

UCOP Green Home Office Certification Program

UCOP’s Sustainability Affinity Group (SAG) is bringing a fun sustainability challenge to your work-from-home office! Challenge yourself to assess your home office footprint and learn green themed tips along the way. All participants will receive a Green Home Office certificate and be entered into a raffle giveaway!

Complete the below assessment to evaluate your work from home space. Next, report your scores [here](#) to be entered into the raffle giveaway and receive your Green Home Office certificate. Each point you receive in the assessment will count as an entry into the giveaway. The UCOP Green Home Office Certification Program will run through Earth Month; with the assessment **opening on April 1st and closing on April 30th**. At the end of the month, SAG members will review completed assessment forms, send out certificates via email, and conduct the gift card raffle.

A raffle ticket will be awarded for each point earned in the assessment. Three random winners will be selected to receive a \$25 ACE Hardware e-gift card. These gift cards could be used to purchase sustainable products that can further green your home such as LED lightbulbs and water efficient showerheads.

1. Energy Conservation

Reducing energy consumption when working from home not only reduces greenhouse gas emissions, but reduces your electricity bill.

Do you reduce your computer/laptop power usage by following the below recommendations?	1 point	
TIP: Adjust your computer’s energy settings so that it goes to sleep if it is inactive for more than 5 minutes. Verify that the energy saving features are turned on.		
Do you turn down the brightness on your laptop/monitor?	1 point	
TIP: It is important that your screen brightness be at about the same brightness as your surroundings to protect your eyes and conserve energy.		
Do you unplug devices or use a power strip?	1 point	
TIP: Many electronics still use power, even when they appear to be off. Make sure that any unused devices are unplugged or in energy-saver mode after work and generally when not in use.		
Have you recently viewed your monthly energy bill and <u>researched time of use plans</u> ?	1 point	
TIP: Time of use plans can help you save money on your energy bill and reduce your energy usage. Utility website’s also have helpful tips on how to reduce your home energy usage.		

Do you opt for sweaters or blankets instead of adjusting the thermostat?	1 point	
<p>TIP: While working from home, you may be tempted to alter your thermostat. In order to reduce energy consumption and increase your savings, you may want to opt for clothing items or blankets instead. You can also utilize windows and sunlight to take in some of the sun's warm rays or a fresh breeze.</p>		
Have you replaced all possible bulbs at home with LEDs?	2 points	
<p>TIP: Conserve energy and save money by switching out old light bulbs with energy efficiency LEDs. As a UC employee, you can save on LEDs through the Million LED Challenge.</p>		
Do you maximize natural light in your work from home office?	1 point	
<p>TIP: If possible, utilize natural daylight at home to enjoy sunlight while reducing your energy consumption. Research suggests that natural light can boost Vitamin D in your body, help you sleep better and longer, increase productivity, and enhance your mood!</p>		
Do you reduce meat consumption or choose sustainable meats?	2 points	
<p>TIP: Reduce meat consumption and/or choose locally farmed and sustainable meats (organically raised, cage-free, grass-fed etc.). Opt for chicken instead of beef to reduce your water footprint. It takes 1,800 gallons of water to produce 1 pound of beef, 216 gallons for 1 pound of soybeans, and 468 gallons for 1 pound of chicken. (Water Footprint Calculator) Learn more about the environmental impact of your meat consumption here.</p>		
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS		10

2. Water Assessment and Conservation

Do you try to cut back your shower time?	1 point	
<p>TIP: The average non water savings shower head has a water flow rate of 2.5 gallons per minute. If you cut back just a minute of your shower every time, you can save hundreds of gallons every year!</p>		
Have you switched to a water efficient showerhead?	2 points	
<p>TIP: Water efficient showerheads, or “low flow” deliver between 1.6 and 2.5 gallons per minute while modern standard showerheads deliver up to 3 gallons per minute. Low flow showerheads can run you as little as \$10 and will save your family thousands of gallons of water. Efficient shower heads also save energy, because less water is being heated, which in turn saves you money. Also, look for a showerhead with a shutoff feature which reduces the water flow to a trickle while you lather up your hair and skin. Read the guidelines for the EPA's WaterSense Label certified showerheads.</p>		

Water Assessment

You will need one 32 oz (quart) container and a sharpie or tape.

1. Use a sharpie or piece of tape to divide your container into quarters (this is to assist with eyeballing).
2. Turn your water on the highest force and fill up your quart container for 6 seconds.
3. Multiply the number of quarts filled in 6 seconds by 10, then divide this number by 4 (60 seconds/minute, 4 quarts/gallon). For example, if your quart filled up 3/4 of the way, your equation would be $(0.75 \times 10)/4 = 1.9$ gallons/minute.
4. Record this number and repeat the process with all relevant faucets in your office/house - kitchen and bathroom sinks, showers, etc.
5. Remember that the water used for these flow tests can be used to water plants, do dishes etc.!

"Low Flow" for bathroom faucets and showers = 1.2 gallons/minute

"Low Flow" for kitchen faucets = 1.8 gallons/minute

"Low Flow" for Water filters/aerators = 0.78 gallons/minute

If any of your faucets leak, use this [online leak calculator](#) to see how much water is wasted per day. Round up to the nearest whole number.

