

REPORT FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

Brief History of Issue - why the issue is being considered:

The Department of Geology is requesting a change to the name of the program from the “Department of Geology” to “Department of Geology and Environmental Science” for the next possible catalog. The proposed change better reflects the academic array of programs offered to our students. Currently, the Department of Geology has four comprehensive major emphases: 1) the General Geology emphasis; 2) the Hydrogeology and Water Chemistry emphasis; 3) the Environmental Science emphasis; and 4) the Dual Degree Engineering emphasis (partnered with the University of Minnesota-Twin Cities). Many students receiving degrees in all four of these emphases enter careers and internships that focus on the environment, with graduates holding the titles such as ‘Environmental Scientist,’ ‘Hydrogeologist’, or ‘Environmental Engineer.’ Changing the department name will also better reflect what they do for students. Incorporating Environmental Science at the department level will help to guide prospective students and better express the true focus and character of the department.

Points Discussed by Committee:

1. The name change should have happened earlier on this campus (long overdue).
2. Was there pushback on name change from stakeholders outside of the program (“Ownership” of the words *environment* and/or *environmental science*). Multiple discussions took place over a period to alleviate concerns (BIOL, CHEM, GEOG, and PHES).
3. Distinctiveness between PHES environment science and proposed name change.
3. Program name change impact on students (more or less confusion-professional tracks are distinctive).

Pros of Recommendation:

1. Program name change better reflects the emphases and professional tracks of students in the department.
2. Program name change will be advantageous for recruiting new students, especially out of high school, who may not recognize department’s commitment to, and expertise in, the environmental sciences.

Cons of Recommendation:

none

Technology/Human Resource Impact:

None

Committee Recommendation:

The committee approved the name change of the department from “Department of Geology” to “Department of Geology and Environmental Science” for the next possible catalog.

MOTION FOR THE UNIVERSITY SENATE

The University Senate Committee: Academic Policies Committee

by a vote of 8 for to 0 against on April 19, 2022 (Date)

Recommends that:

The rename of the department from “Department of Geology” to “Department of Geology and Environmental Science” for the next possible catalog, starting 2023-2024 AY. Due to the timing of request and subsequent approval of motion, changes to catalog can’t be made during the 2022-2023 AY, however the department will be permitted to use their new name/status for purposes other than the catalog.

Implementation Date: 23/24 catalog

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marquell J. H.", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Signed:

Chair of the Committee

Send to: University Senate Office