



The University of Texas at Austin
Office of Sustainability

UT Climate Leaders

A bottom-up approach to university greenhouse gas emissions reduction

UT Office of Sustainability



Jim Walker
He/Him
Director of
Sustainability



Caitlin Griffith
She/They
Climate Leaders
Coordinator



Cara Ingram
She/Her
Climate Leader
Data Analyst



Fiona Wyrzten
She/Her
Climate Leader
Engagement Specialist



Anya Gandavadi
She/Her
Climate Leader
Engagement Specialist

UT Office of Sustainability

- Collaboration across operations, academic, and auxiliary units
- Major programs
 - President's Sustainability Steering Committee (PSSC)
 - Climate Leaders Program
 - Green Fund
 - Campus Environmental Center
 - Emissions Planning
- @TexasSustainability



Source: UT Daily

How We Got Here

- Growing national interest in climate change commitments over past decade
- Increased interest and advocacy from UT students, staff, and faculty
- Increased focus of UT research units
 - Planet Texas 2050
 - Energy Institute
 - Global Sustainability Leadership Institute

How We Got Here

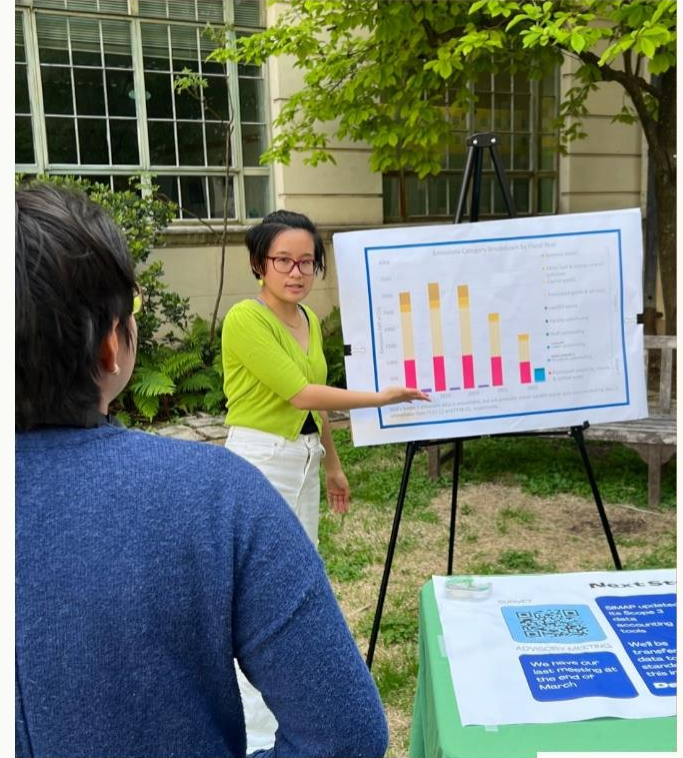


Climate Leaders Program

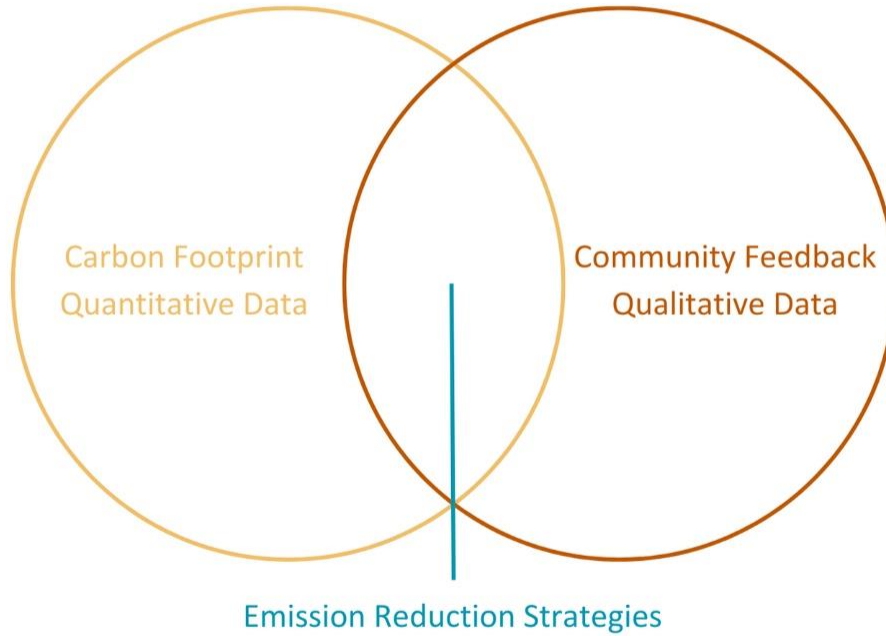
- Paid, year-long internship program (~8hrs/week, \$15/hour) for 10 students
- Hands-on, practical experience developing a greenhouse gas emissions reduction plan
- Focused on skill-building and professional development
- 77 applications for pilot year

