**Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program and Manual**

By Briana Prado

Environmental Studies B.A., 2020

Earth Sciences B.S., 2020

bprado@ucsc.edu

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Provost Sustainability Internship Program

Transportation and Parking Services (TAPS)

Mentored by Cathy Crowe ( cacrowe@ucsc.edu)

**Abstract**

Monetary, environmental and administrative conditions impact how students from the University of California, Santa Cruz get around campus. A growing number of students and a shorter inbetween class times makes student’s abilities to get on and off campus a difficult task. The Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program hopes to alleviate this notion by promoting people-powered forms of transportation and resources through direct outreach and use of the Sustainable Transportation resource manual. This resource manual will be distributed to freshman, transfers and international students at the beginning of fall quarter and promoted throughout the rest of the year. I hope to promote and strengthen the knowledge students have of the resources available at UCSC that are funded by student fees. The University of California is dedicated to reaching the goal of carbon neutrality by 2025 by having over 75% of campus travel be by foot or bike. The information collected this year via surveys and focus groups will influence how the Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program will be test piloted in Colleges Nine and Ten during the 2018- 2019 academic year.

**Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program**

**Introduction:**

**Carbon Neutrality or Net Zero Emissions: Absorbing as much Carbon Dioxide as an agency or institution releases to offset and cancel out the amount released.**

The Campus Sustainability plan is a set of goals suggested by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP) and covers areas such as Materials Management & Food Systems, Natural Environment & Infrastructure, and Climate & energy.

A critical aspect of sustainability at UC Santa Cruz is transportation. Many transportation initiatives on campus aim to reduce single-occupancy vehicle use (SOV), or one person driving a car. The Sustainability Office estimates SOVs make up 35% of trips to campus. Surveys in 2011 and 2012 found the number of trips to campus to be the same as in 1997 despite the fact that the student body increased by more than 5,000 students between 1997 and 2011. Although this is only 1/3 of car usage on campus, SOVs produce the most fossil fuel emissions per person and contribute to the increase in traffic and the scarcity of parking. Carpooling, transit, cycling, and walking instead, could effectively reduce the intensity and frequency of these issues.

In order to continue striving toward UCSC’s Carbon Neutrality by 2025 goal of 70% of on-campus travel be by walking, biking or electric vehicles, stakeholders like TAPS, the Sustainability Office and interning students have joined together to create the Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program under the Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP).

One of the transportation goals detailed in the Campus Sustainability Plan (CSP) to help reach carbon neutrality is **STRATEGY 3.2: “**Develop an outreach strategy to promote sustainable transportation culture and prioritize human-powered on-campus travel at UC Santa Cruz.” To do so, **ACTION 3.2. A** recommends we “pilot a sustainable transportation peer-to-peer advising program with outreach activities. By utilizing the actions outlined by the CSP and TAPS, the sustainability office hopes to “expand intra-campus transportation programs such as bike sharing and bicycle-pedestrian infrastructure. The intent is that by “2025, all UC campuses shall reduce the percentage of employees and students commuting in single occupancy vehicles (SOV) by 10 percent relative to their 2015 SOV commuting rates.”

**Project Description 350-700 words**

The purpose of this project involved promoting people-powered forms of transportation like walking and biking particularly amongst frosh, transfers and international students. We have observed through in-person interviews, surveys, focus groups and outreach that these student demographics are not well informed about the resources available on campus. Surveys and the focus groups I conducted suggest that this is due to inadequate transportation-related communication upon arrival to UCSC between students and agencies like the Housing Offices, Residential Assistants (RA’s) and Transportation and Parking Services Department ( TAPS).

According to my focus groups, some have never actively used public transport, walked extensively or used bikes as their main method of getting around before coming to UCSC. (citation). Thus a deliverable for this project included creating a resource manual booklet that offers all transportation-related resources offered within UCSC and to travel at a city and regional level. Compiling student fee funded resources into a physical and electronic booklet that students receive at the beginning of the year saves student the hassle of diving through a lot of information. According to our Focus groups, students feel bombarded with a lot of information upon arriving at UCSC. By offering a booklet that connects and synthesizes all transportation resources into compact bits of information, allows students to interact with the sources without becoming overwhelmed with technicalities. I hope that the convenient nature of the booklet inspires students to flip and try to read the information.

I worked with graphic designer Dagmar Kuta to make a compact, readable and aesthetically pleasing resource manual. The hiring process was quite simple. I asked Kyra Fitts, creator of the Blueprint for a Sustainable Campus booklet for who she worked with. Within 2 weeks, Dagmar and I met to plan and work through the information I had collected.

Another goal of this project is to select dates for the outreach peer to peer advisor team to reach out to the larger student body. Dates like OPERS fest and weeks leading up to breaks and big weekends were annotated for tabling at bus stops, dining halls and other key spots on campus to inform students how to get home suitability and cheaply get home. Another major goal was to simply understand the type of help students need to switch to more sustainable alternatives. Through surveys and focus groups I investigated the questions: What do students really want to know about transportation? What resources could we further develop or promote to enhance student experiences with transportation that could help us reach their carbon neutrality goal and make student’s life a little easier? We delved deep into the styles people like being approached. Did students want someone to show them the fastest way to get to class, or would they prefer emails sent to them with all this information? Are RAs important stakeholders in sharing transportation information with new students? Is peer to peer communication more effective or is there a better way?

