

Executive Summary of the Climate Mobilization Action Plan

In December of 2020 Union Theological Seminary declared a Climate Emergency, and dedicated itself, through the student-run Eco-Justice Caucus, to holding a Democratic Community Assembly to create a Community Mobilization Action Plan (CMAP). At this Community Assembly, consisting of students, faculty, and experts from within and outside of Union, students proposed edits, additions, and subtractions to the CMAP that was originally put together using guides by the GreenFaith's Green Seminary Initiative and The Climate Mobilization and the Democracy Collaborative. The students then voted on a final copy of the CMAP which is presented in summary form below.

Union Theological Seminary's CMAP plan centers on five goals that need to be reached by the Union community at large. The goals are to: 1) have practical and pedagogical partnerships with indigenous communities, 2) have zero-emissions by 2030, 3) gain Green Seminary certification through the Green Seminary Initiative, 4) be institutionally resilient to the effects of climate change, and 5) have a yearly community assembly to assess progress on the 10 year plan. The CMAP centers on three policy areas of focus: 1) Education and Community Programming, 2) Facilities and Sustainability, and 3) Eco-Justice, Engagement, and Resilience.

Curriculum: Theology and Ecology

Pursuant to goals of ecological justice at Union Theological Seminary and in the ministries of its alumni, UTS will add courses focused on theology and ecology, as well as integrating ecological concerns into already-existing required courses. Further, the Seminary will audit courses for remnants of the Doctrine of Discovery and promotion of a dominating attitude toward the earth and its creatures. The school will also offer at least one theology and ecology-oriented lecture to its immediate community and the general public, as well as hosting an interreligious panel on ecotheology. Additional goals include but are not limited to faculty members integrating eco-justice content where possible beyond stipulated additions to core curriculum, and to electives. Creation care and related topics could be explored with other seminaries, and the Seminary might strive to promote eco-justice oriented experience in further intellectual or hands-on manners.

Facilities and Sustainability

Union Theological Seminary aims to reduce carbon emissions to zero, water usage by 50%, 75% solid waste reduction, will encourage green infrastructure, and will reduce food insecurity by 100% by the year 2030. Union will/ has committed to implementing 100% renewable energy sources into newly-built facilities, will conduct water-use audits and install options for facility water-use, will conduct quarterly and annual waste audits, will install sustainable drainage systems, and will ensure at least one community meal a day to students and employees as well as a twice-weekly soup kitchen. Through benchmark meetings, Union has committed to reducing

emissions by a minimum of 15% annually. Both the long and short term goals set by UTS pertain to use of energy, water, waste, materials, grounds, and food services. Each long and short term goal will ensure sustainability on a communal and operational level by reaching students, faculty, and employees.

Eco-Justice, Engagement, and Resilience

To embody Union's mission 'where faith and scholarship meet to reimagine the work of justice' UTS will intentionally engage the community to resist climate devastation, in a way which recognizes our unique position as a leading moral and spiritual institution. To do this UTS will develop an Environmental mission statement as a guiding ethos which will be shared frequently with students, faculty, administration, and the board of trustees. UTS will divest from Chase and other banks which invest in fossil fuels and will work towards implementing ethical investments. UTS will simultaneously support those most affected by the climate crisis by becoming a disaster hub for the UTS and surrounding community, working with local community partners for mutual aid in disaster, prohibiting the removal of students from campus during emergencies, committing to support legislation that supports greater climate mobilization, and by establishing supportive partnerships with local Indigenous organizations.