



Sustainability and the Academic Senate

OCTOBER 20, 2021

- **Climate**
- **Philosophical approach and definitional underpinnings**
- **Faculty involvement opportunities**
- **A hypothesis**



**Be the change our
youth seek in the
world.**

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Environment ▶ Climate crisis Wildlife Energy Pollution Green light

This land is your land
Environment

'No point in anything else': Gen Z members flock to climate careers

Colleges offer support as young people aim to devote their lives to battling the crisis


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About this content
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Mon 6 Sep 2021 06.00 EDT

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▲ Hundreds of protesters march to the White House calling for climate action, including a Civilian Climate Corps. Photograph: Allison Bailey/Rex/Shutterstock

California is facing a drought so devastating, some publications call it “biblical”. Colorado now has “fire years” instead of “fire

We are not helpless in the face of crisis

We have navigated Covid

We can navigate this as a family

We are in this with Nature

“You never change things by fighting the existing reality. To change something, **build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.”**

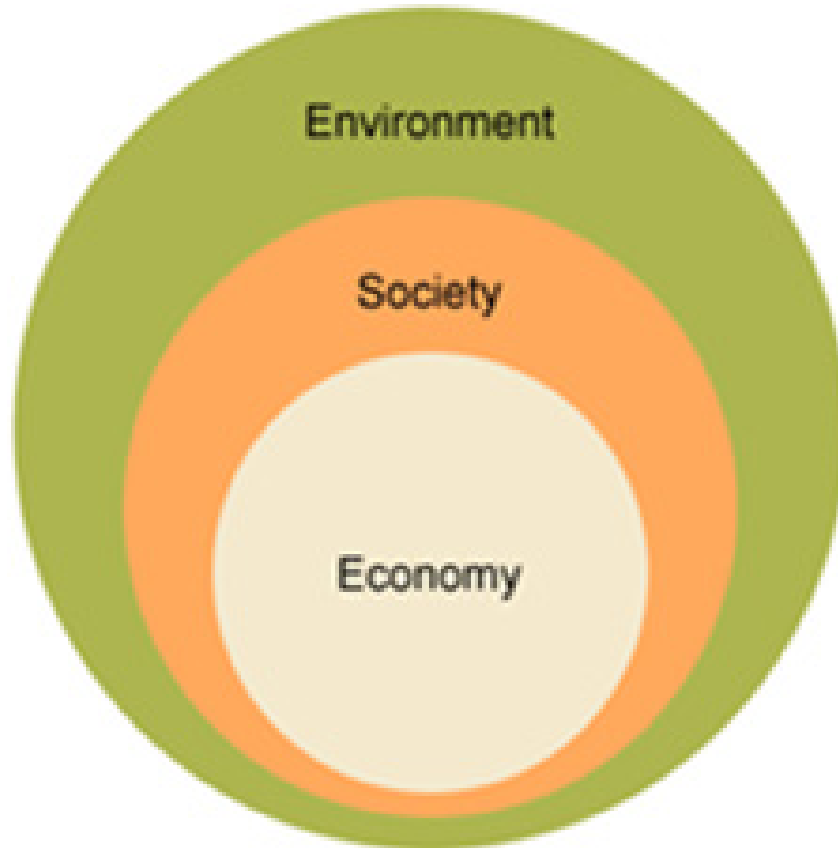
- Buckminster Fuller

**“If you can’t find a solution,
draw a bigger box around the
problem.”**

- Buckminster Fuller

Defining Sustainability at USC *(Draft for Discussion)*

- Sustainability is the alignment of economic and social systems with natural life support systems, maximizing positive feedback loops and minimizing trade-offs, in order to enable people and other species to thrive now and into the future.





SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS
17 GOALS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD



USC will serve as a premier leader by:

- Expertly **educating** society's future leaders, including in inclusionary problem-solving with a sustainability mindset
- Generating innovative and trans-disciplinary, solutions-oriented **research** outcomes
- Aligning university **operations** with natural systems, inclusive decision-making, and social justice
- **Engaging** our communities to solve challenges together and build a stronger, **inclusive**, healthier society



How the Academic Senate enables sustainability progress

- **Infuse** sustainability principles into courses, certificates, minors, graduate studies
- **Create new** sustainability courses
- Leverage campus and community for **experiential learning**
- Add **UN SDG** categories to course listings
- Support policies and programs that promote inter-disciplinary **solutions-based learning** in addition to deep, disciplinary expertise
- Pursue **interdisciplinary research** for applied solutions
- Pursue **community-based participatory research**
- Encourage **centralization** of non-mission functions (eg: purchasing, fleet support, IT)
- Support strong climate action and the upcoming **2028 Sustainability Plan**



“We can’t save the world by playing by the rules, because **the rules have to be changed. Everything needs to change – and it has to start **today**.”**

