**Teleconferencing Options at UIUC**

**Why should we care?**

In 2008, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign signed the American College & University Presidents’ Climate Commitment. This action committed the campus to carbon neutrality by the year 2050. The Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP) describes a path toward the fulfillment of this commitment.

As the flagship public university in the state of Illinois, the campus has a moral and ethical responsibility to lead, to set aggressive goals, to work to meet them, and to serve as a model for the community, state, and nation.

The Plan represents a roadmap to a new, prosperous, and sustainable future for the University. It outlines strategies, initiatives, and targets toward meeting the stated goal of carbon neutrality by 2050.

**Figure 1: ACUPCC Emissions 2008-2014**

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| **ACUPCC Emissions** |
| **Fiscal Year** |  |  **Fleet**  |  **% change from FY08**  |  |  **Commuting**  |  **% change from FY08**  |  |  **Air Travel**  |  **% change from FY08**  |  |  **Transportation**  |  **% change from FY08**  |
|  |  **MT eCO2**  |  |  **MT eCO2**  |  |  **MT eCO2**  |  |  **MT eCO2**  |
| 2008 |   |  5,688  | n/a |   |  11,580  | n/a |   |  27,453  | n/a |   |  44,722  | n/a |
| 2009 |   |  5,599  | -2% |   |  11,945  | 3% |   |  21,992  | -20% |   |  39,536  | -12% |
| 2010 |   |  4,633  | -19% |   |  11,945  | 3% |   |  25,299  | -8% |   |  41,877  | -6% |
| 2011 |   |  4,948  | -13% |   |  10,236  | -12% |   |  24,033  | -12% |   |  39,217  | -12% |
| 2012 |   |  5,347  | -6% |   |  10,266  | -11% |   |  28,337  | 3% |   |  43,950  | -2% |
| 2013 |   |  5,147  | -10% |   |  10,566  | -9% |   |  32,381  | 18% |   |  48,094  | 8% |
| 2014 |  | 5,503 | -3% |  | 10,868 | -6% |  | 41,835 | 52% |  | 58,206 | 30% |

Recently, the updated iCAP will focus on many initiatives but for transportation, it has been tasked specifically to develop and implement a system for offsetting air travel emissions. In Figure 1, it is shown how air travel has increased significantly from 2013 to 2014 by 34%. However, the goal was to reduce GHG emissions from transportation by 30% in 2015.

Through the iCAP, one of the charges became to provide improved facilities and services in support of participation in online conferencing and other virtual meeting technology to reduce air travel emissions.

**What is teleconferencing?**

*Teleconferencing* is a form of communication that substitutes for physical travel. Teleconferencing can include but not limited to all types of telecommunications ranging from video connections, websites, email, telephone, etc.

Specific examples from the Victoria Transport Policy Institute[[1]](#footnote-1) are:

* *Telecommuting*. Employees who work from home rather than a central office. This is particularly appropriate for tasks that involve information management, such as research, accounting, editing, software development and design.
* *Satellite office or local work center*. Neighborhoods work centers can provide office services to a variety of businesses, reducing the need to travel to a central office.
* *Mobility working*. Certain job types require frequent travel, so employees work from their cars, coffee shops and hotels.
* *Video-conferencing*. The use of live video connections as a substitute for physical meetings.
* *Distance Learning*. Teachers and students can use telecommunications as a substitute for physical meetings. Some colleges and universities offer distance-learning classes and projects.
* *Internet Business-to-Business* (B2B) refers to Internet interactions between businesses, such as bidding, sales and planning.

**Resources**

Some options are already available at the University that individuals can pursue to learn more information on teleconferencing:

[http://uc.illinois.edu](http://uc.illinois.edu/) – This is the start page for all unified communications content. The video at the top of the page is of our outgoing CIO talking about how he used Lync from Africa to communicate with a colleague in Illinois.

<http://www.cites.illinois.edu/mshelp/2013/windows/using.html> - This is the start page for documentation of Lync. The “Lync 2013 Meetings” and “Audio and Video” sections are probably most relevant to our conversation today.

<http://www.fast3.illinois.edu/workshops/lync.htm> - Links to all the free Lync training including the basics and a separate class for audio/video/web conferencing.

* Audio/Video/Web Conferencing using Lync 2013
	+ This two hour workshop will demonstrate how easy it is to set up and attend an online meeting using Lync 2013. Meeting schedulers will learn how to escalate an instant message or phone conversation into an audio or video conference; schedule an online meeting in Outlook 2010 or 2013 using default options; customize advanced meeting options for unique meeting requirements; how to create a recording of a meeting; and schedule a meeting on behalf of another. Different meeting roles (attendee versus presenter) will be discussed; and we will learn how to use a virtual waiting room known as a “lobby” for control over who attends a meeting. In addition, we’ll spend a few minutes looking at the new expanded meeting controls including the Share menu which gives you access to all presentable content in one place, such as Desktop, PowerPoint presentations, Poll, Whiteboard, and OneNote. We’ll look at the new meeting layouts for different types of meetings. We will learn about Lync Web App which allows PC and Mac users to join a Lync Meeting from within a web browser while delivering a full Lync Meeting experience. Finally, the use of Lync Mobile clients will be discussed.

<http://www.cites.illinois.edu/mshelp/2013/windows/using/setup.html#uniqueID> – The “Using your unique meeting URL and ID” section might be useful to if an individual is not using Outlook or Lync on your machine. Each Lync user (i.e. all faculty, staff, and grad students with appointments) has a permanent conference available. This would allow an individual to set up Lync meetings from their \*nix machine even if they are going to connect from a Windows/Mac/mobile Lync client.

For a larger conference, individuals can use NCSA’s Event Services group. This group uses Lync, but they also handle Polycom and other conferencing solutions as well, so that provides some additional options that might be necessary for larger group events.

**Other resources available are:**

<http://www.logitech.com/en-us/product/conferencecam?crid=1545> – This device works with Lync or Skype on Windows or Mac, so it is flexible. The MSRP that is seen on the page is quite a bit higher than the iBuy price.

<http://www.logitech.com/en-us/product/mobile-speakerphone-p710e-business?crid=658> – This speakerphone device is great with the Lync mobile client. It will hold up a mobile device so that the mobile device’s camera points at the person speaking. It has a battery and can connect by Bluetooth, so it’s an easy to use portable solution. The iBuy price on this is also lower than the MSRP that is seen on the link.

1. Victoria Transport Policy Institute. (2012, February 22). *Telework*. Retrieved November 12, 2014, from TDM Encyclopedia: http://www.vtpi.org/tdm/tdm43.htm [↑](#footnote-ref-1)