



November 14, 2025

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

FROM: Iván Aguirre, Interim Chair
CHASS Executive Committee

RE: Proposal: Proposed Revisions to Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices

The CHASS Executive Committee (EC) reviewed the Proposed Revisions to Presidential Policy on Sustainability Practices. First, the EC notes the policy's emphasis on the University's interest to renew its commitments to sustainable transportation. While the Committee supports the thrust of this policy recommendation, we encourage the drafters to more clearly delineate what incentives, if any, will be offered to university employees to support and ensure the success of this program.

Much of the EC's concerns converged around the policy's failure to stipulate a clear and serious strategy for addressing sustainability, health, equity concerns associated with *existing* buildings—some of which have garnered the reputation for being notoriously *unhealthy* due, in some cases, to the asbestos and other harmful materials they are well known to contain. While we recognize current efforts to remediate the presence of harmful materials through UCR's Environmental Health and Safety Office, we are curious as to the detailed nature of the partnership between EH&S and implementation of local campus sustainability initiatives going forward. Any comprehensive University sustainability policy—especially one that has as its focus addressing “health, equity, and the environment” through the promotion of “healthy buildings” (p.24)—must account for its existing infrastructure to bring that up to standard, otherwise the policy will be dangerously incomplete.

Also, from an equity perspective, the Committee believes the policy should include provisions outlining how the University plans to address disparities in capacity among various locations and whether additional resources will be allocated to campuses with fewer assets to implement these changes. This is especially critical in view of current plans for state funding cuts across the UC, but especially with respect to campuses such as UC Riverside and UC Merced. We advise the inclusion of language recognizing resource imbalances and the establishment of a framework—

even if provisional—for developing a structure of shared support across campus locations so that the University’s sustainability efforts do not reproduce inequality.

Finally, the Committee also identifies as a significant oversight the policy’s failure to articulate how the University’s health, climate action, and sustainability efforts are being considered alongside the sustainability efforts and policies specific to each campus location. Accordingly, the Committee proposes the adoption of language that conveys an attentiveness to the potential impacts of these policies on, and their alignment with local community standards and aspirations.