

UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS
URBANA-CHAMPAIGN SENATE
Prefiled Resolution

RS.19.03 Resolution for Campus Sustainable Landscapes

WHEREAS, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is moving toward sustainable development of campus landscaping but currently has no clear central plan to ensure improvements and it is difficult for the campus community to provide input on these practices; and,

WHEREAS, the large and decentralized nature of our campus has often led to landscape practices with unintentional consequences that lack sustainable design, effective control of water, insensitivity for use of native plantings, and neglect of regional environmental design conventions; and,

WHEREAS, improper landscaping features can be a significant source of greenhouse gas emissions and require large inputs of water, chemical fertilizers, pesticides, and ongoing unplanned maintenance cost; and,

WHEREAS, the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign has committed that we believe we must, “...*exercise leadership by modeling ways to minimize global warming emissions*” as part of our 2015 Illinois Climate Action Plan (iCAP); and,

WHEREAS, objective 7.2 of the 2015 iCAP states “*Design and maintain campus landscapes in a more sustainable manner...*”; and,

WHEREAS, the campus leadership has expressed the need to improve the outdoor aesthetics of the campus grounds; and,

WHEREAS, our campus landscape acts as a “living learning laboratory”, a true classroom, teaching students every day how the University values natural order, ecological relationships, and sustainable land use¹; and,

WHEREAS, improving the resistance and resilience of our landscapes to future climate change will necessitate careful, centralized planning and management of landscaping operations; and,

WHEREAS, funding of sustainable plans of various portions of the campus landscape could be established by cooperation with the University of Illinois Foundation; and,

WHEREAS, the current system for managing campus landscapes is understaffed and poorly resourced, lacking horticulturists and/or ecologists, and is difficult for campus community members to interact with; and,

WHEREAS, the Illinois Student Government has previously passed a resolution supporting the development of sustainable campus landscapes, therefore:

BE IT RESOLVED, the Senate of the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign recommends the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign create a committee, with the appropriate expertise and competence, who shall be tasked to design and implement a clear, transparent, and accessible management plan for the sustainable development of our campus landscapes with a focus on planting systems with native species that require minimal input, support pollinator communities, and promote positive social-ecological interactions, balancing aesthetic beauty with ecosystem integrity; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, this sustainable landscape management plan be overseen by a campus sustainable landscape director, who shall be adequately provisioned with the authority and resources necessary to ensure its successful implementation.

Submitted by senators,

Joseph Edwards
Vikram Sardana
Eric Krupinski
Bryan Parthum

¹<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/00091383.1995.10544677>