

Sustainability Leadership Council Charter, February 2024

Mission

The Sustainability Leadership Council (SLC) works in partnership across Portland Community College and within the community to steer and implement [PCC's Climate Action Plan](#) and uphold the college's commitment to sustainability. At PCC, Climate Action takes a holistic approach, using adaptation and mitigation to support racial equity and social justice to create a thriving campus community.

SLC's work involves creating culturally informed, culturally responsive and equity student-centered curricular and co-curricular offerings. SLC supports a just transition through green workforce development and models innovative pathways towards carbon neutral operations to build a resilient and thriving campus community.

Vision

We envision the Sustainability Leadership Council (SLC) as a district-wide, cross-functional, consensus driven and innovative council of stakeholders that coordinates the implementation of the Climate Action Plan and other sustainability efforts across operations, student engagement and education. PCC's sustainability and climate action work are part of the college's integrated planning efforts in support of the college's mission to support student success by delivering access to quality education while advancing economic development and promoting sustainability in a collaborative culture of diversity, equity and inclusion.

Values

PCC's Sustainability Leadership Council serves by working as an intentional community to bring hope, courage and innovative solutions for a just and sustainable future. We respect, value and celebrate the unique attributes, characteristics and perspectives that make each person who they are and is a fundamental component of crafting solutions for a just and sustainable future. We value all forms of knowledge, lived experience and indigenous wisdom. We invite and welcome the diverse contributions of many voices and experiences, particularly from students and those of historically marginalized and underserved communities to solve today's many sustainability challenges. We believe in the power of education as a transformative catalyst for sustainability and justice for current and future generations. We value restorative approaches to justice and seek to uplift and empower our diverse community, ensuring that all individuals have the opportunity to participate and benefit from sustainability education and initiatives.

We aim to share power by taking a consensus based approach to decision making. We use self-reflection, transparency and community engagement to help us grow and remain accountable to the PCC community.

1. **Hope is the best path forward for a sustainable future.** We will inspire our students, faculty by taking innovative action on meeting our sustainability and climate action goals and share our successes with our community.
2. **Planning for the future is critical for student success.** We will work to prepare our grounds, facilities and operations for a changing climate in the knowledge that student, faculty and staff success depends upon a safe and healthy environment for learning and personal growth.
3. **Education is a civil right.** We will apply integrative learning strategies to empower our students, faculty and staff to adapt to and thrive in a changing environment. PCC thrives as a learning community when it draws its strength from the many talents and experiences of those who come here to learn, to teach, to work.
4. **Everything is connected.** We will use our campuses' as living laboratories where students and the community can explore climate and sustainability solutions by supporting faculty use of community based-learning with real-world examples, while providing hands-on learning opportunities that also offer space for self-reflection and research.
5. **Success requires equity.** We will actively use social justice and equity frameworks to center those impacted most in creating climate and sustainability solutions. We value all knowledge, indigenous wisdom and lived experience.
6. **Our responsibility to our community goes beyond the college's doors.** We will root climate action in our home in the Pacific Northwest of the United States, while ensuring that we reduce our global footprint.
7. **We can go further together.** We will work collaboratively with our neighbors and other stakeholders to support leadership development in sustainability and a green workforce. We use self-reflection, transparency and community engagement to help us grow and remain accountable to the PCC community.
8. **A just transition is imperative.** We will address historical injustices with restorative, place-based sustainability efforts that uplift and empower our diverse community. We seek to engage and learn from our community stakeholders in our efforts to deliver positive benefits from our sustainability efforts that are healing and restorative.

By-Laws

Subcommittees

SLC subcommittees are determined by the membership of the council, subject to approval by the council co-chairs. At the minimum, working SLC sub-committees shall represent each of the main focus areas of PCC's Climate Action Plan (See Appendix 1):

- Education and Outreach
- Scope 1 & 2 Emissions
- Scope 3 Emissions
- Resiliency

Major goals for each of the subcommittees can be found in the [2021 Climate Action Plan](#); however, each subcommittee is expected to develop an annual work plan and interim projects. Each of the SLC subcommittees also support PCC's variety of sustainability initiatives and goals. PCC's sustainability commitments include Bee Campus and Tree Campus USA and performance goals in Strategic Energy Management and green building. The SLC subcommittees also support other operational sustainability initiatives such as green purchasing initiatives, chemical reduction, and recycling and composting.

