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SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

CHAIR, ACADEMIC SENATE  
RIVERSIDE DIVISION  
UNIVERSITY OFFICE BUILDING, RM 225

Kenneth Barish  
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April 16, 2026

Ahmet Palazoglu, Chair, Academic Council  
1111 Franklin Street, 12th Floor  
Oakland, CA 94607-5200

**RE: Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

Dear Ahmet,

The Executive Council of the Riverside Division included this topic on our April 13, 2026 agenda. Though Council had no comments to add to those provided by local committees, I provide below a summary of the feedback and the attachments for consideration.

As you'll find from the attached memos, UCR committees expressed broad support for the proposal to establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. While several committees stated general support, key feedback focused on enhancing the clarity and structure of the proposed committee. Specific recommendations included ensuring the committee's scope, responsibilities, and desired outcomes are clearly defined, especially concerning the environmental impact of AI industries. Committees also stressed the need for appropriate Senate staffing, mentioned student representation (graduate and undergraduate), and ensuring sustainability expertise is present in existing UCR committees and the divisional representative to a potential systemwide committee.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kenneth Barish". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a small mark above the 'i' in "Barish".

Kenneth Barish  
Professor of Physics and Astronomy and Chair of the Riverside Division

CC: Monica Lin, Executive Director of the Academic Senate  
Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of UCR Academic Senate Office

Enclosures



## Academic Senate

### PHYSICAL RESOURCES PLANNING

March 24, 2026

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair  
Academic Senate

From: Brian Siana, Physical Resources Planning Committee Chair

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "B. Siana", written over a light blue grid background.

Re: ***[Systemwide Review] (Proposal) Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability***


The Physical Resources Planning Committee (PRP) reviewed the *Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability*. PRP appreciates the proposed committee as a means of centralizing sustainability efforts and maintaining momentum across the system. The committee agrees with benefits of establishment identified within the proposal including a freer exchange of sustainability strategies across campuses, and an improved ability to efficiently identify and prioritize campuses for decarbonization. Deliberations on the former and future potential financial savings for decarbonization studies and implementation across the system further supported the establishment of a sustainability committee at the system level.

Recently (June 2024), the UCR Senate Executive Council decided *not* to have a standing committee on Sustainability, Environment and the Climate Crisis, as recommended by the Sustainability, the Environment and Climate Crisis Ad-Hoc Committee ([report](#)). Instead, the Executive Council recommended that these issues be dealt with by existing committees such as Physical Resources Planning, Planning & Budget, Diversity Equity & Inclusion, and Faculty Welfare. Therefore, PRP does not necessarily recommend establishment of a Riverside Division sustainability committee. However, it is critical that sustainability expertise is present in relevant UCR committees (e.g. PRP, Planning & Budget) and in a Riverside division representative in the systemwide committee.



March 25, 2026

TO: Ken Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

FROM: Iván Aguirre, Interim Chair   
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate  
Change and Sustainability

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The CHASS Faculty Executive Committee reviewed the proposal to establish a systemwide academic senate committee on climate change and sustainability and is in enthusiastic support, particularly as the University is navigating its climate goals and its relationship with AI industries, which the committee considers of utmost importance in this regard. We firmly believe that any conversation around climate and sustainability at the University and Campus levels must happen alongside relationships with AI and their environmental impact.

The FEC noted some comments in the discussion, specifically about appropriate Senate support for this committee in staffing, as well as in the formation of the committee. The FEC recommends at least two graduate and undergraduate representatives to address any power imbalances, and to promote more engagement and conversation with this population of the University.

Lastly, the FEC noted that while UCR has an ad-hoc committee on climate change, there is no formal Senate committee and encourages the Senate to consider forming one, perhaps to engage with the new AI council and be able to address campus climate goals and challenges.



## *Academic Senate*

### **GRADUATE COUNCIL**

March 20, 2026

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Viji Santhakumar, Chair  
Graduate Council

**RE: [Systemwide Review] (Proposal) Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

The Graduate Council reviewed the Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability at their March 19, 2026 meeting. The Council wondered how the members of this committee would be determined if not all campuses will be required to have a divisional committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. Furthermore, to ensure representation from each campus, there should be a divisional committee on each campus as well as relevant disciplines and research fields which should be identified in the proposal. The Council supported the general idea of this committee but the details and parameters in the proposal were not specific.



