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Office of the Academic Senate
SANTA CRUZ DIVISION
125 CLARK KERR HALL
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January 18, 2023

Susan D. Cochran, Chair
Academic Council

RE: Proposed Revisions to Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices

Dear Susan,

The Santa Cruz Division of the Academic Senate has completed its review of the proposed revisions to the Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices with the Committees on Academic Freedom (CAF), Planning and Budget (CPB), and Research (COR) providing comment. All were generally affirmative in their support of a systemwide policy on sustainable practices but raised issues related to implementation and costs associated with it.

It is important to acknowledge from the outset the importance of reliable energy to a research university. Traditional energy delivery systems and new renewable energy sources must be able to work together to deliver the power researchers need. As COR observed, "Increased use of renewable energy can, if properly deployed, help to mitigate the impacts of downtime of traditional energy sources such as the grid and COGEN, while also reducing our carbon footprint." COR further suggests that implementation should include the development of key metrics that address resiliency and uptime of campus electricity sources along with decreased environmental impacts. COR also points out that more should be developed in the policy to address how E-waste will be disposed of and offers UC Santa Cruz's Green Lab program as an excellent model.¹

CAF raised issues related to the feasibility of conforming with some of the requirements of the policy. One such requirement would have University community members fly only with airlines that engage in sustainable practices. This could prove to be problematic given the fact that not all airlines can or will engage in these practices, and that there are destinations served by very few airlines. CAF commented, "We are concerned that this is not possible during research travel in some parts of the world and would ask for some clarification of the policy to allow for exceptions." CAF supports the use of remote work to reduce carbon emissions produced by commuters but suggests that the freedom to work remotely should be balanced against the mission of the

¹ See UCSC Sustainability Office at <https://sustainability.ucsc.edu/engage/green-certified/green-labs/index.html>

University. CAF suggested that the term “plant-based” be clarified in the policy because “it is not clear if the intention is to promote meat substitutes, the consumption of fruits and vegetables or all of the above.”

CPB’s comments were much more specific and focused on the aspects of the policy that, in their view, would have the most impact in furthering sustainable practices. Members observed that Green Building Design changes would mandate all new buildings move from LEED Silver to LEED Gold, as well as restricting use of fossil fuels, and estimates that this could increase up-front construction costs by 5%. They further suggested that these costs should be included in capital planning. The committee noted that Alignment of UC policy with the State of California goals for Climate Protection would move the target date for carbon neutrality for scope 3 sources (indirect upstream and downstream greenhouse gas emissions) from 2050 to 2045. CPB suggested that the campus can meet this target goal based on projection of the current multi-year declining trend in GHG emissions. The last comment offered by CPB suggested that UCSC could comply with the Zero Waste policy under the revised schedule given the overall trend of decreasing waste on our campus. They make note, however, of the reversal in this trend in 2021, and suggested this could be due to COVID, and that the units responsible for monitoring this should take note and develop ways to address this issue.

On behalf of the Santa Cruz Division, I thank you for the opportunity to provide comment on this Presidential Policy.

Sincerely,



Patty Gallagher, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

encl: Senate Committee Responses (Bundled)

cc: Roger Schoenman, Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF)
Michael Hance, Chair, Committee on Research
Dard Neuman, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget
Matthew Mednick, Executive Director, Academic Senate

November 16, 2022

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Re: Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices

Dear Patty,

CAF met on October 24, 2022, to review the proposed policy on sustainable practices. The committee strongly supports the goals of this policy and the promotion of sustainable practices. Members, however, wonder about the requirement to travel on airlines that engage in sustainable practices. We are concerned that this is not possible during research travel in some parts of the world and would ask for some clarification of the policy to allow for exceptions.

Members also strongly supported the promotion of remote work. We note that Senate meetings have increased participation since the move to Zoom. Remote work also allows for the conduct of fieldwork when not teaching while continuing to perform departmental service. These are all great benefits of the flexibility afforded by remote work. However, CAF members also felt strongly that students benefit from face to face interaction as part of the university experience and recommend that the freedom to work remotely is balanced against the educational mission of the faculty.