All SLC subcommittees shall support PCC's efforts as a participant in the Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education (AASHE) Sustainability Tracking Assessment and Rating System (STARS). SLC subcommittees shall support conducting greenhouse gas inventories every other year. This support will take the form of helping to develop mechanisms for data collection and helping to collect and organize data relevant to the scope of each SLC subcommittee.

The Association for the Advance of Sustainability in Higher Education's Sustainability Tracking and Rating System is PCC's standard for rating and tracking Sustainability efforts; In addition as a signatory to Second Nature's Carbon Commitment climate action is a critical component for PCC's Sustainability efforts and SLC committees shall support our efforts in participating in STARS and the Climate Commitment including conducting greenhouse gas inventories and climate education.

SLC subcommittees shall support conducting greenhouse gas inventories every other year. This support will take the form of helping to develop mechanisms for data collection and helping to collect and organize data relevant to the scope of each SLC subcommittee.

Membership

Every effort shall be made to ensure that the membership of the SLC and associated subcommittees will be balanced and representative of the diverse PCC stakeholders, as well as strategically selected to allow for the most effective and efficient implementation of PCC's sustainability and climate action goals, objectives and strategies.

SLC Committees and Membership

The (overall) SLC includes all members of SLC subcommittees including the members of the Sustainability Department. There are a minimum of four SLC subcommittees. (See Appendix 1). Subcommittees are chaired or appointed by members of the Sustainability Department; however, co-chairs from SLC membership are highly encouraged. Secretaries and other positions may be formalized upon the recommendation of the committee.

The SLC shall have two executive sponsors to share updates, recommendations, progress and requests from the council to college leadership. The co-executive sponsors shall have appropriate programmatic oversight and access to high level leadership at the college to ensure efficacy of the SLC and advocate for sustainability.

The SLC aims to have representation from the following areas of the college:

- Student leadership (staff and student leaders)
- Student diversity including career pathways, academic programs and full/part-time status
- Faculty representing various disciplines
- Sustainable Practices for Academics Resource Council (SPARC)
- Community-based learning
- Libraries
- Student volunteers
- Learning Gardens
- Environmental Center
- Rock Creek Environmental Studies Center
- Identity-Based Equity Centers
- Campus-based Green Team volunteers
- Parking & Transportation
- Dining Services
- Planning & Capital Construction
- Facilities Management Services (Central Distribution Services, Custodial, Grounds, Energy Management, Environmental Health and Safety)
- Information Technology
- Print Services
- Purchasing

In addition, we welcome all faculty, staff and students who share our passion for sustainability and climate action work. SLC Subcommittees should undertake to prioritize recruiting diverse and representative membership that reflects the broad racial diversity of the Pacific Northwest and the PCC Campus Community. SLC Subcommittees should make every effort to include students. In addition, the SLC Subcommittees should seek diverse faculty and staff representation across different positions and levels within the organizational hierarchy.

SLC Committee Appointments

Appointments for co-chair of SLC subcommittees will be recommended by the SLC chair. When appropriate, prior to any recruitment to the SLC, the direct manager or supervisor of a prospective candidate for SLC membership shall be consulted to ensure the support for and approval of this commitment. Expectations and responsibilities associated with SLC membership will be made clear to both the candidate and his/her supervisor prior to extending an official invitation.

Appointments to the SLC and subcommittees will be recommended by the Sustainability Manager and be based on appointees interest and area of college expertise. Prospective candidates to fill membership vacancies may be recommended by anyone in the SLC. SLC Subcommittee Chairs will appoint additional members based on recommendations.

Stakeholder Participation

Understanding that at times some committees may find themselves short of the appropriate type of representatives due to a shortage of engagement, committees should undertake to seek diverse stakeholder engagement either with other members of the SLC or with other key project stakeholders. All reasonable attempts will be made to solicit appropriate stakeholders for subcommittees on a project-by-project basis. Appropriate stakeholders may possess an area of technical expertise, have lived experience, and/or have decision-making power. In addition, in order to support our commitment to diverse stakeholder engagement, subcommittee co-chairs may seek the approval of the SLC chair to engage with stakeholder groups once the annual work plan has been set; however, subcommittee co-chairs will work to keep all stakeholders regularly updated and informed.

