UW AIR TRAVEL EMISSIONS
Part II: May 15, 2024, 2:00-3:00

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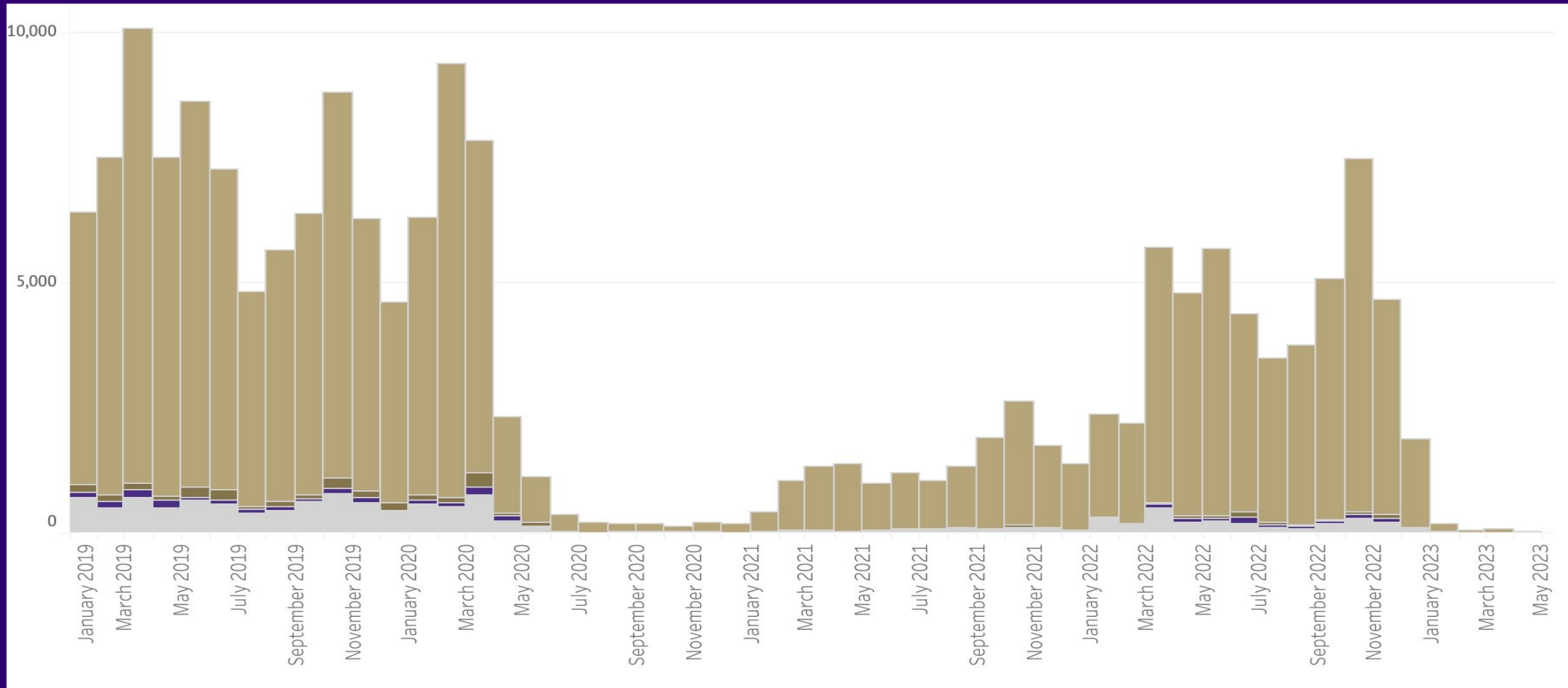# INTRODUCTIONS