**PLANNING AND BUDGET**

March 9, 2026

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: David Oglesby, Chair  
Committee on Planning and Budget

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David D. Oglesby".

**Re: [Systemwide Review] Proposal: *Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability***

At our meeting on February 10, 2026, the Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) reviewed the *Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability*. CPB members feel there should be more specificity to the charge of the Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. Otherwise, CPB did not see any significant financial impact, nor budget-related red flags.



February 26, 2026

TO: Ken Barish, PhD, Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Adam Godzik, Ph.D., Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, UCR School of Medicine


SUBJECT: **Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

Dear Ken,

The SOM Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed the *Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability*

The FEC expresses general support for the proposed standing committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. At the same time, members would like additional discussion to ensure that the scope, responsibilities, and desired outcomes of the committee are clearly defined and realistically achievable.

Yours sincerely,

DocuSigned by:  
 2/26/2026 | 7:25 PM PST  
F3F7FC0ECB4E4AD...  
Adam Godzik, Ph.D.  
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee School of Medicine



## *Academic Senate*

### **Committee on Research**

February 19, 2026

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Padma Rangarajan, Chair  
Committee on Research

**Re: Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

The committee on research reviewed the proposal and had no comments.

3/18/2026

**To:** Kenneth Barish, Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate  
and Cherysa Cortez, Executive Director of the UCR Academic Senate

**From:** Kinnari Atit, Ph.D., Faculty Chair of the School of Education Executive Committee

**Subject:** Comments on the Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability

The SOE Executive Committee reviewed the Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability. Comments/feedback were solicited at our executive committee meeting and via email.

Overall, the SOE FEC expressed much support in the establishment of this committee.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide feedback.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kinnari" followed by a stylized flourish.

Kinnari Atit  
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee  
Associate Professor  
School of Education  
University of California, Riverside  
Email: [kinnari.atit@ucr.edu](mailto:kinnari.atit@ucr.edu)

TO: Ken Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

FR: Kurt Schwabe, Chair   
Executive Committee, School of Public Policy

RE: **[Comments] Re Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

Date: March 25, 2026

The Executive Committee of the School of Public Policy has reviewed the **Re Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**. We appreciate the effort and recommendations provided by the task force, and are in support of this proposal to establish a systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability.



March 18th, 2026

TO: Kenneth N. Barish, Chair, Academic Senate, UCR Division

FROM: Harry Tom, Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences

SUBJECT: [Systemwide Review] Proposal: Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability

Prof. Barish,

The CNAS Faculty Executive Committee has reviewed the proposal to establish a systemwide Academic Senate committee on Climate Change and Sustainability at the March 3rd meeting and were surprised that we don't have this committee already in place at the systemwide level, as we do have one here at UC Riverside.

The committee supports this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Harry Tom".

Harry Tom, Ph.D  
Chair, Faculty Executive Committee, College of Natural and Agricultural Sciences



## *Academic Senate*

### **COMMITTEE ON EDUCATIONAL POLICY**

March 10, 2026

To: Ken Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: Annie Ditta, Chair  
Committee on Educational Policy

**Re: Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

The Committee on Educational Policy (CEP) reviewed the proposal for a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability at their March 6, 2026 meeting and were generally supportive of the proposal.



March 5, 2026

**TO:** Ken Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division of the Academic Senate

**FROM:** Evangelos (Vagelis) Christidis, Chair  
BCOE Executive Committee

**RE:** Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability

The BCOE Executive Committee met on March 5th, 2026. Regarding the Systemwide Senate Review of Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability, the committee supports this action.





## *Academic Senate*

### **Committee on Information Technology**

February 19, 2026

To: Kenneth Barish, Chair  
Riverside Division

From: John Franchak, Chair  
Committee on Information Technology

**Re: Proposal to Establish a Systemwide Academic Senate Committee on Climate Change and Sustainability**

The committee discussed the proposal and had no comments.