achieve impact mitigation goals.
4. Promote sustainable practices on campus, including policy development, in alignment with the goal of net neutrality in greenhouse gas emissions.
5. Promote student and employee education and behavior modification in the areas of waste reduction, recycling, transportation, and other means of reducing environmental impact.
6. Support faculty development of courses and the incorporation of concepts of sustainability, climate justice, biodiversity, and environmental impact into their curricula.
7. Facilitate partnerships to enhance and develop College environmental impact mitigation efforts.
8. Integrate the voices of Native and First Peoples with respect to sustainability and environmental justice.

Composition

Two (2) faculty appointed by the Academic Senate

Two (2) classified professionals appointed by the Classified Professional Liaison Committee (CPLC)

Two (2) students appointed by the Associated Students of College of Marin (ASCOM)

Two (2) administrators appointed by the Superintendent/President

2024-2025 Members TBD