Marilyn Ostergren, UW Sustainability
Jamie Mayerfeld, Professor of Political Science
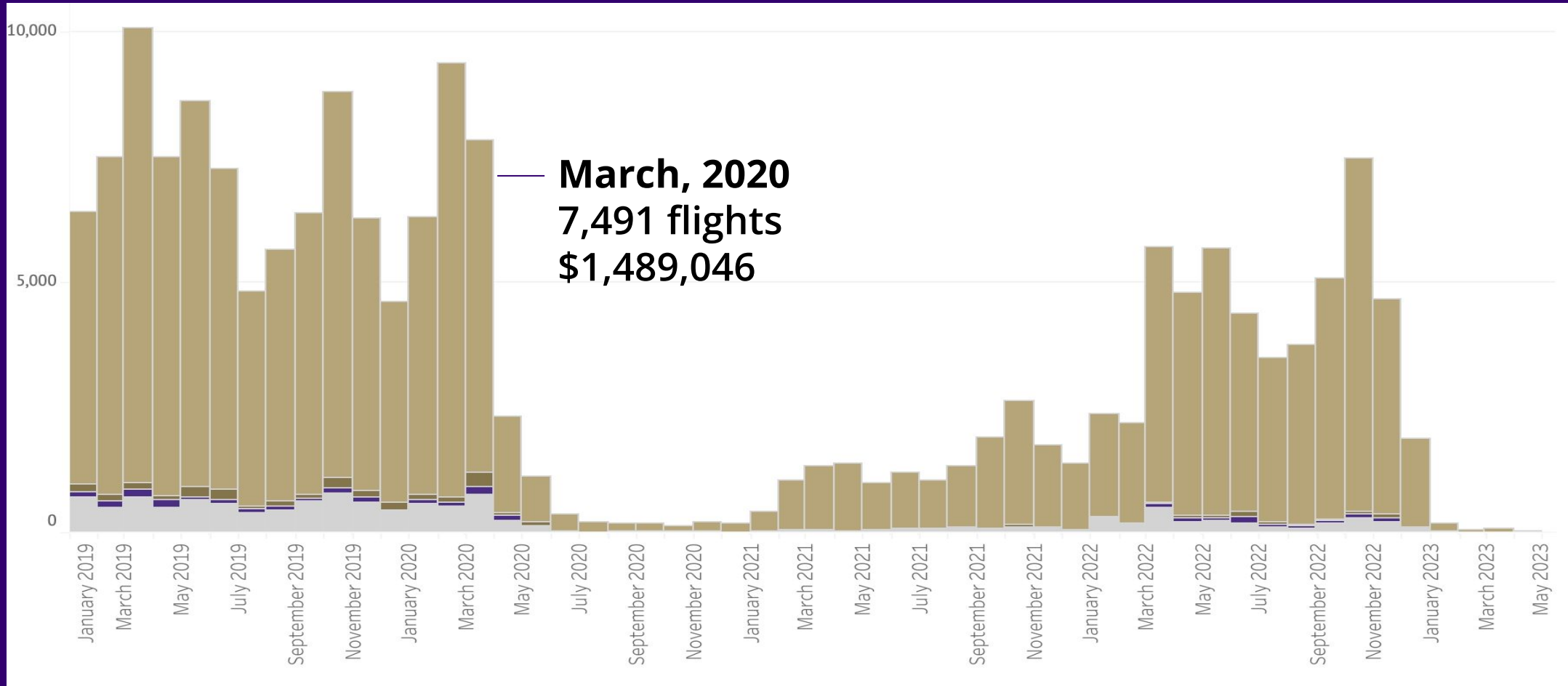**Jeremy Hess,** Professor of Emergency Medicine