Finally, CAF members would suggest that the meaning of “plant based” be clarified in the policy. It is currently not clear if the intention is to promote meat substitutes, the consumption of fruits and vegetables or all of the above.

Sincerely

/s/

Roger Schoenman, Chair
Committee on Academic Freedom

cc: Michael Hance, Chair, Committee on Research (COR)
Dard Neuman, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB)

December 9, 2022

PATTY GALLAGHER, Chair
Academic Senate, Santa Cruz Division

Re: Systemwide Review of Proposed Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices

Dear Patty,

The Committee on Research (COR) met on November 29, 2022, to review the proposed updates to the existing Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices. In our review, we checked for recent changes in response to COR's review of the same policies in the 21/22 academic year, and considered the overall impact of these policies on faculty research.

We agree that the UC Santa Cruz should make increasing use of clean energy to support campus operations. We also note that reliable sources of energy are essential to support campus research. Our campus has historically relied on COGEN to supplement power from the grid, which has sadly still not completely eliminated the impact of power cuts on campus research. Increased use of renewable energy can, if properly deployed, help to mitigate the impacts of downtime of traditional energy sources such as the grid and COGEN, while also reducing our carbon footprint. We encourage any implementation of renewable energy that supports campus operations to develop metrics of success that include resiliency and uptime of campus electricity sources along with decreased environmental impacts.

We also noted that the updated policies do not include any guidance or plan for electronic waste. We would welcome inclusion of policies and resources that enable campuses to more effectively collect and process electronic waste in ways that limit any adverse environmental impacts. Along similar lines, support for programs that replace power-hungry equipment with more efficient models may help to reduce electronic waste overall while lowering our carbon footprint. An example of such a program is the UCSC Green Labs Program.¹

Finally, we continue to encourage the University of California Office of the President to work closely with campuses with financial and planning assistance that will be necessary to meet these new policies.

Sincerely,
/s/
Michael Hance, Chair
Committee on Research

cc: Roger Schoenman, Chair, Committee on Academic Freedom (CAF)
Dard Neuman, Chair, Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB)

¹ See UCSC Sustainability Office at <https://sustainability.ucsc.edu/engage/green-certified/green-labs/index.html>

October 31, 2022

Patty Gallagher, Chair
Academic Senate

RE: CPB Review of Proposed Revisions to Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices

Dear Patty,

The Committee on Planning and Budget (CPB) reviewed the proposed updates to the existing Presidential Policy on Sustainable Practices on October 20, 2022. We focused specifically on some of the more impactful changes, including Green Building Design, Climate Protection, and the Zero Waste program, while noting that other changes such as the UC Healthy Vending Guidelines and Sustainable Foodservice are excellent opportunities to continue enhancing UC's implementation of sustainable practices.

The Green Building Design changes would mandate all new buildings move from LEED Silver to LEED Gold, as well as restricting use of fossil fuels (i.e., natural gas) for heating unless connected to a central facility. CPB notes that a reasonable estimate for additional up-front construction costs is in the order of 5%, and that based on past projects the additional cost may or may not be recouped during the lifetime of the building.¹ This has potential implications for our campus budget and capital planning, particularly for the housing initiative, given that new housing might not be heated using the Cogen plant, resulting in a second incremental increase in cost for heating if more expensive sustainable energy sources are required. These additional costs should be included in capital planning.

Alignment of UC policy with the State of California goals for Climate Protection would move the target date for carbon neutrality for scope 3 sources (indirect upstream and downstream greenhouse gas emissions) from 2050 to 2045. We note that UCSC's current trajectory should easily meet this goal based on projection of the current multi-year declining trend in GHG emissions. We note that the overall trend of decreasing waste on our campus should allow UCSC to comply with the Zero Waste policy under the revised schedule. However, we also note that the downward trend was sharply reversed in 2021 (last available data), presumably due to COVID, and we encourage the responsible units to consider how best to address the issue.

Sincerely,



Dard Neuman, Chair
Committee on Planning and Budget

cc: CAF Chair Schoenman
COR Chair Hance

¹ Erin A. Hopkins (2015) LEED Certification of Campus Buildings: A Cost-Benefit Approach, Journal of Sustainable Real Estate, 7:1, 99-111, DOI: 10.1080/10835547.2015.12091877