Climate Leaders Program

- Designed to increase student leadership and peer engagement related to climate action
- Living lab, experiential learning program for undergraduate students
- Funded by President's University Budget Council and the Green Fund in November 2021 for three years
- Coordinated by the Office of Sustainability



The Big Picture



Expert Speakers

Twenty-three speakers have provided lectures and workshops to Climate Leaders throughout the year.



Zach Baumer

COA Interim Chief
Sustainability Officer

Austin Climate Equity
Plan



**Rev. Dr. Lynn
Osgood**

Priest, UT CRP
Professor

Community Engagement



Shane Johnson

Sierra Club

Environmental Justice



Erika Frahm

UT Organization
Effectiveness

Change Management



Dr. Alex Karner

UT CRP Professor

Data Visualization



Grace Hsieh

UT Energy Analyst

Energy Conservation

Program Roadmap



Pilot Colleges

- College of Liberal Arts

10,006 students

15 buildings

1,044,322 sq ft

- College of Natural Sciences

11,483 students

20 buildings

2,208,296 sq ft

- School of Architecture

700 students

4 buildings

142,506 sq ft

- Cockrell School of Engineering

8,000 students

7 buildings

1,626,169 sq ft

- Jackson School of Geosciences

400 students

3 buildings

293,000 sq ft

Data Analysts

Create a carbon footprint of a college in SIMAP and GHG Protocol, quantify emission reduction strategy potential, visualize and communicate findings.



