



# The Times

## TCNJ forum focuses on global warming

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Climate change is an encroaching problem, but beyond finding solutions, changing lifestyles to accommodate those solutions is an even bigger task, people agreed at a forum last week at The College of New Jersey.

"It's a very distant, abstract thing to most of us," said Bill Ball, a TCNJ political science professor. "To really do something major takes a really major change in lifestyle."

According to Ball, the Public Issues Summit on Responses to Global Warming was intended to "discover our own voice on the issue of responding to global warming as a problem and (to try) to find the common ground among us to respond to it."

Sharon Kaplan, a summit participant, said many people are simply uninterested in the issue. "It's not a sexy topic," Kaplan said. "I think people sort of go to sleep when you start talking about science."

Summit participants, who included members of the community, TCNJ faculty and political science students, were divided into groups and asked to consider three categories of possible climate change solutions: allowing the free market to correct the issue, empowering the federal government or creating "innovative public and private partnerships."

Ball's students generated facts and perspectives in each of these categories and distributed them to summit participants in order to help foster discussion on the issue. TCNJ students and faculty moderated and reported on each group's findings.

Despite the complexity of climate change, many provided insight regarding potential solutions.

"The free market left unregulated doesn't provide many solutions to environmental problems like global warming because the costs are not tied to the cost of manufacturing," Lawrence Weiss said. "Our system responds when the costs are recognizable and identifiable."

Other participants offered criticism of the U.S. system of transportation as a contributing factor to climate change. Michael Marriott said the United States needs to improve its system of mass transportation, following the European example.

"We just need to look around and see what other countries are doing," Marriott said.

Assemblyman Reed Gusciora, D-Princeton Borough, said the summit was a good opportunity for different members of the community to interact on the issue.

"At the end of the day, I think the whole thing is to teach us that government can't do it alone, and you can't leave private industry to their own devices because they're not going to solve it either on their own," Gusciora said. "It has to be a partnership at the end of the day."

Time is running out to address the problem of climate change, according to Assemblyman John F. McKeon, D-South Orange.

Citing climatologist James Hansen, McKeon said in his keynote address that the global community has "10 years within which to get to the point that we reverse the trends of global warming or else get to the tipping point that will change the world forever."