SLC Member Responsibilities and Expectations

SLC Members are expected to:

- Attend and participate in all regularly scheduled SLC meetings (including SLC subcommittee meetings and quarterly overall SLC meetings);

- Serve on ad hoc committees and subcommittees as appropriate and in the best interest of the SLC and the PCC District;
- Participate in diversity, equity, justice, inclusion and accessibility (DEIJA) trainings offered by the SLC and highly encouraged to participate in other diversity, equity and inclusion trainings the college offers;
- Understand, use and apply DEIJA tools such as fist to five, PCC's Equity and Empowerment Guide, PCC's Climate Action Equity Guide and identity cards;
- Participate in education & outreach opportunities when appropriate;
- Perform other duties and responsibilities as appropriate to fulfill the mission of the SLC; and
- Ensure that student participation is meaningful through professional development opportunities and appropriate roles/responsibilities.

SLC members not meeting these responsibilities may be subject to removal from the SLC. SLC Members shall attend as many meetings as their schedule allows. Members are expected to notify the SLC chair if they are no longer able to participate. Members in key stakeholder areas are expected to appoint a delegate if they are unable to participate on a regular basis.

The SLC meets for 1-2 hours every other month, plus a retreat at the beginning of the academic year. Meetings will be in-person, possibly hybrid. During the alternate months, members participate in one of four sub-committees, so overall the time commitment is 2-4 meeting hours per month and additional time for projects as needed.

SLC Chair

The SLC shall be chaired by the Sustainability Manager or a member of the Sustainability Team. This will be a permanent appointment.

SLC Co-Chair Duties

A co-chair for the SLC shall be appointed as deemed appropriate. The SLC co-chairs shall be supported by PCC Sustainability staff. The SLC co-chairs shall be responsible for:

- Serving as primary points of contact for the SLC;
- Appointing, when appropriate, a member of the SLC to serve as SLC co-chair(s) in his/her/their absence. This appointment shall be temporary and for a specified period of time;
- Convening and serving as facilitators at all regular and special meetings of the SLC;
- Developing and receiving meeting agenda topics, and preparing and disseminating agendas prior to SLC meetings;

- Following meeting guidelines and protocols as laid out in the charter; and,
- Ensuring that regular updates and tracking of progress of the overall SLC are documented and communicated to the PCC community.

Voting

Within their organizational units, members of the SLC and SLC subcommittees (including the SLC subcommittee chairs co-chairs) will have equal voting rights, except for ex-officio members and external partner representatives serving on the SLC subcommittees who will not have voting rights.

As a general rule, SLC is not a decision making body. Rather, as a steering and implementation committee, SLC makes an annual work plan on how to best support the Climate Action Plan within a given year. In addition, SLC may vote on themes for education, outreach and engagement, shifts within planning (such as the addition of climate justice to the Climate Action Plan), or whether or not to encourage support or develop a particular guideline, plan, policy or proposal.

For decision making, SLC uses the consensus based voting method known as fist of five, as outlined in [PCC's Take 5 Toolkit](#). Fist of five voting is an inclusive decision-making process to ensure there is consensus before moving forward with a decision. Everyone has to share their vote before we can move forward. Folks may choose a vote of 0-5. A 0 vote blocks moving forward and a 1 or 2 means more discussion is needed. Members continue to vote and workshop the idea until all voters are a 3 or higher. See appendix 4 for a deeper explanation of this decision making tool.

Meetings

All SLC meetings shall be open to the PCC community. The SLC values input from members of the Portland Community College District and it is the policy of the SLC to welcome and encourage the attendance of all interested persons at its meetings.

The SLC meets for 1-2 hours every other month, plus a retreat at the beginning of the academic year. Meetings will be in-person, possibly hybrid. During the alternate months, members participate in one of four sub-committees, so overall the time commitment is 2-4 meeting hours per month, and possibly additional time for projects as needed.

Citizens wishing to speak on agenda or non-agenda matters shall notify a SLC co-chair prior to the commencement of the meeting and be heard on the agenda at the time allocated for public comment. Citizens requesting to speak on non-agenda items shall be heard following the SLC

business agenda. Each citizen will have five minutes to speak on such matters unless the SLC requests more information. For SLC subcommittee meetings, the respective meeting secretaries will maintain a file of correspondence received from citizens and will ensure that the file is available for SLC member review at all times.

Accountability

The SLC, in its steering committee function, shall report to and be accountable to PCC's President's Cabinet or another office or executive(s) that may be designated by such.

