

Quarterly Update

April 2020



Higher Education
Working Group

TASK FORCE 1: Support climate action planning and implementation across the higher education sector



Current updates

- Developing a set of shared climate and resiliency goals for Boston's higher education sector to unite this group's actions towards interdependent climate action.
- Building off Northeastern student work to create a comprehensive Climate Action Planning Baseline spreadsheet that summarizes climate action planning efforts at institutions in and around Boston.
- Identifying existing climate action planning (CAP) materials and toolkits from AASHE, Second Nature, Center for Climate Change at Mohawk College, and the best practices of Boston area higher education institutions.
- Interviewed Mohawk College's Center for Climate Change team about their Campus Carbon Mitigation Initiative (CCMI).

Future projects

- Creating a Boston regional toolkit based on existing resources.

Collaborations



With task force 2:

- Gathering baseline information from Boston area higher education institutions. There may be a possibility of overlap in this work when it comes to consolidating outreach efforts. Goal 1 and Goal 2 have both been discussing opportunities to support resiliency focused climate action and research.

With task force 3:



- Creating toolkits based on similar resources including the CCMI from Mohawk College encouraging climate change action in Ontario Colleges.
- Discussing the need for an equity lens in this work, especially when considering financial resources, bandwidth, and diversity of communities served by different sectors.

TASK FORCE 2: Facilitate collaborative research that leverages the higher education sector's capabilities to promote solutions for equitable climate resilience and mitigation in the greater Boston area.



Current updates

- Gathering information from Boston area schools on their research strengths, existing projects, and pending research to support the creation of a research agenda that is co-created with researchers and implementers.
- Discussing how the climate change and COVID-19 connection may inform a shift in the focus of climate mitigation and resiliency research.

Future projects

- Potentially presenting HEWG Goal 2 purpose and future action steps at the Boston Area Research Initiative (BARI) remote conference on May 8.

Collaborations



With task force 1:

- Gathering baseline information from Boston area higher education institutions. There may be a possibility of overlap in this work when it comes to consolidating outreach efforts. Goal 1 and Goal 2 have both been discussing opportunities to support resiliency focused climate action and research.

With task force 3:



- Goal 3 learning from the community what tools or information they need to be successful in climate preparedness and linking these needs to research opportunities for Goal 2.

TASK FORCE 3: Transfer knowledge to other sectors to accelerate change for equitable implementation of climate mitigation and resilience



Current updates

- Determining best engagement and communication strategies across sectors, using Action Pact (Boston's cultural institution CAP network) and Mohawk College's CAP toolkit as resources.
- Considering the best ways to check in with different institutions and sectors about their status during COVID-19 and how HEWG work may support them.
- Compiling resources and reframing information to be relevant and applicable in meeting various sectors where they are, as a result of the pandemic.
- Identifying lessons from resiliency as it relates to COVID-19 and how they can be communicated to institutions.

Future projects

- Create a comprehensive list of various sectors and contacts to share this information.

Collaborations



With task force 1:

- Creating toolkits based on similar resources including the CCMI from Mohawk College encouraging climate change action in Ontario Colleges.
- Discussing the need for an equity lens in this work, especially when considering financial resources, bandwidth, and diversity of communities served by different sectors.



With task force 2:

- Goal 3 learning from community what tools or information they need to be successful in climate preparedness and linking these needs to research opportunities for Goal 2.

ALL GOALS

Current updates

All task forces are having conversations about the COVID-19 and climate action connection including:

- Identifying ways to incorporate resiliency and preparedness into CAP planning tools, outreach information, and research.
- Discussing how higher education is adjusting and pivoting in this time, calling for the GRC HEWG to do the same when taking steps to meeting the HEWG goals.
- Considering relevant and effective communication and engagement strategies.

Other Announcements

Events

[Boston Area Research Initiative Annual Conference](#)

April 24 – May 15, 2020

Resources

- [GRC HEWG Strategic Plan](#)
- [Mohawk College Campus Carbon Mitigation Initiative \(CCMI\)](#)
- [Climate Action Planning Baseline - Northeastern student work](#)