Julia Harris
Environmental
Engineering
College of Liberal Arts



Samara Zuckerbrod
Sustainability Studies,
English
College of Natural
Sciences



Cara Ingram
Geology
Jackson School of
Geosciences



Louis Diara
Architectural
Engineering
Cockrell School of
Engineering



Mandy Tran
Environmental Science
School of Architecture

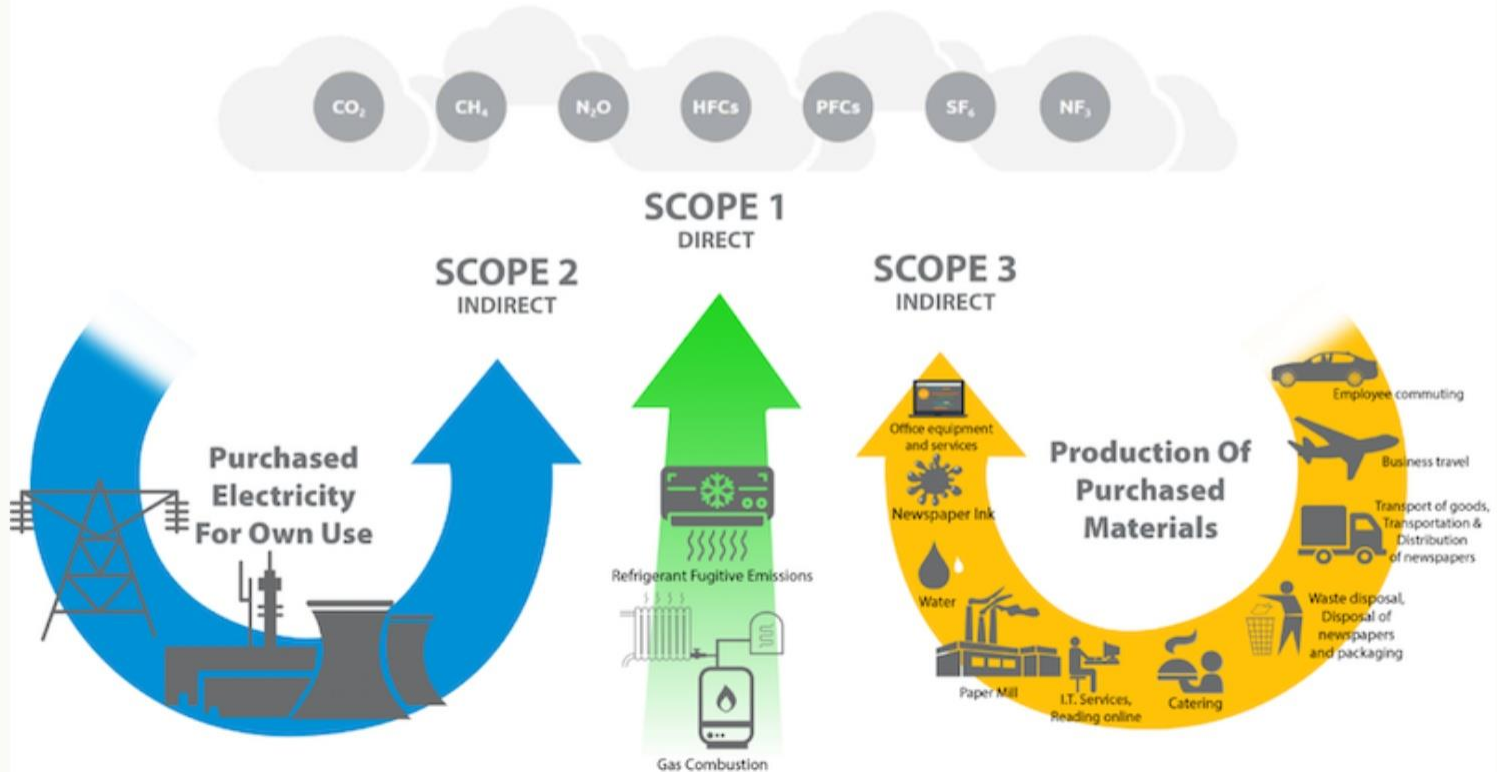
SIMAP



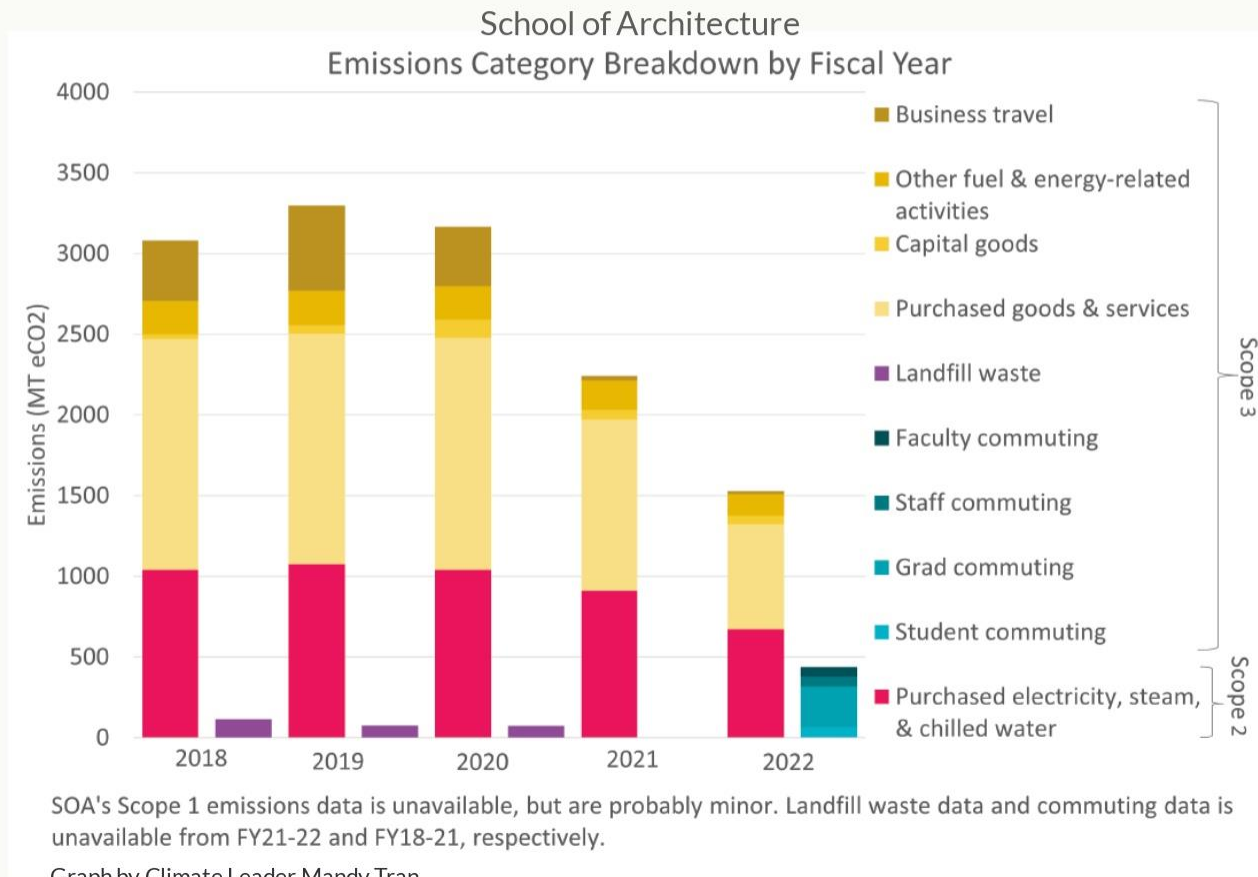
- Sustainability Indicator Mapping & Analysis Platform (SIMAP)
- A carbon and nitrogen-accounting platform that offers campuses a simple, comprehensive, and affordable online tool to track, analyze, and improve campus-wide sustainability
- Analysts also used Greenhouse Gas Protocol to map scope 3 emissions

Scopes

Emissions that are categorized by how and where they are created. Combined, they make up an institution's carbon footprint.



Data Visualization



Engagement Specialists

Solicit diverse stakeholder input on emissions reduction strategies via interviews and surveys, build and facilitate an advisory group to collect qualitative feedback.



Karla Salazar
Environmental Sciences
College of Liberal Arts



Fiona Wyrzten
Environmental Science
College of Natural
Sciences



Vivian Nguyen
Public Relations
Jackson School of
Geosciences



Anya Gandavadi
Environmental Science
Cockrell School of
Engineering



**Chloé Dentis
Ramirez**
Government
School of Architecture

Advisory Groups

- Small, diverse groups of volunteers from UT colleges that meet monthly to discuss Climate Leader team progress
- Help explore what strategies make sense for each college's culture
- Consist of undergraduates, graduates, faculty, and staff
- November, January, February, and March meetings
- Engagement specialists also survey and interview students, faculty, and staff and hold an "open house" in the spring for broader community feedback

Deliverables

- SIMAP Carbon Footprinting Certificate from University of New Hampshire
- Landscape analysis of peer institutions
- Greenhouse gas inventory of college
- Presentation & memo to dean

Program SWOT

- **Successes**

- Students are passionate & engaged

- Expert speakers are resources

- Effective at addressing scope 3

- **Weaknesses**

- Does not address institution-wide issues outside dean's domain

- Does not address scope 2

- **Opportunities**

- Pilot cohort will workshop schedule for next cohort

- Pilot cohort will leave program notes for next cohort

- Pilot cohort may assist with hiring next cohort

- **Threats**

- Funding only secured for three years (so far!)

- Keeping pressure on deans after cohort leaves to implement strategies



The University of Texas at Austin
Office of Sustainability

Thank you!

Questions?

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2022-2023 pilot cohort