Lisa Dulude, Director, UW Sustainability
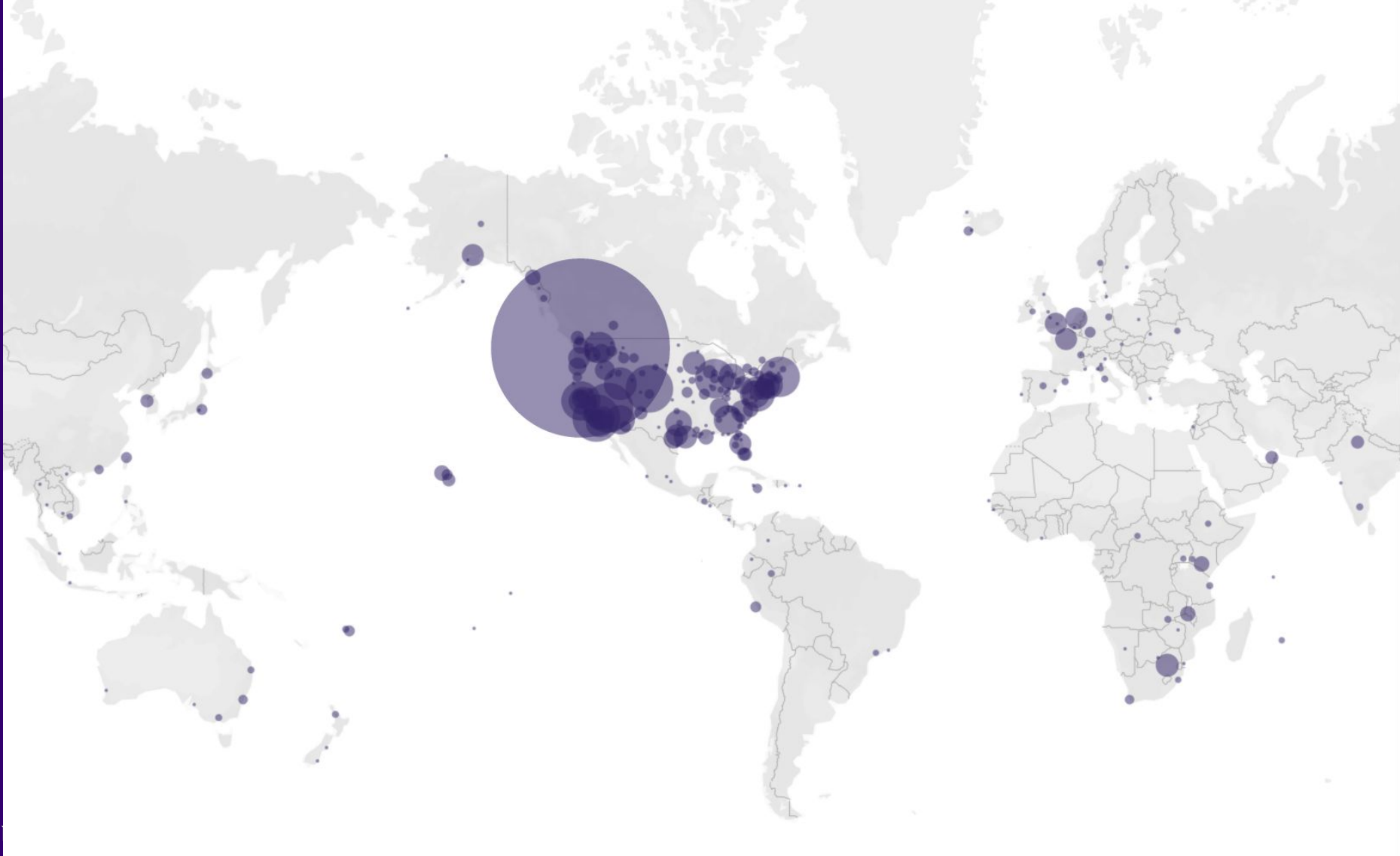
recap
AIR TRAVEL WEBINAR, part I
video is available

