SUSTAINABILITY
Functions
At Work!

As more people learn about sustainability and climate change they often want to know what they can do about it - both at home and at work. This is supported by the 2021 Gallup poll, published by SHRM, which reported that 70% of US workers said that an employer's environmental record is important to them and is a consideration when deciding whether to take a job with an employer. That's why UMBC Sustainability has put together this useful guide for infusing climate and sustainability thinking into various professional functions.

7 out 10 Employees

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Consider their employer's environmental record

Climate Change Branding Can Lift Recruitment and Retention

Job hunters are saying they want to work for employers that support efforts to stop climate change. Here's how employers can show prospects they are taking this requirement seriously.

SHRM / Jan 18

How Your Job Relates

Communications

Storytellers working to share UMBC's stories which are powerful tools

Open: Communication Professionals understand motivations and can help sway public perception and catalyze action. By engaging stakeholders, rethinking processes, creating climate-focused campaigns, and helping support climate policy advocacy, they can help ensure

Human Resources

**Shapes work operations, culture, and employee behavior**

Open: Human Resources can consider how to incorporate and infuse climate action in recruitment, and professional development, shaping workplace culture and making operational changes.

Leadership

The process of social influence, which maximizes the efforts of others, towards the achievement of a goal

Open: We all exhibit leadership it involves the knowledge that success comes with a willingness to change how things are done and to bring in fresh eyes to inspire new ideas

How many of the above functions does your job encompass on a regular basis? Each one of these topics has several sub-topics that apply to the function. Use this guide as your climate compass to determine opportunities to include sustainability and/or climate action into your role at UMBC.
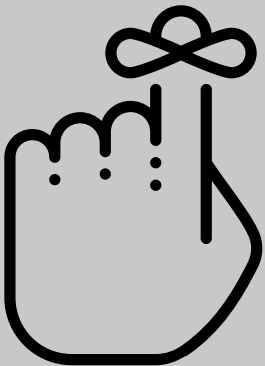
A good rule of thumb:
Rethink and reimagine everything, foster strong communities, and keep pushing forward.

Leadership

UMBC's leaders work to bring to life our community's vision: to redefine excellence in higher education through an inclusive culture that connects innovative teaching and learning, research across disciplines, and civic engagement. UMBC greatly values the voices and service of faculty, staff, and student leaders across UMBC and the University System of Maryland. You too are a leader and you can bring some climate and sustainability leadership into your office!

Search...

Interest	Action	Resources	Link
Governance	Include climate topics in every shared governance meeting	Climate Action Plan	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Governance	Provide climate-related educational opportunities for campus leaders	Green Office 2.0 Program	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-you-can-do/green-office/
Governance	Work with stakeholders to ensure adoption of climate-related commitments with clear and relevant key performance indicators	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Governance	Integrate climate and diversity requirements across shared governance	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Governance	Recruit shared governance members with climate expertise	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Risk	Understand campus risks with respect to climate-related disasters and any opportunities to mitigate climate risk	Climate Action Plan: Climate Resilience	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/climate-resilience/
Risk	Understand how shifting environmental laws and climate disclosure regulations affect cost-benefit analyses and business decisions	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/

Procurement

Whether you work in procurement or you're responsible for ordering supplies for your division, it's important to think about the message you're sending with the money that you spend. Consider the impacts of purchases and contracts

Search...

