

# University Air Travel and GHG Mitigation

## Examining Institutional Policies through the Lens of #flyingless

**Anthony Schmidt**

@anthonyteacher / anthonymschmidt.co

PhD Student - Evaluation, Statistics, and Measurement

University of Tennessee, Knoxville



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# The Research

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- Examined 46 institutions' Climate Action Plans, Sustainability Plans and related documents
  - Home institution (UTK)
  - Comparative Peers (13)
    - Determined by institutional research
    - Public, doctoral institutions of similar enrollment, tuition, and other characteristics
  - Aspirational Peers (6)
    - Determined by institutional research
    - Public, doctoral institutions of similar that meet institutions' strategic goals
  - Top-25 Public Research (23)
  - Other (5)
- Thematic Document Analysis
- Focus on policies related to university/business air travel (Scope 3 emissions)



# Themes of Scope 3 Mitigation

## Establishing an Offset Program

43% of institutions recommend establishing a program to offset university-sponsored travel, with some including study abroad travel.



## No Mention of Air Travel

35% of institutions do not refer to university air travel or do not mention reducing emissions from them.



## Lack of Data

26% of institutions mention not being able to track data consistently or the need to improve data tracking.



## Supporting Videoconferencing

24% of institutions recommend improving infrastructure and supporting video conferencing as an alternative to in-personal conferences.



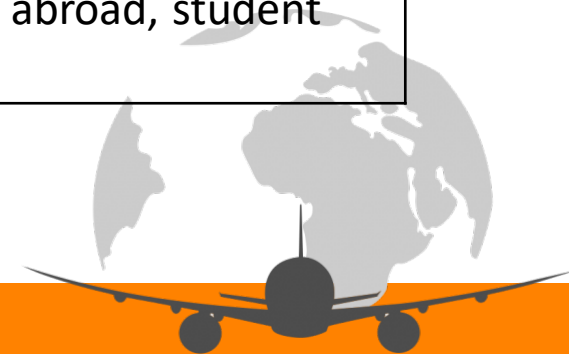
## Other Actions

Other actions suggested include promoting **driving** over flying, **regional conference** attendance, **behavioral** changes, and **raising** awareness.



# Noteworthy Programs

Institution	Program	Notes
Arizona State University	Price on Carbon for Air Travel	\$12 flat fee
Duke	Partnership with Delta	Tree planting Carbon offsets
UCLA	Air Travel Mitigation Fund (pilot)	\$9 domestic fee \$25 international fee
Oregon State University	Can request offsets through an online form	
Stanford	SCORE – athletic travel offsets	
University of Maryland	Carbon Neutral Air Travel Initiative	Business, study abroad, student travel offsets



# Suggestions & Next Steps

- Be a champion at you own institutions
- More research
  - Cost-benefit analysis
  - Gather travel data and habits
  - Investigate willingness to change



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