Relevant metrics for PCC's Sustainability work include metrics set by the climate action plan, metrics on for relevant strategic plan initiatives, AASHE STARS, tracking PCC's renewable energy portfolio and similar initiatives. These metrics shall be posted to the PCC Sustainability website in a timely manner.

A written record of every regular and special meeting shall be maintained. Meeting notes shall be made readily available to the PCC community. Posting on the internet is considered readily available.

Adoption of By-Laws

These by-laws and their revisions shall become effective upon resolution using majority voting; however, amendments made after December of 2023 and their revisions shall be voted on through fist-to-five voting.

SLC members shall have the opportunity to comment on any proposed amendments to these by-laws at a regular meeting of the SLC by those in attendance when quorum has been met. A quorum shall constitute at least 15 members present including sustainability staff. An amendment to the SLC By-Laws will become effective upon resolution using the fist-to-five voting method.

Appendix 1: SLC Subcommittees

Education and Outreach: Our Outreach and Education projects support students across three themes: Sustainability & Climate Justice Curriculum, Outreach and Engagement, Community Connections and intersect with every aspect of education. This committee currently focuses on the following areas.

- Equity-based Curriculum
- Inclusive and Collaborative Engagement
- Sustainability in the Student Experience

Scope 1 & 2: This committee focuses on reducing and mitigating emissions from our own operations and energy consumption. This committee currently focuses on the following areas.

- Energy Reduction
- Renewable Energy
- Fleet Fuels

Scope 3: This committee focuses on reducing and mitigating emissions outside of PCC's direct control. This committee currently focuses on the following areas.

- Sustainable Travel
- Sustainable Procurement
- Water Reduction
- Waste Diversion

Resiliency: This committee is dedicated to enhancing the college's resiliency, or its ability to survive disruption, anticipate, adapt, and thrive in the face of change. This committee considers factors such as physical, social and mental health in looking at the long and short-term potential for success for our staff, students, and faculty.

Appendix 2: SLC Subcommittee Relationships

There are natural synergies between all PCC subcommittees. All SLC subcommittees shall interface and collaborate with one another as well as with other PCC stakeholders to maximize PCC's ability to address sustainability challenges, opportunities and commitments. Opportunities to accelerate progress on PCC's Climate Action Plan are created by collaboration amongst subcommittees. For example:

The *SLC Scope 1 & 2 subcommittee* and the *Scope 3 Subcommittee* collaborate to develop efforts to further the use of electric vehicles (EVs) at PCC.

The *SLC Scope 3 and Resiliency Subcommittees* collaborate to address stormwater related issues associated with site management, including the management of parking areas and other impervious surfaces. Another example of collaboration between these two committees include reducing food waste and food container waste and composting efforts along with efforts regarding agricultural activities related to on-site food production and composting. Both committees also work with Education and Outreach and meeting student basic needs around food justice.

The *SLC Education and Outreach subcommittee* collaborates with all other SLC subcommittees and with the Sustainable Practices for Academics and Resources council (SPARC) to develop and pursue opportunities for integrating climate action plan themes and sustainability theory & applications into PCC educational curricula. The *SLC Education & Outreach Subcommittee* also collaborates with all other SLC subcommittees to serve as a sounding board for communicating SLC related news. This includes serving as a resource to the SLC and the SLC subcommittees for communicating to the PCC community and beyond about SLC updates and progress, as well as opportunities for involvement in and for supporting PCC sustainability efforts.

The *Resiliency Subcommittee* collaborates with all other SLC subcommittees to serve as a resource and guide for establishing and instituting mechanisms for reporting & tracking progress, as well as providing financial planning & financial advising support.

Appendix 3 - Climate Action Plan Update

In keeping with the college's agreement with Second Nature under the Climate Commitment, the SLC shall re-examine the established objectives and overall goals of PCC's Climate Action Plan (PCC's CAP) at least every five years and the SLC shall develop science-based interim target dates for meeting milestones that will lead to carbon neutrality. At a minimum, the SLC's interim targets must contain specific carbon reduction goals over PCC's 2006 baseline in Scope 1 and Scope 2. Best practices for PCC's Climate Action plan update have historically included an emissions inventory, interviewing key stakeholders, holding listening sessions, visiting classes, using a DEIJA framework, incorporating equitable meeting practices, surveying college stakeholders, engaging key community groups, and developing a budget. PCC's Climate Action Plan will formally be presented to the President's Cabinet upon its completion for review and feedback.