WE FLY A LOT

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WE FLY A LOT

March, 2020
7,491 flights
$1,489,046

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WE FLY A LOT

WE GET A LOT FROM IT

- Conferences and Networking
- Research and Fieldwork
- Collaborations and Partnerships
- Teaching and Guest Lectures
- Professional Development

- Institutional Representation
- Access to Resources
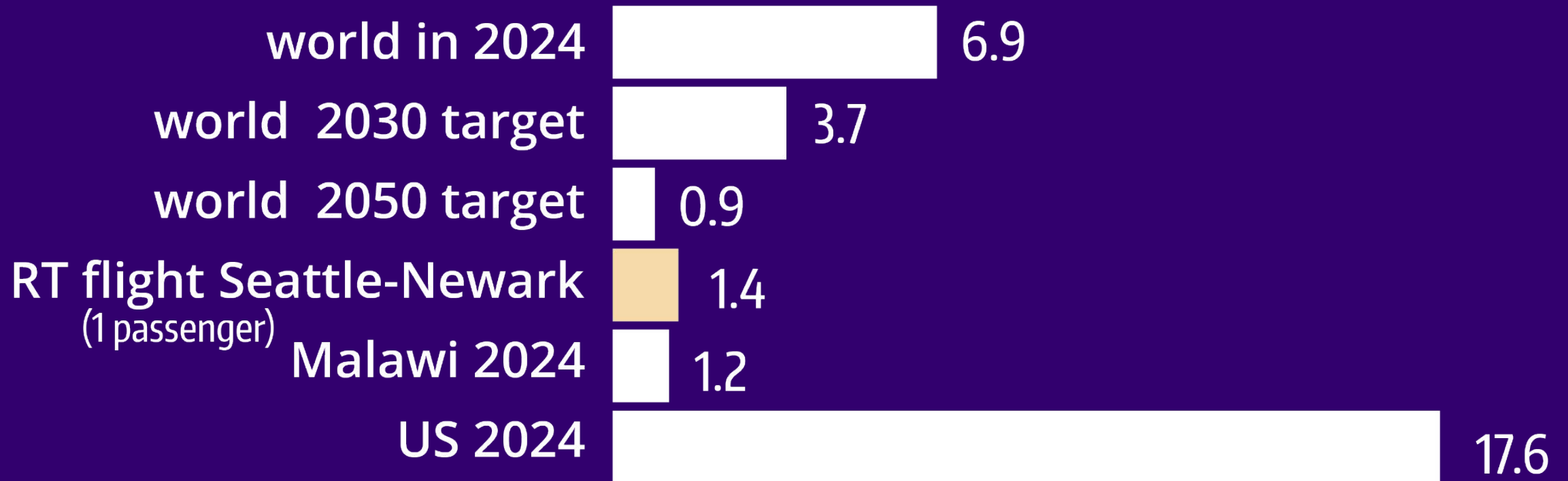- Performance, Funding Requirements
- Study abroad
- Athletic competition

