

# Climate Justice Action Committee

Report to the Faculty Senate  
March 23, 2022

# Committee Membership



Jennie C. Stephens  
Co-Chair  
Director, School of Public Policy and Urban Affairs  
Dean's Professor of Sustainability Science and Policy  
College of Social Sciences and Humanities



Sonia E. Rolland  
Co-Chair  
Professor of Law  
School of Law



Auroop R. Ganguly  
Professor of Civil and  
Environmental Engineering  
College of Engineering



Sarah Kanouse  
Associate Professor  
Department of Art + Design  
College of Arts, Media and Design



Elizabeth M. Glowacki  
Assistant Teaching Professor  
Department of Health Sciences  
Bouvé College of Health Sciences  
Department of Communication Studies College of Arts, Media  
and Design

# Committee Charge

Definition of climate justice action

Communication strategy

Recommendations for an updated  
Climate Action Plan

Operationalize climate justice  
action

# Why Climate Justice at Northeastern?



**DEFINING  
CLIMATE JUSTICE**



**MEETING A  
GENERATIONAL  
CHALLENGE**



**ENACTING THE  
NEW ACADEMIC  
PLAN**



**REGAINING  
CLIMATE  
LEADERSHIP**



**IMPROVING  
COMMUNITY  
RELATIONS**

# Key Findings and Recommendations

Articulating leadership

Transparent assessment

Leveraging synergies

Inclusive community engagement

# Articulating leadership

- Climate justice as a [Presidential-level initiative](#)
- Empower the new [Sustainability and Climate Justice Hub](#)
- Elevate climate justice action in the university's [communication policy](#) and chain of [accountability](#)
- Align leadership on climate justice with the [Academic Plan](#)
- Set ambitious goals for being a [fossil-fuel free university](#)

# Articulating leadership

- Foster impactful interdisciplinary research
- Incentivize the development of experiential coursework on climate justice
- Align climate justice action with diversity, equity, and inclusion
- Follow principles of ethical community engaged teaching and learning

## **Leah Bamberger**

**Executive Director of Northeastern's Climate Justice & Sustainability Hub**

Video discussing her new role and her vision for an integrated approach





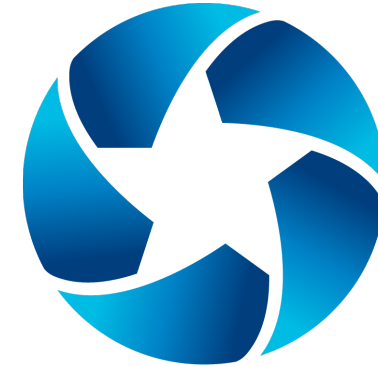
# Transparent Assessment

SDG 13: Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

SDG 10: Reduce inequality within and among countries

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

SDG 7: Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all



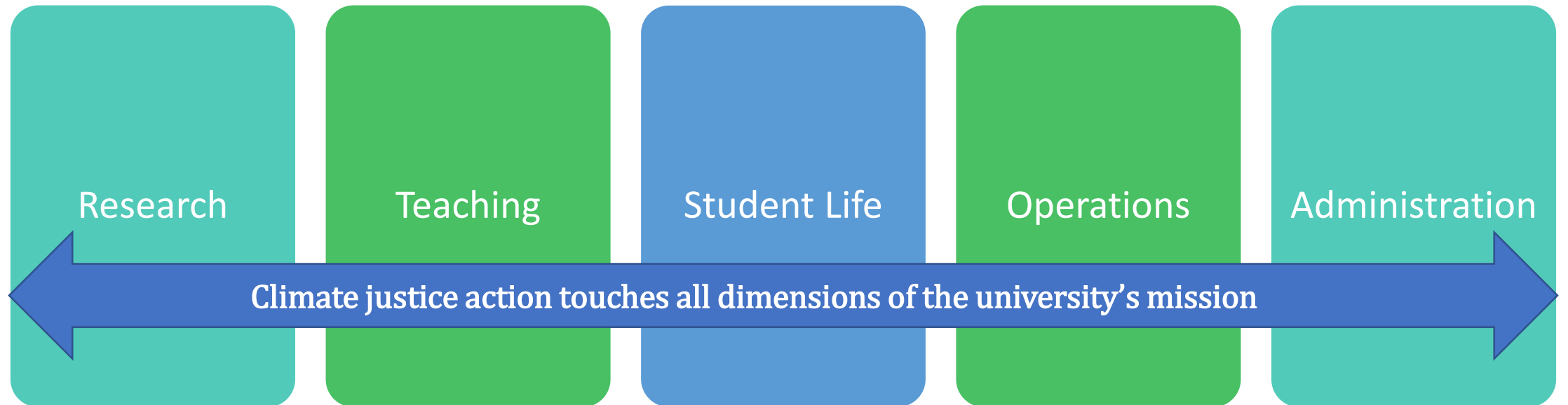
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**SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS**

