**Chicano Studies Department**

**Sustainability & Climate Action Plan**

**Overview**

During Fall 2017, the Chicano Studies department was audited and assessed by PACES (Program for the Assessment and Certification of the Environment and Sustainability). Information was compiled using a Business Office survey, notes from a departmental walkthrough, and a survey completed by the building occupants. The results of the assessment as well as recommendations for future action are outlined in the report below. It is entirely up to the decision on the departments of which suggestions below to implement. Our hope is to present a variety of possible options from which your department can select.

**Transportation**

PACES was pleased to discover from the building occupant survey that from the building occupant survey, 40% of Chicano Studies employees commute using alternative to single-occupancy vehicles, including bikes, buses, and carpools. Additionally, all of the employees indicated that they have heard of UCSB’s Transportation Alternative Program (TAP), and half stated they participate. This program offers a variety of resources including discounts on bus passes that provide unlimited MTD bus use, vanpool subscriptions, and pre-tax payroll deduction.

PACES is also impressed by the department’s initiative to reduce emissions from daily transportation. The building occupant survey indicated that many employees bike to work daily. To further encourage more alternative transportation such as biking, PACES recommends the staff to participate in the CycleMAYnia annual Bike Challenge event, which runs through the whole month of May. During this event hosted by Traffic Solutions, volunteers from the community’s agencies, organizations, and businesses participate in the team-based competition to replace as many car trips with bike trips. The department can play a role in helping employees be more sustainable by engaging employees in team-based activities where employees can motivate one another. To sign up, please visit. <http://cyclmaynia.ning.com/>.

**Energy and Atmosphere**

100% of employees indicated on the building occupant survey that they turn of their equipment when they leave their desk. One way to easily facilitate and optimize this practice is by utilizing power strips in conveniently accessible areas. This increases the convenience and likelihood of building occupants turning off a large cluster of electronics and appliances at once. PACES recommends hitting the off switch on those power strips at the end of the day to reduce energy use. Cell phone chargers and other devices with a charging block should be fully unplugged or plugged into a turned off power strip when not in use. These are called “vampire” plugs and will still draw power when switched off. To remind office occupants to turn off the lights and appliances when leaving a room an extended period of time, another recommendation is to increase the amount of signage and/or stickers next to the light switches, appliances, and electronics (PACES can provide and help install these signs).

When computers are in use, PACES encourages all building occupants to turn the computer screen brightness down to each person’s own comfort level. A handful of building occupant survey respondents stated they adjust the brightness on their computer screen. The added brightness of a computer screen can be harmful to the eyes. Also, contrary to popular belief, screensavers often do not save energy. According to the US EPA, using a screen saver may consume more energy than not using one, and may prevent a computer from entering sleep mode. Particularly problematic screen savers are those with rotating images and/or bright graphics. Therefore, rather than setting the monitor to go on standby mode when idle, the PACES team recommends setting all department monitors to turn off after a certain period of inactivity and disable the screen saver.

In our department walkthrough, PACES was pleased to find that few of the office spaces contain a mini fridge. While the Chicano Studies department does not have a kitchen or sink, we encourage the use of a centralized office refrigerator, rather than multiple miniature fridges if possible. We understand that there are some challenges associated with a shared refrigerator, such as food theft and abandonment. In order to combat these problems we recommend clearly labeling all food containers with a name and date so that expired food may be identified and disposed of. PACES also recommends displaying food security resources near the common refrigerator, including the AS Food bank and student offices with available food vouchers. We can provide this signage for you. If a mini fridge is unavoidable, PACES recommends keeping the appliance free of frost build up to maximize energy efficiency.

Finally, during the walkthrough, PACES noticed a couple personal heaters and fans, indicating that employees are opting to bring in their own equipment in due to temperature discomfort. PACES advises your department to have ongoing communication with Facilities Management about temperature comfort concerns. By creating consistent communication through the work order system, facilities is better able to understand the severity of thermal issues.

According to the MSO interview and building occupant survey, Chicano Studies strives to complete purchase orders electronically, and sources from suggested vendors on Gateway. PACES was impressed with the departments coordination to order in bulk through email, and further encourages the department to purchase in bulk to minimize transportation and shipment trips. These efforts may be coordinated by encouraging staff, faculty, and graduate students to consider their future needs as well when ordering supplies.

Furthermore, it was indicated that the Chicano Studies department is very interested in sourcing more environmentally-friendly products, but was unsure on how to proceed. **Please refer to the attached “Green Workspace Guide” for more recommendations in this area.**

**Solid Waste Management**

It was indicated in the MSO interview and building occupant survey that there is a challenge in using reusable mugs and cutlery, due to the lack of a sink in the immediate vicinity. Although the lunch room offers disposable cups, PACES was pleased to discover that the department uses recyclable utensils and cutleries, and recycles used items when finished. PACES recommends sourcing reusable utensils and washing them in the nearest sink (4th floor).

By sourcing reusable food and drinkware, the department can effectively reduce the amount of waste going into landfills. Another consideration is to add reusable cutlery and towels in the breakroom and replace the disposable utensils. This should be combined with the UCSB Sustainability Linen Program for Food, Nutrition, and Basic Skills Program.

