

Fossil Fuel Divestment Resolution

2021-04

Whereas the Title 5 § 53200 (b) defines the purpose of California Community Colleges Academic Senates as making recommendations with respect to academic and professional matters, including: 5) *“Standards or policies regarding student preparation and success,”* 6) *“District and college governance structures, as related to faculty roles,”* and 10) *“Processes of institutional planning and budget development”*¹ and Mt. San Antonio College’s existing Climate Action Plan calls for the College to divest from all fossil fuel assets in a timely manner *“unless or until fossil fuel companies cease drilling and mining for new fossil fuels and begin to commit the majority of their monies to”* renewable forms of energy², and Dr. William Scroggins’ cover letter in the Climate Action Plan says, regarding climate change: *“Taking action now is imperative. And so is it imperative that Mt. SAC take action in our teaching, in our business practices, and in our social advocacy. This Climate Action Plan is our template and our commitment to do so.”*³; and

Whereas the Fifth Assessment Report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) predicts that the world is currently on course to raise global temperatures by 3 degrees Celsius over preindustrial levels by the end of this century,⁴ and the IPCC has called for limiting warming above preindustrial levels to 1.5 degrees Celsius, stating in its 2018 report *“Warming of 1.5 Degrees”* meeting this target will require reducing global greenhouse gas emissions by 40 % by 2030⁵; and,

Whereas, according to research by geographer Richard Heede, only 90 corporations have been responsible for two-thirds of greenhouse gas emissions since the dawn of the industrial age, and the majority of them are fossil fuel companies such as ExxonMobil, Chevron, Saudi Aramco, BP, Gazprom, Royal Dutch Shell and others⁶; and,

Whereas the fossil fuel industry has engaged in a campaign of deliberate deception of the public, as documented in investigative reporting by the *L.A. Times* and *Inside Climate News*⁷ as well as in numerous court cases filed by multiple jurisdictions, and fossil fuel companies have engaged in a campaign of lobbying to prevent legislation aimed at reducing fossil fuel use in order to combat climate change from being passed.

Resolved that the Mt. San Antonio Academic Senate urges the Mt San Antonio College Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board, and other managers of College investment funds to audit all of the college’s investments for fossil fuel assets and fossil fuel commingled assets using the Carbon Tracker 200 Investor tools⁸ due to concerns about student health and success; and,

Resolved that the Mt. San Antonio Academic Senate urges the Mt San Antonio College Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board and other managers of College investment funds to then report the results of the audit to the Academic Senate and Associated Students; and,

Resolved that the Mt. San Antonio Academic Senate urges the Mt San Antonio College Board of Trustees, the Foundation Board and other managers of College investment funds to then divest

Foundation and other funds from all fossil fuel or fossil fuel commingled assets within five years; and,

Resolved that the Mt. San Antonio Academic Senate urges the Mt SAC Foundation and other managers of College investment funds to then report the results of this divestment to the Board of Trustees, Academic Senate and Associated Students.

References

1. Academic Senate for California Community Colleges "10+1," https://www.asccc.org/10_1
2. Mt. San Antonio College 2018 Climate Action Plan, "Recommendations Regarding Divestment," p. 204, https://www.mtsac.edu/president/cabinet-notes/2017-18/2018_Climate_Action_Plan_052118.pdf
3. Mt. San Antonio College 2018 Climate Action Plan, "Cover Letter from the President: An Imperative for Mt. San Antonio College," p. 5
4. Fifth Assessment Report of the U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), "Climate Change 2014 Synthesis Report: Summary for Policymakers," p.p. 9-10, https://www.ipcc.ch/site/assets/uploads/2018/02/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf. Also in: Michael Mann, *The New Climate War: The Fight to Take Back Our Planet*. (New York: Hachette Book Group, 2021), p. 27 and p. 185
5. U.N. Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, "Special Report: Global Warming of 1.5°C: Summary for Policymakers," p. 12
6. Zack Coleman, "The New Science Fossil Fuel Companies Fear," *Politico*, 10/22/2019, <https://www.politico.com/agenda/story/2019/10/22/attribution-science-fossil-fuels-climate-change-001290/>
7. Marianne Lavelle, "Former Exxon Scientists Tell Congress of Oil Giant's Climate Research Before Exxon Turned to Denial," *Inside Climate News*, October 24, 2019 and Susanne Rust, "Report Details How Exxon Mobil and Fossil Fuel Firms Sowed Doubt on Climate Change," *Los Angeles Times*, October 21, 2019
8. Carbon Tracker website, Tools: Company Profiles, <https://carbontracker.org/company-profiles/>

Contact: James Stone, Professor of Political Science in the Department of Geography and Political Science

Approved by the Mt SAC Academic Senate 5/20/2021

Last updated: T. Anders and J. Stone 5/2/2021

Updated: K. Rivera 4/12/2021

Updated: T. Anders and J. Stone 4/11/2021

Input from C. Uyeki: 4/5/2021

Updated: J. Stone 3/29/2021