Climate Action Planning Team

The planning process will be developed by the Sustainability Manager and the PCC Cabinet Liaison. This team may include the members of the Sustainability Department, temporary positions or consultants as needed, with the appropriate approval.

The team will:

- Provide regular updates to the Sustainability Manager and PCC Cabinet Liaison;
- Form the Climate Action Task Force, recruiting members from the SLC and from the college at large as needed;
- Update the planning process as needed to reflect new modes of inclusive and equitable planning;
- Develop a plan for broad stakeholder engagement;
- Ensure training for the Climate Action Task Force on use of the Equity Tools; and
- Carry out other duties as needed.

Climate Action Task Force

Furthermore, a climate action task force shall be formed to update PCC's Climate Action Plan. At a minimum, the task force shall update interim the goals and strategies. The task force will gather broad stakeholder input from the college and the community. The Climate Action Task Force will work using the same collaborative processes as the SLC. The Climate Action Task Force will update the climate equity planning tool as needed.

In the first year following an update to PCC's Climate Action Plan, the SLC shall develop an interim climate action work plan to execute the goals and strategies. The interim climate action work plan shall be evaluated at the beginning of each year during the SLC annual retreat and updated with revised or new strategies and or actions as needed.

Appendix 4 - Fist of Five Voting



*Fist of Five Voting Method Steps

Imagine you have a topic that you want to get a vote on. Let's use a simple one: you have family or friends visiting and you are trying to decide on where to go to dinner. You talk and talk about options and it seems like everyone is okay with Indian food. You ask for a show of hands and seem to have a majority. So you start to call a local Indian restaurant and someone suddenly says, "I don't want that." **HUH?** I thought we agreed... This happens often in our personal and work lives.



1. State the question: "Is everyone okay with Indian food for dinner?"
2. Count: 1, 2, 3, vote! Everyone votes at the same time and hands must be held high. This may seem trivial but, for more contentious topics (although this could be one), it is important that people do not look to others in the room to see how to vote.
3. Each person votes by holding up 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 fingers.
4. The facilitator (or vote caller) looks around the room and quickly tallies the votes [and articulates to the group the result of the count]. The votes breakdown like this:
 - **0 fingers (a fist):** No way, terrible choice, I will not go along with it. A way to block consensus.

- **1 finger:** I have serious reservations with this idea, but I vote to move forward, but I'd prefer to resolve the concerns before supporting it.
 - **2 fingers:** I have some concerns, but I'll go along and try it.
 - **3 fingers:** I will support the idea
 - **4 fingers:** I like this idea, sounds good.
 - **5 fingers:** Absolutely, best idea ever! I'll champion it.
5. Based on the goal of the vote (as noted above), the facilitator takes the next steps...
- A. **Goal: Check-in** - The facilitator uses the results to adjust the session, make changes, start a discussion, or other actions based on how the vote went and how he/she sees the process progressing. Was the vote what you expected? Different? Do you believe changes are required?
 - B. **Goal: Learn and gain consensus** - If you have some Os, 1s, or 2s, ask for reasons. What reservations do they have? You ask for a brief summary or a bottom-line of the reasons. Ask for other bottom-line comments from others. Then call another vote. You may learn new information to restate the question and vote again.
 - C. **Goal: Vote and move forward** - If everyone has fingers up, that is a yes. If everyone has a fist up, that is a clear no. If there is a mix, it is a winner take all, number of hands with fists, vs. number of hands with fingers up (1 thru 5).

If you decide you want to learn more about people's reservations to develop a stronger decision, you can use the ideas from the goal 'Learn and gain consensus.' If you choose this, it is important to have a clear plan to move on, and for everyone to understand that you are not aiming for consensus, but instead Deep Democracy (you want all voices to be heard). The learning variation can be a challenge, since the facilitator will at some point have to decide when the vote stands. This can be very hard to do if you do not have an alliance developed with the group (certainly if you are not impartial and were just the one to call the vote). Everyone does not have to think this is the best idea ever, but Fist of Five voting provides a way for people to voice a spectrum of opinions. You may have some people that are willing to support the idea, even with some reservations. The process also airs different ideas and provides a clear way to discuss differences.

*Learning with Fist of Five Voting”, September 23, 2014 by Jake Calabrese