The building occupant survey indicated that slightly under the majority of the department employees consider the department’s recycling practices to be effective. An area where Chicano Studies may improve includes clarification on recycling fluorescent light bulbs and e- waste. As light bulbs are considered hazardous waste, please contact Environmental Health & Safety for hazardous waste removal. The nearest e-waste container can be found down the hall of the department building (South Hall). For larger e-waste items, please contact either the executive officer for the department or the Central Stores. **For more information regarding recycling on campus, please refer to the attached “UCSB Waste and Recycling Guide”.**

PACES is excited that the Chicano Studies staff show interest in the topic of recycling and, as a result, have a conscious effort to recycle. During the department walkthrough, the PACES team noticed that some of the recycling bins and trash bins were not paired next to each other. Occupants tend to use the waste management system most effectively when all of the options are present each time they go to dispose of an item. When not all of the options are available, employees may throw recyclables in the landfill container rather than finding a more inconveniently located recycling bin. Therefore it is important to always have a pair of trash and recycling bins, one solely dedicated to recycling and the other for trash. If an individual notices an unpaired bin, the department can contact Matt O’Carroll, UCSB’s Campus Recycling Manager, to acquire an additional bin. When reaching out, identify the specific room or hallway location, style of bin, and what is present/needed; this will improve the efficiency of the waste management program within the Chicano Studies department.

**Water**

From the building occupant survey, it was indicated that a majority of employees know how to report a leak or water waste situation. In this situation, employees should contact their department MSO in order to bring the leak to the attention of Facilities Management. By promoting quick and effective responses to water waste situations, we can strive to improve the water-saving practices exhibited by the department.

**Indoor Environmental Quality**

Chicano Studies can promote stretching exercises and healthy living to prevent office injuries. Programs are offered through the Rec Cen, however, a simple and less costly activity would be to request staff to step away from their desk for a few minutes a day to complete a group exercise. The exercise can be metacarpal stretches or simple yoga pose to keep individuals healthy and more productive.

Chicano Studies is also clearly aware of, and utilizes, services that Julie McAbee, UCSB’s Ergonomics Program Director, provides to assess and improve the ergonomics of workspaces. Feel free to invite her back periodically to reassess the office space. As mentioned in the Energy section of this report, task lamps can help improve both energy efficiency and functionality within the workspace. With lighting assessments to support the use of task lamps, MS. McAbee can assist in assessing which staff members and spaces can best benefit from an office lamp, and make recommendations for styles that follow ergonomic requirements. Beyond the use of task lamps, Ms. McAbee can also assist staff members with determining the appropriate adjustment for a sit-stand desk to meet ergonomic recommendations

It is also important to keep VOCs and all potential pollutants away from food preparation, and food storage areas to prevent ingestion of harmful particles and toxins. Chicano Studies has done this well by stationing the copier machine away from food handling areas and personal workspaces. For further precautions, staff members who change and refill printer ink and toner should wear gloves because the ink can be carcinogenic. PACES also suggest that Chicano Studies include this warning in staff training and/or orientation.

Another measure that Chicano Studies can implement to improve indoor environmental quality is encouraging staff members to refrain from eating at their desk. According to the building occupant survey, some of the staff eat lunch or breakfast at their desk daily. Refraining from this will decreases the chance of food particles lingering in the workspace, which decreases the chance of having pests. This will overall decreases the likelihood of needing to use toxins and harmful chemicals for extermination that can potentially harm building occupants in the aftermath of the extermination process.

To further improve the office indoor environmental quality, PACES recommends keeping desktop plants. Indoor plants like Spider Plant, Dracaena, or Snake Plant, can be helpful in improving the indoor air quality.

**Communication and Training**

In order to foster building-wide environmental awareness, Theater and Dance staff members should be informed of the current environmental excellence Chicano Studies administration has strived for. PACES recommends providing information through print materials to reduce the time impacts upon the department. Communication about the department’s sustainability goals and successes can be conveyed through print materials, such as handouts, signage, web pages, or emails. It is important to engage and encourage all staff to give regular feedback on how the office is operating because they understand their space and its functionality the best. By setting aside time and a space for staff to provide insightful sustainability suggestions, staff comfort and productivity can be improved. We recommend setting up a method to collect suggestions on an ongoing basis. This can be during a quick “check-in” time slot each meeting or an email inquiring for any comments and suggestions to the office operations. If Chicano Studies is interest in additional workshops or trainings, PACES can offer these workshops or, if the topic is outside of our scope, can help to identify trainers who can. Institutionalizing this effort through an education plan and consistent communication will benefit the departments’ overall efforts to promote and excel in sustainability.

For additional suggestions or comments, please contact:

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**PACES Assessment Checklist**

* Encourage employees to utilize the TAP program if applicable
* Encourage employees to utilize the CycleMAYnia program if applicable
* Incorporate task lighting to reduce the need for overhead lighting (contact UCSB’s Ergonomic Coordinator, Julie McAbee, for recommendations)
* Use power strips when applicable to make it easier to turn off all equipment when not in use
* Lower computer brightness to a comfortable level
* Disable computer screensaver
* Use the communal refrigerator whenever possible
* Provide resources for food security and labeling food near the communal refrigerator
* For all refrigerators, monitor and dispose of frost build up
* Keep small appliances in communal areas when possible
* Keep department communication with Facilities Management to improve indoor office quality
* Make office purchases in bulk, and encourage students, staff, and faculty to plan ahead when ordering supplies
* Apply for electronic course evaluations to reduce paper consumption/waste
* Source paper made from 50% or 100% post-consumer waste
* Choose green cleaning products when available (see the “Green Workspace Guide)
* Replace disposable cutlery with reusable alternatives, and also consider a reusable towel program
* Communicate guidelines for recycling materials and waste (see the “UCSB Waste and Recycling Guide”)
* Pair all landfill and recycling bins (contact Matt O’Carroll, UCSB’s Campus Recycling Manager, for replacement bins)
* Communicate guidelines for reporting water waste situations
* Consult Julie McAbee for workspace evaluations
* Advise employees to use glove when handling ink and toner
* Advise employees to eat away from the workspace to reduce pest presence and the need for pesticides
* Improve office air quality through indoor desktop plants
* Provide print materials to employees for department communications regarding sustainability practices
* Designate a method for collecting feedback from employees on department sustainability practices

**Contact List**

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