

UBC DEPARTMENT OF ASIAN STUDIES CLIMATE INITIATIVES

UPDATED AS OF MAY 2024

TEACHING



- Encourage faculty to incorporate environmental and/or climate change case studies and literature into existing courses where relevant
- Minimize printing of teaching resources in the Asian Centre by charging department members to pay for copying papers in the building, with exceptions for certain course materials. The use of digital course materials such as pdfs are encouraged instead
- ASIA 570B (042) – Indigenous Environmentalism in Asia [3.0 credits] (Taught in W2023-2024)
Instructor: Dr. Pasang Sherpa



TRAVEL



- Encourage department staff to reduce commute-related emissions by implementing a weekly remote workday known as Green Fridays
- Incentivize local and virtual and hybrid faculty conference attendance with subsidized costs for carpooling, train and bus passes and virtual conference fees (rather than conference travel)
- Purchase carbon offsets for department-funded flights that are deemed necessary

RECYCLING/REPAIR/REUSE



- Conducted a waste audit of public waste bins in the Asian Centre
- Created a department waste audit toolkit to share our waste audit methodology with other UBC units
- Expanded alternative waste recycling to include soft plastics, Styrofoam, and writing utensils.
- Organized an electronics recycling collection period, and currently are developing an Electronics Repair and Recycling Policy
- Office staff manage a free book table accessible to all department members and are expanding the table to office stationery donation and exchange

ADVOCACY AND COMMUNICATIONS

- Founded the Asian Studies Sustainability Initiative Committee in 2020
- Utilized a workplace sustainability fund to host a month of eco-challenges about waste, energy, connecting with nature, reducing water consumption, education, etc.
- Created a webpage about our committee on the Asian Studies department's website
- Hired a Sustainability Assistant Work Learn student to assist with department sustainability projects
- Provided occasional sustainability updates and resources in department newsletters
- Provided a series of sustainable resources on our committee webpage targeted towards departmental community members
- Hosted a circular economy workshop for staff and faculty
- Planning a three-part eco-skills workshop series for the late summer and fall of 2024 utilizing workplace sustainability funding

EVENTS AND PURCHASING



- Implemented a Furniture Policy incentivizing the purchase of second-hand furniture from UBC Reuse-it! and disposal into second-hand streams
- Offer reusable cups, plates, utensils, and dish washer services for smaller scale events organized by department staff
- Provide compostable containers instead of plastic or paper for larger events requiring disposable food containers
- Integrating sustainability into the events information available on our department AIR site
- Exploring ways to enhance social and environmental procurement processes by partnering with the UBC VP Finance & Operations Procurement Programs team to review current spending

