



UVM's Student Government Association discussed student voting and changes to the former Clean Energy Fund at their weekly meeting Oct. 6.
Photo: Allion Ouellette/The Vermont Cynic

Students and admin broaden goals of student fund for environmental projects

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A fund for environmental projects has been revised to engage more students due to low levels of student involvement in the past, despite the fact that students' tuition finances the fund.

UVM's Student Government Association discussed the changes to the fund during their Oct. 6 meeting. The group also talked about student voting and gave committee updates Tuesday night.

The shift from the Clean Energy Fund to the Sustainable Campus Fund:

Formerly known as the Clean Energy Fund, the now Sustainable Campus Fund is a pool of money that finances projects to achieve energy efficiency, renewable energy and other sustainability projects.

Undergraduate students pay \$10 each semester through their tuition to the SCF, and all students can submit their project proposals to the fund.

The mission of the fund was recently redrafted to "support student's vision of enhancing a culture of sustainability, innovation, and research on campus," to broaden the scope outside of clean energy projects.

Fund Coordinator Elizabeth Palchak announced the name change and the new terms Oct. 6.

"It was started in 2007 by some really innovative students who said they wanted to release funding to address climate change through projects and ideas that could be implemented on campus," Palchak said.

Last year Jillian Scannel, former president of SGA, prompted the change. Scannell appealed to VP of Finance Richard Cate, requesting the fund expand to live student engagement.

Students interested in submitting a proposal should do so before Oct. 23.

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The Boulder and Tower Societies to Encourage Voting:

SGA also discussed student voting in the upcoming presidential election throughout the meeting.

Only [42.8 percent of UVM undergraduate students voted in the 2016 election](#), 5% below the national voting average of college students, according to an Oct. 8 Cynic article.

The group announced that the The Boulder and Tower societies will stand on South Prospect Street Nov. 2, the day before the election, to hold up signs intended to motivate student voting.

The Boulder Society is a group of senior men who work to vocalize issues and needs of the undergraduate student body to the administration and wider UVM body.

The Tower Society is a female-oriented group that works to bring together women and other traditionally marginalized gender identities that strive to make a difference in the community.

Aidan May, chair of the Committee on Legislative and Community Affairs, said his committee's senators are also collaborating with Club Affairs to work with clubs on voter registration.

Committee Updates:

The Committee on Legislation and Community Affairs announced SGA has started planning a forum for the UVM Police Services where students can express concerns about policing on campus.

Additionally, the Committee on the Environment said that there will be a climate strike Oct. 16 led by groups such as Sunrise, Eco-reps, The Black Perspective and others.

Around 600 students attended [the strike last year](#).

The University's Masks Up Day was described as an "overwhelming success." Youth-led organization Masks4Missions provided the SGA 500 masks to hand out, which were quickly swept away by passing undergraduate students.

Several senators also announced the LifeSafe app is up and running, and praised the platform for helping sexual violence and assault victims. The app works to aid students in safety and risk reporting.