**Professor Martha Davis (Law) and Rachel Joseph (Undergraduate student)**  
Video discussing their proposal to use the UN Sustainable Development Goals  
to structure university-wide assessment and curriculum mapping



# Leveraging Synergies



## Professor Sara Wylie

Video discussing her experiential learning course-work with students monitoring gas leaks on campus revealing local impacts of fossil fuel reliance



# Inclusive Engagement

Recognize ongoing harms

Build relationships and trust

Transparency, mutuality, accountability

Create and resource actionable research

# Reverend Mariama White-Hammond

## City of Boston, Chief of Environment, Energy and Open Spaces

Video on growing community mistrust of Northeastern's changing priorities  
Calling for a reset on university-community interactions



# Building on 2020-21 Climate Justice Action Committee



Martha Davis  
School of Law



Joan Fitzgerald  
School of Public Policy &  
Urban Affairs, CSSH



Auroop Ganguly  
Civil & Environmental  
Engineering COE



Sharon Harlan  
Health Sciences, Bouvé



Brian Helmuth  
MES/SPPIA COS/CSSH



Randall Hughes  
College of Science



Ted Landsmark  
Dukakis Center, SPPUA,  
CSSH



Kelsey Pieper  
Civil & Environmental  
Engineering, COE



Sheila Puffer  
D'Amore McKim



Rebecca Riccio  
Social Impact Lab, CSSH



Jennie Stephens  
School of Public Policy & Urban  
Affairs CSSH



Shalanda Baker Deputy Director of  
Energy Justice, DoE  
School of Law (on leave)

# Resolution Passed April 21, 2021

**WHEREAS** Northeastern University is a *global leader in experiential education and research* with intersecting commitments to sustainability, resilience, social justice, and racial justice,

**WHEREAS** *anchor institutions* like Northeastern are contributing to both climate change and racial inequities through our policies, processes and practices

**WHEREAS** the impacts of climate disruptions and the capacity to adapt are distributed unequally among and within local and global communities

**WHEREAS** equitable climate adaptation and strengthening climate resilience requires new *transformative investments, innovations, and actions* to rectify the disproportionate burdens on those who are most vulnerable

**WHEREAS** climate justice action involves striving for transformative systemic changes that link *technological and social innovation* prioritizing social, racial, and economic justice

**WHEREAS** we endorse the College of Science resolution to support the climate experts who warn of the serious consequences of global climate change caused by human activity, and we acknowledge that our continued investment in fossil fuels is undermining Northeastern's role as a leader in sustainability.

**BE IT RESOLVED that the Senate calls on University leadership to:**

*Establish a standing faculty committee on climate justice action* appointed by the faculty senate to provide continual assessment and feedback on university strategy, investments, policies, practices and processes. We call on senior leadership to collaborate, consult and engage with that committee.

*Demonstrate leadership in climate justice through our actions* as an anchor institution in our research, teaching, experiential learning, investments (managing our endowment), campus operations, and our engagement with the cities and communities in which our campuses are located.

*Take the clear step of divesting itself from fossil fuels within two years.*



# Climate Justice Action @Northeastern

*Uniquely Positioned for Global Leadership*

## Requires:

- Demonstrated senior-leadership commitment to social justice
- Re-alignment of strategic priorities
- A reset in university-community relationship
- Inclusive, transparent assessment of our institutional impact
- Becoming fossil fuel free & divesting
- Declining funding from climate-denying organizations

Climate Justice & Sustainability Hub  
April 20<sup>th</sup> Earth Day Event

