

The Big 10 Student Sustainability Association

Proposal: To develop an association of students comprised of sustainability-oriented student organizations at all 14 of the Big 10 Schools.

Why? The reasons for this proposal are twofold:

1. **Short term:** To encourage broader collaboration, share ideas, give constructive feedback, and ultimately enact more sustainable change on each of our campuses.
2. **Longer Term:** To lobby for sustainability issues which pertain to the entire Big 10 Conference. (*eg. Would you like the Big 10 to become the first carbon neutral athletics conference in the world? See below...*)

How? How can we create the Big 10 Student Sustainability Association?

1. Contact sustainability organizations from every Big 10 University and propose the idea
2. Collect responses from all interested organizations
3. Determine one organization from each campus to serve as the official campus representative for the Big 10 Student Sustainability Association
4. Official campus rep will gather information about sustainability on their campuses
 - a. What major initiatives are students working on?
 - b. What have students worked on in the past?
 - c. What are the campus sustainability highlights? (Student driven or not)
 - d. What are initiatives that students would like to pursue?
 - e. What sustainability issues are most pressing on your campus?
5. Bring together all information gathered and begin to develop Big 10 Student Sustainability Association website
6. Develop official name and mission statement for what this association will be.
 - a. Figure out organizational structure and what exactly we want this association to be.
7. Once we have the website up and running, our name selected, mission statement developed, and our organizational structure, each campus rep will reach out to all sustainability organizations on their campus and formally invite them to be a member of the association.
8. Share information, collaborate, lobby, etc.

One B1G Idea: Carbon Neutral Athletics Programs!

The University of Maryland, along with every other Big 10 School, is a signatory of the American College and University President's Climate Commitment, and as such have established goals to reduce our carbon emissions progressively until we reach carbon neutrality in 2050. Our first goal was to achieve 15% emissions reductions in 2012, which we did successfully. Our second goal is to achieve 25% emission reductions in 2015, which we are working towards but unfortunately is not looking likely. Our third goal is 50% emissions reductions by 2020. This is the goal our campus is most closely focused on, and which will require the most significant changes. Currently, most of the carbon emissions at UMD are coming from two sources: our campus' natural gas power plant, and air travel emissions from study abroad, athletics, and professors attending conferences. The natural gas power plant is our campus' problem, **but the athletics air emissions is something we all have in common, and something we CAN change.**

We need to figure out a way for UMD, and all Big 10 schools to offset the emissions that they are creating through their athletic air travel. If we create the Big 10 Student Sustainability Association, students on all of the campuses could work together to lobby each of the Big Ten schools to contribute to a carbon offset fund, which would be used to offset emissions associated with air travel and stadium energy consumption on game days. Just for context, the UMD Athletic air travel carbon footprint was around 2000 MT-CO₂e last year, but that was just when we were in the ACC. We don't know yet how that will change in the Big Ten, but assuming it doubles to 4000 MT-CO₂e, and assuming \$5/ton for offsets, then it would cost around \$20,000 for UMD Athletics to have carbon neutral air travel. Stadium energy use would only add a bit to that, so it's pretty inexpensive in the grand scheme of things, considering how much money our athletics program makes every year. I'm not sure what the numbers are for other schools, but I imagine it'd be pretty similar. Instead, imagine if we were the first carbon neutral athletic conference in the world! It'd be incredible, and would have such a lasting impact.

Coming together as an official organization will give us legitimacy and the support of thousands of students across each of our campuses, and will allow us to lobby to the Big 10 commissioner on issues such as this.

Please respond to this message indicating whether you *are* or *are not* interested in the Big 10 Student Sustainability Association by filling out the following form:

<http://tinyurl.com/Big10Sustainability>