– Greta Thunberg

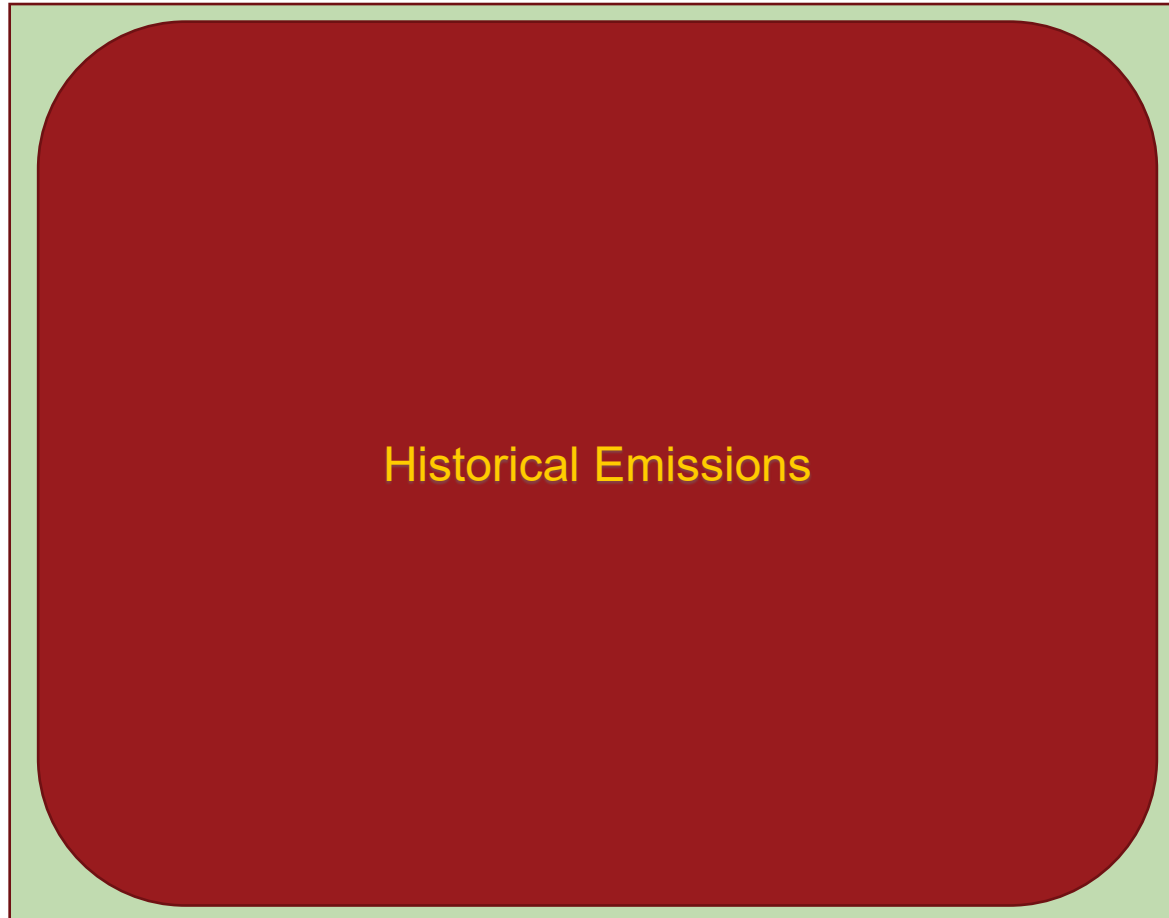
- The more **environmentally** and **socially preferable** solution **IS ALSO** the more **economically superior** solution **WHEN** the following two dilemmas are satisfactorily resolved within the larger system:
 - Who pays and who benefits? (ie: Externalities)
 - When are the costs paid and when are the benefits achieved? (ie: Time scale)

- **Key Drivers in Setting USC's Climate Goal:**
 - Climate science (IPCC Sixth Assessment Report)
 - USC sustainability pillars / leadership brand
 - Attracting / training students as leaders
 - Reducing climate footprint + social inequities
 - City and State climate goals
 - Fundraising potential
 - Media attention

USC Greenhouse Gas Emissions

Additional Emissions Measurement Opportunities

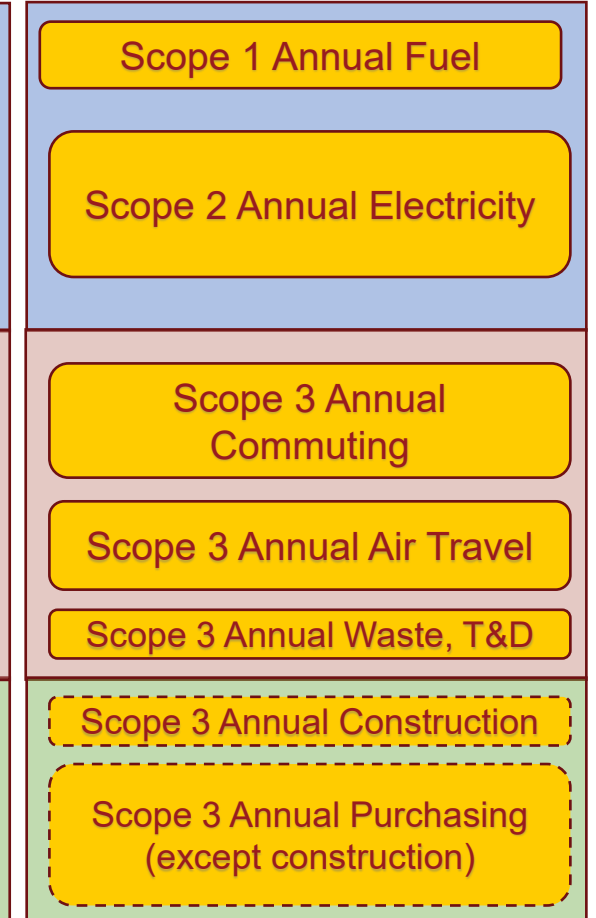
USC and USC Hospitals



USC



USC Hospitals



■ = tracking, current goal

■ = tracking, no goal

■ = no tracking, no goal