

Terms of Reference
President's Task Force on
Climate Action and Sustainability



1. Purpose

The Strategic Plan: *People, Place and Potential* includes a commitment to the sustainable development goals as a cross cutting theme. The President's Task Force on Climate Action and Sustainability is established to provide advice to the President and senior leadership on climate action and sustainability direction, plans, policies and reports. The Task Force and its working groups will engage the VIU community in meaningful dialogue on climate action and sustainability to identify ideas and potential actions. The Task Force will then provide advice to the President and senior leadership on a framework and governance structure to enable VIU to take a strategic and sustained approach to address climate change challenges and identify priority actions to support sustainable development goals.

Vancouver Island University also has a Sustainability Advisory Committee which provides advice and recommendations to the AVP, Facilities & Ancillary Services in the matters of operational sustainability. This committee will be asked to support to the Climate Action and Sustainability Task Force in the form of a working group.

2. Duties of the Committee

The Committee will:

1. Develop and recommend a position statement on VIU's commitment to climate action and sustainability;
2. Develop an engagement and dialogue strategy focused on climate change and sustainability to enable the VIU community to share their hopes, ideas and potential solutions;
3. Develop a timeline and process for the development of VIU's Climate Action and Sustainability Plan identifying recommended content, goals, initiatives, actions, targets and reporting;
4. Provide a framework and recommend a governance structure to enable VIU to take a strategic and sustained approach to address climate change challenges and identify priority actions to support the sustainable development goals;
5. Identify opportunities for regional collaboration on climate action and sustainability.

3. Membership and Appointment

Membership is comprised of multiple, interdisciplinary stakeholders to ensure that academic and operational expertise is incorporated. The Task force is comprised of:

- 1) The Associate Vice-President, Scholarship, Research and Creative Activity, who will act as co-chair
- 2) The Associate Vice-President, Facilities, who will act as co-chair
- 3) Director, Enterprise Risk Management

- 4) Two deans, to be chosen by the co-chairs
- 5) One undergraduate student representative selected by the VIU Student's Union
- 6) One graduate student representative selected by the VIU Student's Union
- 7) Up to 6 faculty members from varying faculties or disciplines, to be chosen by the co-chairs

The individuals to be chosen by the co-chairs shall be identified based on an open call for expressions of interest.

It is expected that additional stakeholders with relevant expertise and/or accountabilities will work closely with the Task Force and may join occasional meetings to provide input or present information, and may serve on working groups.

In addition to the above, the Administrative Assistant, Environment and Sustainability will participate in Committee meetings and facilitate the collection and analysis of information regarding sustainability practices and curriculum, providing administrative support as well as developing materials for Committee deliberation.

4. Roles of the co-chairs

The co-chairs shall preside over Task Force meetings, and have the authority to:

- (i) Appoint members to the Committee from applicants
- (ii) Call additional meetings as necessary
- (iii) Strike working groups as necessary, as determined by the Task Force.

5. Task Force member roles

Task Force members are expected to:

- Attend regular meetings and participate in the fulfilment of Task Force mandate;
- Join working groups of the Committee as appropriate to support specific objectives;
- Liaise with other stakeholder groups on campus to advance implementation of climate action and sustainability objectives;
- Review and provide comment on draft documents in person and over email;
- Vote on decisions which fulfil the Task Force's mandate, including recommendations, reports, and proposed plans;

6. Term of Membership

The Task Force is expected to initiate in January 2022 and complete its objectives by February 2023.

7. Meetings

The Task Force shall normally meet monthly at the call of the co-chairs.

Meeting agendas and any associated information for review will be circulated after review from the Co-chairs, at least five business days in advance of scheduled meeting times. The Administrative Assistant, Environment and Sustainability will record minutes and circulate to the Task Force within ten business days of the meeting, for approval at subsequent meetings.

Meetings will take place via in person and virtual formats.

8. Reporting

The Committee shall report an update to the President in May, August and December of 2022 via the Co-chairs.

The Committee shall report out to the larger VIU community at least twice yearly.

9. Decisions

On the occasion that the Task Force makes recommendations to bring forward to the President and when doing so:

- (i) The committee will make every effort to operate on a consensus model.
- (ii) When consensus is not attainable, the committee will follow a democratic process.

10. Working Groups

The Task Force will form working groups to provide focused support for development or implementation of specific projects and actively engage stakeholders. Working groups shall each develop a terms of reference, meet as frequently as needed to fulfil their objectives, and report back to the Task Force at least once per term. All working groups shall have at least one member of the Task Force. Initially four working groups will be formed with the option to create others as needed.

1. WG on Engagement and Dialogue. This working group could develop an engagement strategy and lead dialogue opportunities at VIU to identify champions, stakeholders and to solicit ideas to leverage our talent and deepen our commitment/impact. This can feed into the actions that will eventually be in the plan and also in the potential governance model.
2. WG on Impact. This working group could pull together what VIU is currently doing with respect to climate action and sustainability (teaching, research, service and operations) and where there are initiatives/plans in motion that we need to be aware of. The focus would be on current and potential impact.
3. WG on Environmental Scan. This working group could look outside of VIU and scan/inventory what other universities are doing, what their action plans and governance structures look like, and what the literature and external bodies/reports are saying about university role in climate action and sustainability.
4. WG on Internal Risk and Adaptation Issues. This working group will undertake a risk assessment associated to climate change to help inform preparation and mitigation strategies.