




Academic Senate

EXECUTIVE COUNCIL

Sang-Hee Lee, Chair

December 15, 2023

To: Dana Simmons, Chair and Lead Proponent, Department of Society, Environment, and Health Equity

From: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair, Executive Council 

RE: Proposed Minor in Environmental Studies (ENST)

Dear Dana,

On December 11, 2023 the Academic Senate Executive Council discussed the [subject proposal](#) along with the consultative feedback from the Committees on Courses, Educational Policy, Planning & Budget, CNAS Faculty Executive Committee, and the SPP Faculty Executive Committee.

Though Executive Council supports inclusion of the proposal on the Winter Division agenda, strong clarification regarding how this minor is different from what is offered in the Department of Environmental Sciences is necessary.

Based on the mixed cumulative feedback regarding the proposal, please provide a revised proposal in consideration of all of the review feedback, and include responses to the comments and questions above and in the attached memos no later than January 12, 2024. You may find it helpful to note that in the past, proponents have included a summary document that includes responses as a cover to a revised proposal.

Thank you.

CC: Wesley Leonared, Chair, CHASS Faculty Executive Committee
Gabrielle Brewer, CHASS Faculty Executive Committee Liaison and Student Affairs Officer



Academic Senate

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY

December 5, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Ward Beyermann, Chair
Committee on Educational Policy

Re: Proposed Minor in Environmental Studies

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reviewed the proposed Minor in Environmental Studies at their December 1, 2023 meeting and voted to support the proposal.



December 4, 2023

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Ph.D., Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Bahram Mobasher, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

SUBJECT: Response to Proposed Degree Programs in ENST and GCH Departments

Dear Sang-Hee,

The CNAS Faculty Executive Committee wants to address several concerns regarding the recent Major and Minor proposals in Environmental Studies and Global and Community Health. It has come to our attention that significant issues require consideration and resolution:

Regrettably, our concerns have not been adequately addressed during the processes underway, and the results are the development of a department that could potentially divert and confuse our students.

It has also come to our attention that there is a proposed change in the department's name from "Sustainability Studies" to "Environmental Sciences." Changing the name from "Sustainability" to "Environmental" may confuse current and future students. Therefore, it is recommended that we act or voice objections against this alteration. It seems reasonable to request reconsideration of the name change. We must collectively ensure that the department's name accurately represents its goals and scope.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "B. Mobasher" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Bahram Mobasher, Ph.D

Chair, Faculty Executive Committee College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences



Academic Senate

COMMITTEE ON COURSES

December 6, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division

From: James Flegal, Chair
Committee on Courses


Re: Proposed Minor in Environmental Studies

The Committee on Courses reviewed the proposed Minor in Environmental Studies at their November 29, 2023 meeting. The Committee recommends that the department ensure that course proposals for the following courses proposed to be included in the minor's curriculum be entered into CRS in a timely manner as all courses listed in the proposed curriculum do need to receive final approval by the Committee on Courses before the curriculum can be published in the catalog: SEHE 115, SEHE 120, SEHE 136/POSC 106, SEHE 131, SEHE 132, SEHE 135, SEHE 137/POSC 137, SEHE 140/GSST 131, SEHE 144/HISA 119.

PLANNING AND BUDGET

October 30, 2023

To: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division

From: Reza Abbaschian, Chair 
Committee on Planning and Budget

**RE: [Campus Review] Proposal: New Undergraduate Minor: Minor in
Environmental Studies**

At our meeting on October 10, 2023, the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) discussed the proposed Minor in Environmental Studies. CPB supports the proposed minor.

Additionally, CPB asks: will the Minor in Environmental Studies provide opportunities for cross-exchanges and collaborations with the Environmental Sciences program in CNAS and the Environmental Engineering program in BCOE?

TO: Sang-Hee Lee, Chair
Riverside Division

FR: Richard M. Carpiano, Chair
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: [Campus Review] Proposal: New Undergraduate Minor: Minor in Environmental Studies (ENST)

Date: November 22, 2023

The Faculty Executive Committee of the School of Public Policy reviewed the document “[Campus Review] Proposal: New Undergraduate Minor: Minor in Environmental Studies (ENST).”

In the course of our review and discussion, the following issues arose about the proposed curriculum:

1. Given the stated learning objectives that indicate the importance of students understanding ecological issues locally, nationally, and globally, it is crucial for students to have a thorough grounding in environmental science to comprehend the interplay between the natural world and human societies. A significant concern raised with the current curriculum proposal is its apparent lack of foundational science. Without a robust understanding of environmental science, discussing environmental governance and the scientific underpinnings of environmental inequities becomes challenging.

It is noteworthy that this curriculum lacks any lower- or upper-division courses in environmental science. The present focus seems to be predominantly on the human aspects of environmental issues, without sufficient emphasis on the scientific aspects. This imbalance could lead to a skewed perspective among students. Overall, the curriculum could be more effectively designed to integrate both natural sciences and social sciences, providing a comprehensive educational experience in this field. Currently, it seems that the curriculum is shaped more by disciplinary convenience rather than a commitment to interdisciplinary learning. This approach risks limiting the depth and breadth of education students receive, thereby hindering their ability to fully understand and address complex environmental issues that humanity faces, particularly in this concerning era of science denialism and less than ideal data literacy.

2. Page 9: Under “Affiliated faculty,” Ariel Dinar is retired from UCR. Hence, it is unclear how up-to-date this list is.
3. The Global and Community Health B.A. curriculum contains a requirement for one lower-division course in data analysis. Why does this requirement not exist for the Environmental Studies minor given that the two department emphases (Environmental Studies and Global and Community Health) are detailed in the two BA degree proposal documents as having considerable focal overlap, sharing some courses like the required methods course?
4. Page 14: Under the section header “Chairs’ approval to include their courses in the new curriculum (in 2021 or 2023),” SPP Associate Dean Bruce Babcock is listed. The phrasing of this header can be read in more than one way, so, just to be certain, this approval only pertains to the PBPL courses cross-listed with other units that are listed in this proposed curriculum document (i.e. ENGR 171/PBPL 171) and not any other PBPL courses. This specificity is indicated in the email exchange between SEHE representative Ellen Reese and SPP Associate Dean Bruce Babcock included in the appendix of the SEHE-submitted Environmental Studies BA proposed curriculum document (p. 66).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard M. Carpiano". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Richard" being the most prominent.

Richard M. Carpiano, Ph.D., M.P.H.
Professor of Public Policy