



# **Davis Division Academic Senate**

## **Request for Consultation Responses**

### **Cross-College Major Proposal: B.S. in Earth Systems Science**

**November 23, 2016**

**UPDATE: When this proposal was initially distributed, it was missing an MOU from the two colleges and some important letters of support. These have now been added to the proposal. The new deadline for responses is 11/23/16.**

The faculty of the Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences in the College of Letters & Science, and the Department of Land, Air and Water Resources in the College of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, have proposed the establishment of a cross-college major in Earth Systems Science.

# **Graduate Council**

**November 22, 2016 11:37 AM**

*Response continued on next 3 pages.*

November 22, 2016

**To:** Academic Chair Goodhue

**Re:** Cross-College Major Proposal: B.S. in Earth Systems Science

Graduate Council discussed the establishment of a Cross-College Major in Earth Systems Sciences. The development of the new major is well justified and appropriate and will generate additional TA and mentorship opportunities with possible benefits to graduate programs. The committee agrees with the proposal and has no suggestions for additional modifications.

# **Planning & Budget**

**November 11, 2016 3:18 PM**

CPB discussed the proposal for a cross-college major in Earth Systems Science. Overall, CPB endorses the proposal. The proposal is supported by the Departments of Land Air and Water Resources and Earth and Planetary Sciences. They plan to evenly share the number of majors and the staff workload. CPB does have a concern regarding the faculty master advisor and the fact that the position will be rotated between the two departments every four years. CPB cautions that the advising hand-off must ensure that there is consistency in the actual advice that is given. CPB is also concerned about how this new major will affect the current LAWR majors. That was not clear in the proposal.

# **Undergraduate Council**

**January 31, 2017 2:18 PM**

*Response continued on next 2 pages.*

December 21, 2016

Rachael Goodhue  
Chair, Davis Division of the Academic Senate

RE: RFC New Earth Systems Sciences Major

Dear Rachael:

The Undergraduate Council does not approve the proposed establishment of a new Earth Systems Sciences Major.

The Undergraduate Council discussed the proposal for a new Earth Systems Sciences Major at meetings on November 25 and December 2, 2016. The UGC found very little truly new in the curriculum for the major, because students are simply selecting from among existing courses that address subsystems (i.e., atmosphere, biosphere, geosphere, hydrosphere). No new courses were proposed, with the exception of a seminar, to provide integration among the subsystems. This was deemed insufficient to an integrated system major, because the students will largely be expected to provide the integration among the subsystems. Accordingly, the UGC wondered whether this program should simply be offered as a concentration within existing majors. With respect to structure for oversight of the major, the faculty master adviser and departmental oversight were proposed to switch departments every 4 years and students are proposed to be assigned to a home department alphabetically. These two approaches were considered unacceptable because over time, the proposed structure will lead to a lack of committed major "ownership" by the departments, and alphabetic assignment ignores student preferences and interests, potentially making students feel like second-class citizens in the departments. The proposed major is unacceptably unit heavy; possibly because no new courses integrating across the subsystems were proposed. Finally, the results of department faculty votes on the proposed major were not included in the proposal, and the faculty members explicitly committed to the continued delivery and support of the new major and its students were not identified.

In summary, although acknowledging the potential value of the proposed major, the UGC will not revisit a modified proposal for this major unless the proposal is revised to correct for the concerns specified above.

Respectfully submitted on behalf of the Undergraduate Council.

Sincerely,



E. P. Caswell-Chen  
Chair, Undergraduate Council