BUT FLYING CONTRIBUTES TO THE CLIMATE CRISIS

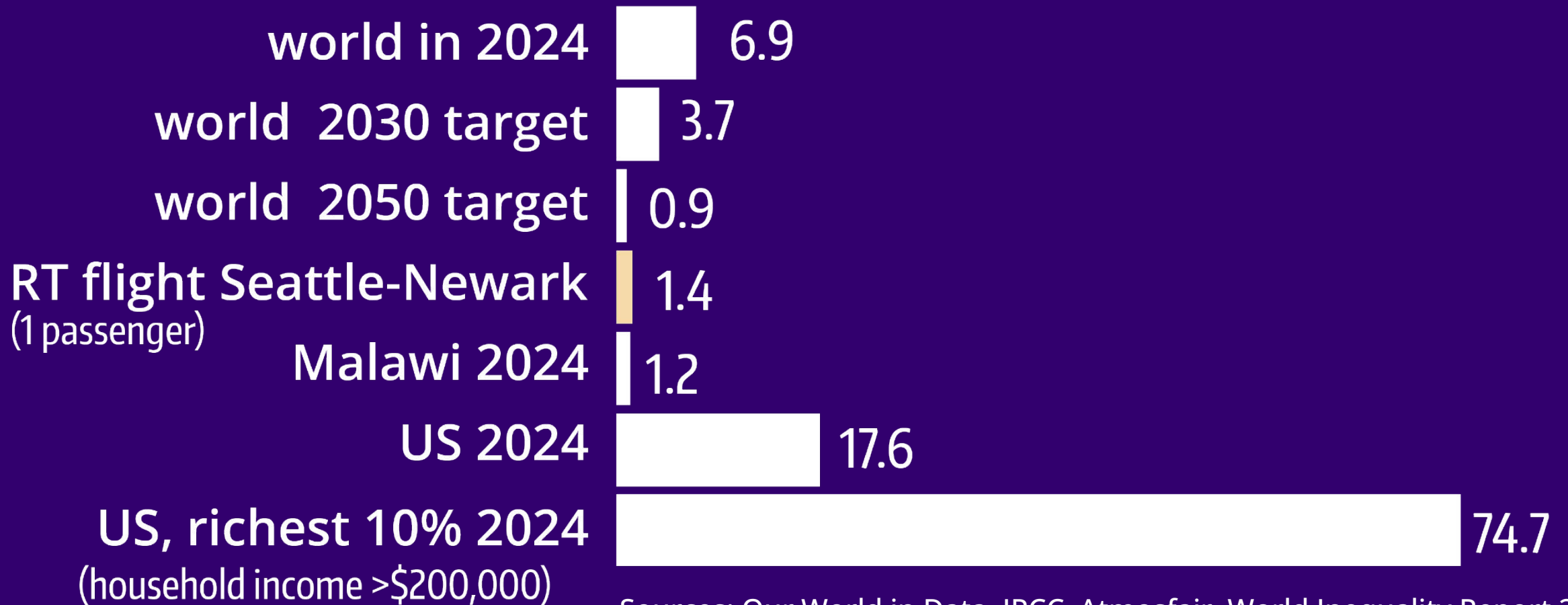## Per Capita Annual Greenhouse Gas Emissions (in tons)

world in 2024	6.9
world 2030 target	3.7
world 2050 target	0.9
RT flight Seattle-Newark (1 passenger)	1.4
Malawi 2024	1.2
US 2024	17.6

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PER CAPITA ANNUAL GREENHOUSE GAS EMISSIONS (in tons)

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RT flight Seattle-Newark
(1 passenger) — 1.4

Malawi 2024 — 1.2

US 2024 — 17.6

US, richest 10% 2024
(household income >$200,000) — 74.7

Sources: Our World in Data, IPCC, Atmosfair, World Inequality Report 2022.

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SO WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO FLY LESS

SOURCES OF EMISSIONS

BUILDINGS ✓ FLEET ✓ COMMUTING ✓ AIR TRAVEL FOOD ✓

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PREVIEW

- Draft Proposal
- Timeline
- Strategies for flying less, both individual and systemic
- Strategies for mitigating the harm from flying

RECOMMENDATION #1: Establish a program to reduce emissions from UW air travel

PROPOSAL: Background

2020-present

- **Working Group** (faculty, staff, students)
- **Environmental Stewardship Committee**
- **Focus Groups:**
  > Study Abroad
  > College of the Environment
  > UW Medicine
  > Athletics
  > Diversity-focused
- **Research/Scoping what other universities are doing**

PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL

UW should establish an Air Travel Emissions Reduction Program "Sustainable Connections" with two primary goals:
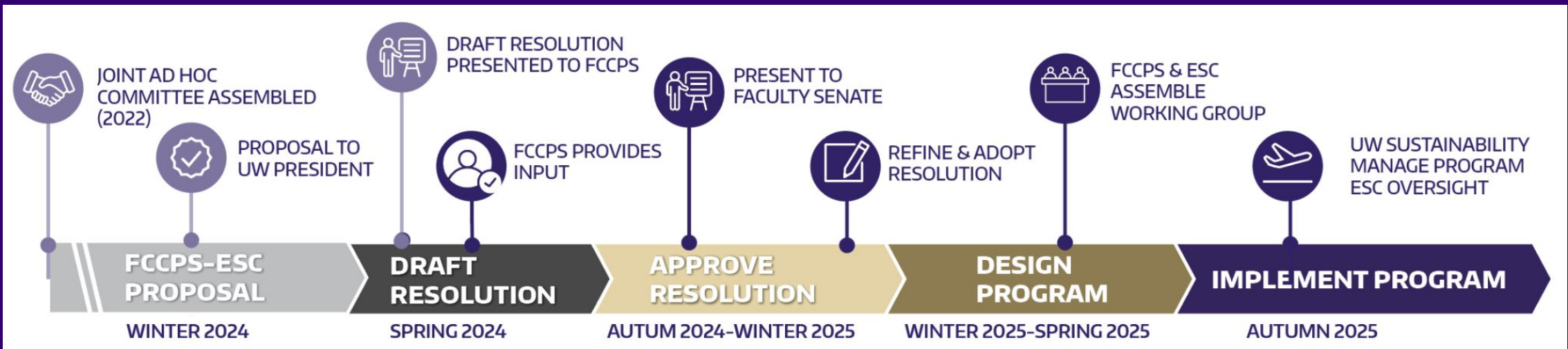
1. **Reduce emissions from air travel: FLYLESS**