If you have an aerator on any of your sinks count those as low-flow faucets in your calculation.

Scoring: What percent of your faucets are low flow or have an aerator?

Water	% of water faucets in home that are low-flow	Score	
	0- 25%	7/10	
	25% - 50%	8/10	
	50% - 75%	9/10	
	75% - 100%	10/10	
	<i>How much water do your leaks waste per day?</i>		
	1 gallon wasted	-1	

TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	13	
----------------------------------	-----------	--

3. Waste Assessment

Waste Assessment
<p>1. Look over your county/city recycling and composting guidelines to ensure you are properly sorting your waste to reduce your footprint! SF City and County Recycling and Composting for Residents DC Recycling Guide Riverside Trash & Recycling Guide Alameda County Residential Recycling Guide Oakland Recycling and Composting Guidelines Contra Costa County Recycling and Composting Guidelines Sacramento Recycling and Solid Waste Guidelines Learn more about how to recycle bulky items, hazardous waste, etc.</p> <p>2. If you are doing the full assessment, lay out a tarp (inside or outside) and dump out your trash can onto it.</p> <p>3. With gloves, go through your trash and count how many items could have been recycled.</p> <p>4. Once you have this number, divide it by the total number of items in your trash, then multiply this by 100. For example, if you have 6 pieces of contamination, and there are 30 items in your trash, your equation would be: $(6/30) \times 100 = 20\%$ contamination.</p> <p>5. Repeat this process with your recycling bin.</p> <p>6. If you do not wish to manually go through your trash and recycling, you can visually scan your bins, possibly over the course of a few days as both fill up. Use your observations to estimate a percent of contamination.</p>

Scoring: What percent contamination was present in your trash and recycling bins? (Calculate and give points for each separately)

Waste	<i>What percent of your trash should be in the recycling?</i>	Score	
	0-20%	5/5	
	20% - 40%	4/5	

	40% - 60%	3/5	
	60% - 80%	2/5	
	80% - 100%	1/5	
	<i>What percent of your recycling should be in the trash?</i>		
	0 - 20%	5/5	
	20% - 40%	4/5	
	40% - 60%	3/5	
	60% - 80%	2/5	
	80% - 100%	1/5	
	Doesn't have Recycling	0/5	

Do you compost or divert your food waste from the landfill in some way?	1 point	
<p>TIP: Many California cities offer curbside composting to residents. If you live in an area without curbside composting, there are still other composting options for you. Visit the EPA's "Composting at Home" site to learn how to compost, what to compost, and what the benefits are.</p>		
Do you reduce your paper waste by printing on scratch paper, printing double-sided, or sending documents digitally instead of printing?	1 point	
<p>TIP: According to the EPA, 1 ton of paper is made using 15-17 mature trees.</p>		
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	12	

4. Environmental Justice and Activism

Environmental justice and social justice are intrinsically interconnected. The impacts of climate change are and will continue to disproportionately impact marginalized and vulnerable populations, exposing the inequities that exist at the core of our societies and institutions.

Take the following actions to engage yourself in this space and become an activist for environmental, social, and racial justice.

Watch a documentary/film on social, racial, or environmental justice (+1 for each watched).	1 point	
<p>TIP: See below for some suggestions: A Brief History of Environmental Justice The Rights of Nature: A Global Movement Feeling Climate Change: The Real Environmental Disaster 13th (Netflix) LA '92 -(Hulu) I am Not your Negro (Youtube) Say Her Name: The Life and Death of Sandra Bland (Hulu) Flint (Netflix)</p>		
Educate yourself about the indigenous history of the land you live on.	1 point	
<p>TIP: Learn about the territory and indigenous history of the land that you inhabit. Visit Native-Land.ca and research and support local native organizations in your area.</p>		
Support small and local BIPOC owned businesses.	1 point for shopping locally where you can, 2 points for almost always shopping local	
<p>TIP: Purchase from local BIPOC owned businesses to close the racial wealth gap, celebrate BIPOC cultures, and encourage sustainable economic development.</p>		
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	4	

5. Health and Wellness

Have you made your work-from-home office ergonomically-friendly?	1 point	
<p>TIP: You can find resources on ergonomic best practices here. Ask your department about the opportunity to incorporate walking meetings in your work day.</p>		
Have you developed a strategy to make a clear division between when you start and end work?	2 points	

TIP: You can create an imaginary commute by going for a 15-minute walk before starting your work day and at the end of your work day.		
Do you follow the EPA's 6 steps for safe and effective disinfectant use?	1 point	
TIP: Following the EPA's guidelines will ensure your household is safe and will lower your environmental footprint.		
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	4	

6. UCOP Community

Would you like to showcase how you are staying sustainable while working from home to be featured in Link? (You can send a picture and description to sustainability@ucop.edu)	2 points	
TIP: This article will help other UCOP colleagues find innovative ways to stay sustainable and connected to the UCOP community while working from home!		
TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	2	

ASSESSMENT TOTAL POSSIBLE POINTS	45	
---	-----------	--

Ranking	Points
Bronze	<14
Silver	15-24
Gold	25-34
All Star	35+

References:

Geck, K., Vaughan, E., Vendegna, E. (2020) [UCSC Home Office Assessment Challenge](#)

Metzgar, C. (2020) [How To Go Green In Your Home Office](#)