Through holding focus groups, surveys and talking to other student organizations I have gained several ideas as to how I will approach the 2018-20109 academic year. Because TAPS Measure 69, a measure that would slowly increment the amount of student fee fundings going towards Transportation like the loop, Metro Buses, Nightcores, bike shuttle did not pass, students will face the consequences of limited buses and competition for an increase for parking. As unfortunate as this is, I hope this motivates the greater campus community to look into doing their part in getting around in a sustainable fashion. Building out this situation is not a feasible solution with a surface parking space costing $30,000. It takes an external pressure to motivate a community to seek alternatives.

**Project Timeline**

**Fall Quarter:**

**10/31/17** – Met with Cathy, Teresa and Kristen to understand how the Sustainability Student Advisor program is running, to see if I would create a program similar or find paths for collaboration.

**11/08/17–** Volunteered at the Bike Path Pop Up @ College 8 3:30-5pm: the first glimpse into bike culture and practical outreach is done by Ecology Action

**11/14/17 -** Submitted the Campus Sustainability Plan Grant.

**Winter Quarter:**

1/29/18 – Attended webinar on how to organize events and get people passionate about sustainability

**2/5/18 – 2/10/18 -** Conducted surveys with Santa Cruz Metro: I understood how to create a survey that takes into consideration your demographics and the type of info that you are trying to collect.

**2/14/18 –** Spoke with Sara Woodside ( CRE for College Nine & 10): She gave me critical info on how to work with RA’s and increase communications between TAPS and the housing office

**3/2/18 –** Met with Kyra (BFASC coordinator): she provided me with plenty info from the student perspective in how to promote transportation and how to create a booklet pamphlet that people are actually interested in interacting with.

**3/6/18 –** Attended SUA meeting about Transit Fee, it was really important in making me realize the importance of the work that I am doing. Sustainable transportation is how UCSC must pool through to be more environmentally friendly and safe.

**3/18/18** Women of Color Conference: Inspiring me to take further ownership of the work I am doing.

**Spring Quarter:**

**4/5/2018 –** Compiled most of manual

**4/8/2018 –** Analyzed RA survey and found interesting trends; created a new survey to send out to the general populace ( over 100 students responded!)

**4/17/2018 -** meet with Dagmar to agree on creating the manual!

**5/2 -5/3 –** Host student focus groups.

**5/21 &5/23** - Buy stickers to place on water bottles

**5/26** - finished budget and timeline

**5/31 -** finsihed premilinary Manaul

**6/1 -** got resource manual checked out by Cathy

**6/8 -** turn in all materials ( Resourc

e manual, budget and timeline, get confirmation from C9&C10 professional staff on installing the program, time log hours, journal etc.

**Project Stakeholders, Student & Mentor Roles:**

The Provost’s Sustainability Internship pairs students with different departments within UCSC to create and manage a year-long project that promotes sustainability on campus. This year I worked with Cathy Crowe to develop a budget, timeline, education materials and plan of execution for the Sustainable Transportation Peer Advising Program. As a mentee and intern, my job involved grasping the history of TAPS ( the essence), the resources for students offered through this department, what the TAPS administration is currently doing and working on and what previous interns have done to over the years to get people excited about walking and biking on campus. Since I knew little about TAPS and transportation at the beginning of this project, it took several months to fully understand what TAPS is and wants to do. Once I grasped the story of TAPS, I became a liaison for TAPS and other resources on campus. As I started piecing information( history of UCSC) together I began to understand why things are the way they are. Posing these questions to Cathy served as a sort of creativity generator. Cathy helped me solve my “silly” questions that looked at bigger problems or issues that we should look at or address and many times this gave us direction.

The CSP grant given to us by the Sustainability office was another major stakeholder.

I used the money to buy water bottles, food for focus groups and give away materials. From experience, Cathy and I realized that giveaways and food greatly motivate people to participate in events.

**Sarah Woodside** - our 1 hour long conversation gave me insight into how to best reach RA’s and members. She insisted that I come to the Weekly Monday meetings to give short presentations on what TAPS wants to do. She also suggested doing a Survey of RA’s and the most common concerns they have heard from students. She said Spring and Fall quarters are prime times.

**Liz ( POCSC) -** she gave insight on how to create/promote/ and get a survey on and about. She told me that she tabled constantly, put flyers in bus stops + quarter sheets around cafes and libraries. Gave me insight on how long the survey was out and who to contact to understand the data one receives.

**Kyra Fitz -** Kyra created the Blueprint for a sustainable campus last year. I thought her pamphlet fell in line with the type of end product I wanted to create. She described to me how she compiled all the information. She also informed me what type of people and who to contact if I wanted artwork contributed into or needed some help with creating a nice and attractive pamphlet. She also recommended me who to contact for distribution of pamphlet as well as linked me to another student working on critical outreach material for future students here @ UCSC.

**Measurable Results 200-400 words**

The way the Sustainable Transportation peer advising program will measure results will be by 1. Creation and completion of the manual

2. Dispersion of the manual to all frosh, transfers and international students at the beginning of the next academic year (Fall 2018)

3. Sending out a survey to students about the manual and asking how were they able to interact with it?

4. Interviewing RA’s if they saw a change in the type of questions they were asked by their students.

5. Observing trends collected by the Sustainability office on transportation. Seeing if there was any difference between this year and the next.

##### **References:**

(CSP) https://sustainabilityplan.ucsc.edu

(TAPS WEBSITE) (https://taps.ucsc.edu)

(TAPS Slides)

(Sustainable Practices OOTP)

(https://www.ucop.edu/sustainability/\_files/annual-sustainability-report2016.pdf)

**Appendices:**