2. **Mitigate for UW emissions from air travel: TAKERESPONSIBILITY**

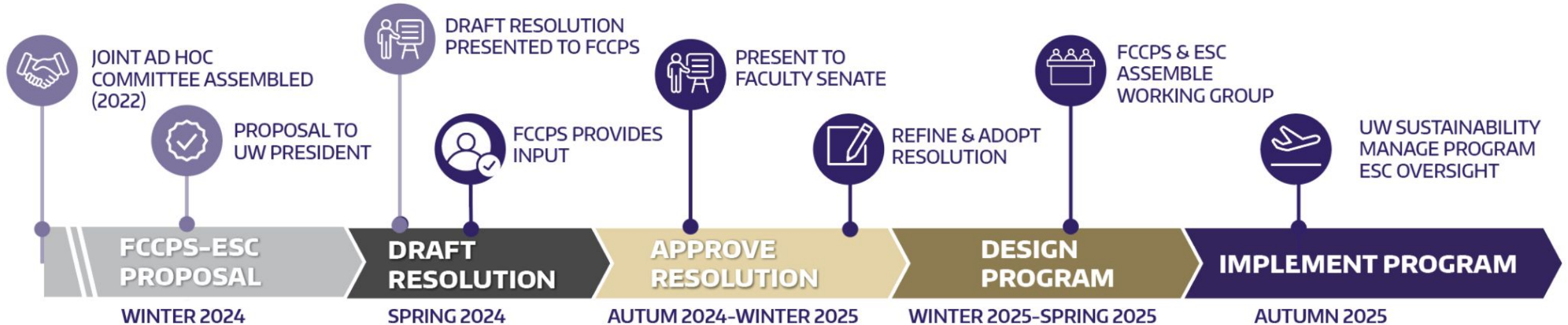Phase 1 (i.e. Flyless) of this program should begin by July, 2025.
Phase 2 (i.e. TakeResponsibility) of this program should begin by July, 2026.

PROCESS: FACULTY ARE LEADING THE EFFORT

- **Working with the Faculty Council on Campus Planning & Stewardship** (one of the Faculty Senate councils)

- **Creating a resolution**
  - > Commit to creating a program to reduce air travel emissions
  - > Convene a task force develop the program

JOINT AD HOC COMMITTEE ASSEMBLED (2022)

PROPOSAL TO UW PRESIDENT

DRAFT RESOLUTION PRESENTED TO FCCPS

FCCPS PROVIDES INPUT

PRESENT TO FACULTY SENATE

REFINE & ADOPT RESOLUTION

FCCPS & ESC ASSEMBLE WORKING GROUP

UW SUSTAINABILITY MANAGE PROGRAM ESC OVERSIGHT

FCCPS-ESC PROPOSAL	DRAFT RESOLUTION	APPROVE RESOLUTION	DESIGN PROGRAM	IMPLEMENT PROGRAM
WINTER 2024	SPRING 2024	AUTUM 2024-WINTER 2025	WINTER 2025-SPRING 2025	AUTUMN 2025

RESOLUTION TIMELINE

JOINT AD HOC COMMITTEE ASSEMBLED (2022)

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IMPLEMENT PROGRAM

WINTER 2024

SPRING 2024

AUTUM 2024-WINTER 2025

WINTER 2025-SPRING 2025

AUTUMN 2025

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STRATEGY #1a: Fly Less
start July 1, 2025

A successful air travel reduction program will combine top-down principles, guidelines, and support with bottom-up initiatives and implementation.