Area of Interest	Action	Resources	Links
Contracts	Research and adopt contractual language that addresses climate risks and impacts	MD Climate Solution's Now Act	https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mg
Contracts	Familiarize yourself with the physical risks of climate change (e.g., sea-level rise) and, if relevant, adopt contractual language to directly or indirectly allocate risk.	UMBC/FEMA National Risk Index	https://www.arcgis.com/apps/da
Specifications	Collaborate with vendors to develop or supply products with low-carbon materials that are optimized for circularity (i.e. repairable, recyclable, and recyclable).	MD DGS Environmentally Preferable Specs	https://dgs.maryland.gov/Docum
Suppliers and Supply Chain	Actively seek out and choose suppliers that align with UMBC's climate goals	Climate Action Plan	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/h umbc-is-doing/cap/
Suppliers and Supply Chain	Work with stakeholders to implement (and if appropriate enhance) DGS Green preferences for sustainable suppliers	DGS Green Purchasing	https://dgs.maryland.gov/Pages/
Suppliers and Supply Chain	Prefer suppliers that adopt and publish science-based emissions reduction targets	Science Based Targets	https://sciencebasedtargets.org/
Suppliers and Supply Chain	Use a climate justice lens by creating guidelines related to		

Communications

Communicating the work you are doing as related to climate change is important, but so is considering the environmental impact of the methods you use to communicate in general. Follow these guidelines to think about how to incorporate climate change into communications.

Search...

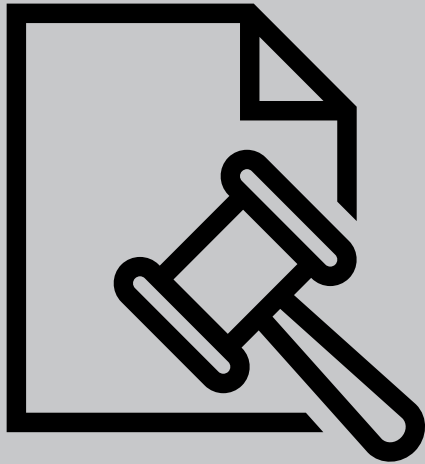| Area of Interest	Action	Resource	URL
Advertising Campaigns	Use climate-friendly imagery and characters in advertising	CC0 Climate Photos	https://unsplash.com/s/photos/climate-change
Collaboration	Collaborate with and learn from others leading on climate to scale the impact of campaigns	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Engagement	Use community ties for climate-related education and action campaigns	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Engagement	Find creative ways to nudge campus stakeholders to take their own climate action	Office of Sustainability Data & Tools	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/learn-more-new/tools/
Talking Climate	Understand where UMBC stands on climate action and start normalizing the climate conversation	Climate Action Plan	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/

Human Resources

Employees are becoming more and more concerned with the impact of their work on the climate, which means there are lots of opportunities to engage them in this work! Whether through employee volunteer programs or making the climate impacts of any job explicit, there's lots to think through on the HR side.

Search...

Area of Interest	Action	Resource	URL
Employees Benefits	Encourage employees to volunteer with climate organizations and participate in climate actions	Climate Action Steering Committee Working Groups	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Professional Development	Incentivize climate action training as part of onboarding and ongoing employee education at all levels of the organization, and especially for leadership.	Green Office 2.0 Program	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-you-can-do/green-office/
Recruitment	Integrate climate and sustainability requirements and metrics into job descriptions, objectives, and performance reviews	Climate Action Plan	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Culture	Foster a work culture where employees feel comfortable and are able to bring up climate concerns to leadership and take on climate at work	Climate Action Steering Committee Working Groups	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Culture	Provide employees with plant-rich snacks and meal options within food service or catering	Zero Waste Events	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-you-can-do/get-involved/events/
Culture	Work with stakeholders to develop clear climate performance metrics at the management level, for transparency and	Climate Action Plan	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/

Relations & Policy

Not only do we need to think about the impact that new climate legislation has on campus, we need to think about ways we can support legislation that helps combat climate change.

Area of Interest	Action	Resource	URL
Legislation	Tracking and prioritizing climate-related local, state, and federal policies.	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Legislation	Develop effective communications strategies and campaigns to publicly support climate legislation	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/
Legislation	Share campus understanding of the current and future policy and regulatory landscape to help campus craft an internal carbon price that can keep your UMBC accountable to its climate goals.	Climate Action Steering Committee	https://sustainability.umbc.edu/home/what-umbc-is-doing/cap/