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*Chair of the Assembly of the Academic Senate
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December 2, 2019

**JANET NAPOLITANO, PRESIDENT
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA**

Re: Climate Change Principles and Recommendations

Dear Janet,

At its November 20, 2019 meeting, the Academic Council endorsed the attached principles to guide UC's response to the climate change challenge. The University Committee on Research Policy (UCORP) developed the principles in consultation with climate experts throughout the UC system. The principles call on the Academic Senate to mobilize faculty support for UC's carbon neutrality and de-carbonization initiatives and objectives, and to show educational and technological leadership on the existential threat of climate change.

Now is the time for the University of California to harness the expertise of its faculty so that we may all work to protect our planet – the central challenge of our time. UC faculty are, and should continue to be, key contributors to the development of scalable solutions to climate change. Many existing campus initiatives, institutes, and research groups could serve as a starting point and nucleus for the efforts. Faculty from all corners of the University — social sciences, humanities, arts, engineering, and science – stand ready to deploy their expertise.

We look forward to engaging with the Administration on this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have additional questions.

Sincerely,



Kum-Kum Bhavnani, Chair
Academic Council

Encl.

cc: Provost Brown
UC Director of Sustainability St. Clair
UC Merced Professor Bales
Academic Council
Chairs of Systemwide Senate Committees
Senate Directors

Academic Council Principles and Recommendations For Addressing the Climate Change Challenge November 2019

1. Formally support UC's lead in demonstrating carbon neutrality with the intent of decarbonization. While achieving carbon neutrality is a core initiative within UC, there is concern that some activities are perceived as symbolic and that more significant and tangible approaches should be considered, for example decarbonization¹. Academic Senate members across all UC campuses and programs can help advise and prioritize the University's ongoing activities to assure that the 2025 carbon neutral objectives are met, if not exceeded.

To this end, the Academic Senate Council can encourage deployment of faculty's "on the ground" expertise to meet the critical objective of carbon neutrality and decarbonization by actively consulting with ongoing efforts.

2. Formally support co-ordination and faculty engagement in developing alternative approaches to address the challenge of climate change. New ideas, new approaches and new systems are needed to mitigate and adapt to climate change. The Academic Council could become more proactive in faculty coordination.

To this end, the Academic Senate Council could assemble a systemwide Senate WORK GROUP to (a) interface with Faculty, (b) promote Faculty participation in climate-change mitigation and adaptation activities and (c) recruit climate-solutions expertise to UC's research, teaching and service missions. The Systemwide Senate can equally urge Divisional Senates to form equivalent Working Groups to coordinate work in concert with this systemwide group.

3. Foster the mobilization of multi-, cross-, and trans-disciplinary teams to communicate and explain the urgency of sustainability and decarbonization. UCs leadership in research and teaching, and its considerable operational experience in climate action could be shared with professional and lay community networks.

To this end, the Academic Senate, through the deployment of "climate champions" could address the urgent need for (a) the STEM disciplines to interact with the Humanities to help communicate and develop a comprehensive response to the challenge of climate change², (b) multi-, cross-, and trans-disciplinary teams of Faculty to develop better ways to communicate the scope of sustainability challenges³ and (c) sharing scalable climate solutions developed by UC.

¹ Meier, A., S.J. Davis, D.G. Victor, K. Brown, L. McNeilly, M. Modera, R.Z. Pass, J. Sager, D. Weil, D. Auston, A. Abdulla, F. Bockmiller, W. Brase, J. Brouwer, C. Diamond, E. Dowe, J. Elliott, R. Eng, S. Kaffka, C.V. Kappel, M. Kloss, I. Mezić, J. Morejohn, D. Phillips, E. Ritzinger, S. Weissman, J. Williams. 2018. UC Strategies for Decarbonization: Replacing Natural Gas. UC TomKat Carbon Neutrality Project. <http://doi.org/10.17605/OSF.IO/HNPUJ>

² Goldstone H, Pastan E, Why Science Needs Humanities to Solve Climate Change, Aug 2019 <https://www.capeandislands.org/post/why-science-needs-humanities-solve-climate-change#stream/>

³ Aron A, The Climate Crisis Needs Attention from Cognitive Scientists. Trends in Cognitive Sciences 2019 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tics.2019.08.001> [https://www.cell.com/trends/cognitive-sciences/fulltext/S1364-6613\(19\)30202-5](https://www.cell.com/trends/cognitive-sciences/fulltext/S1364-6613(19)30202-5)