PROPOSED ELEMENTS
OF AN AIR TRAVEL REDUCTION PROGRAM

- Establish an ambitious target

- Track and analyze air travel

- Educate

- Minimize unnecessary/excess travel

- Facilitate alternatives

- Unit level air travel reduction plans

- Reform professional organizations and conferences

- Geographically optimize meetings/events

- Eliminate short-haul flights

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IDEAS FROM YOU:

- Ask if there are online options for participation before approving travel costs.

- Provide support for trying to merge trips.

- Better expectation setting with department heads on the when/why to travel.

- Limit how much money can be spent on travel on any given funding source?

- Create an airline carbon budget for each department and track/limit it.

LEARN FROM EXISTING EXAMPLES:

Academics pledge to fly less due to environmental impact of air travel

At Concordia University, the entire geography department recently adopted a flying-less policy. Professors there have committed to limit the number of flights they take and publish a record of all their air travel annually. They'll endeavour to travel by rail or bus to any destination within 12 hours of Montreal, and decline some conference invitations, all with the aim of encouraging "a low carbon working culture."

LEARN FROM EXISTING EXAMPLES:

LUND UNIVERSITY

Vice-Chancellor

Travel regulations

There are regulations that apply to all travel paid for by Lund University (for employees, external guests and students). The rules are part of Lund University's responsibility to reduce its climate impact and protect the safety of employees and the public resources. The regulations apply from 31 January 2019 and the goal is that all business trips are to be planned based on work environment and environmental considerations as well as cost efficiency. Before you book a trip, you should always consider whether the trip can be replaced with digital meetings. If the trip is necessary, it must be planned so that the negative environmental impact is limited. The trip must be approved by line manager, who is also responsible for environmental and cost considerations when choosing the mode of transport. For domestic travel, trains must primarily be selected. Flights can be considered if the total time gain is at least two hours each on the departure and return journey (including connecting transports and waiting times).

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LEARN FROM EXISTING EXAMPLES:

DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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PEOPLE   PROGRAMS & COURSES   AFFILIATED CENTERS   RESEARCH   NE

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Videoconferencing for Climate: A Proposal

Submitted by Britta M. Anson on October 16, 2019 - 10:44am

Colin Marshall (UW Seattle) and **Sinan Dogramaci** (UT Austin) are adopting a practice of making videoconferencing a regular part of colloquium series and conferences they organize and are calling on other organizers to do the same. Their recent guest post in *Daily Nous*

SOME THINGS ACADEMIC DEPARTMENTS MIGHT CONSIDER DOING

- Pay registration fees for virtual conferences.
- Pay membership fees for associations that hold virtual conferences.
- Give professional recognition and rewards for participation in online conferences, workshops, and lectures.
- Provide teaching leave and flexibility to enable full participation in virtual conferences.
- Provide generous honoraria to guest online speakers.
- Invest in technology to support online events.
- Encourage public ground transportation rather than air travel when feasible.
- Adopt codes of conduct to reduce air travel.
- Reduce payment for air travel. (For example, require ground transportation for relatively short-distance travel.)

STRATEGY #1b: Fly less – systemic change

SYSTEMIC CHANGE

...keeping the current system, reducing a few flights, and relying on technology will not be enough.

Instead, we need to rethink and redesign the scientific system, its values and culture, and the way scientists interact. This includes conferences, teaching, evaluation criteria and the role of policymakers and funders.

**An evidence-based approach to accelerate flight reduction in academia
Gorlinger et al. 2023, npj Climate Action**

SYSTEMIC CHANGE: MAXIMIZING BENEFITS/MINIMIZING HARMS

Conferences and Networking

Research and Fieldwork

Collaborations and Partnerships

Teaching and Guest Lectures

Professional Development

Institutional Representation

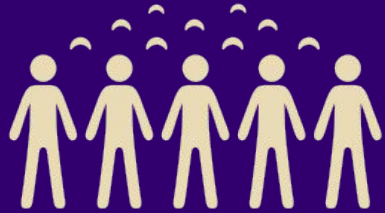Access to Resources

Performance, Funding Requirements

Study abroad

Athletic competition

HOW WE CAN ALL CONTRIBUTE TO SYSTEMIC CHANGE

Leverage the Power of Collective action

Use institutional influence
(e.g. professional organizations)

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Strategy #1b: Take Responsibility
start ~July 1, 2026

Take responsibility = mitigate for emissions

HOW ARE OTHER UNIVERSITIES MITIGATING?

university	fee	purpose
ASU	**$17/RT**	urban tree planting and research forest
UCLA	**$9/25RT** (domestic/abroad)	local GHG mitigation projects
UMD	**$0.0027/mile** (based on $4/offset)	purchase carbon offsets

WHERE COULD FUNDS GO?

Back to units to support flight reduction

To campus-wide flight-reducing projects
- financial incentives
- resources to network remotely (e.g. new spaces or technologies to improve the virtual experience, efforts to create networking experiences)
- resources to distribute research virtually (e.g. high quality video presentations or simulations)
- support for timely, tailored reports for units and potentially individuals

To cross-campus emission reduction projects
- to campus projects with measurable emissions reductions
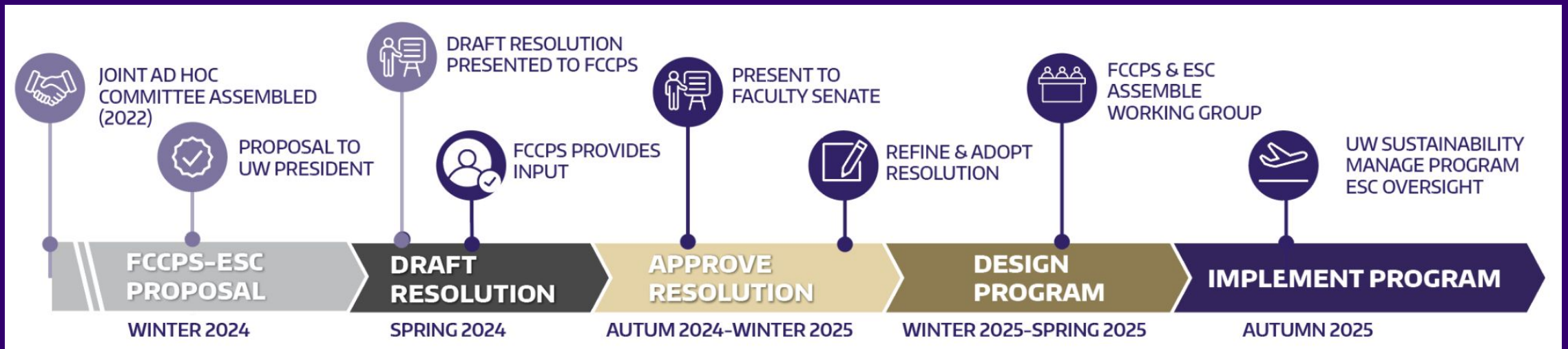
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SUMMARY: PROPOSAL

UW should establish **"Sustainable Connections,"** an Air Travel Reduction Program with two primary goals:

1. **Reduce emission from air travel #FLYLESS**
   (begin July 2025)

2. **Mitigate for UW emissions from air travel #TAKERESPONSBILITY**
   (begin July 2026)

SUMMARY: TIMELINE

The work is ahead of us, once we get a commitment, is to establish governance and details of the program

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POLL

What would be useful for you to help further this discussion in your unit/college/department?

QUESTIONS/DISCUSSION