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COMMITTEE ON ACADEMIC PLANNING AND REVIEW

Thursday, April 18, 2013  
12-13 CAPR 24

**TO:** The Academic Senate  
**FROM:** The Committee on Academic Planning Review (CAPR)  
**SUBJECT:** 12-13 CAPR 24: Anthropology and Geography & Environmental Studies merger  
**PURPOSE:** For Action by the Senate  
**ACTION REQUESTED:** Acceptance of the request to merge the departments of Anthropology and Geography & Environmental Studies; effective Fall 2014

**BACKGROUND:**

The departments of Anthropology and Geography & Environmental Studies have requested that these compatible disciplines be merged into a single department. Some benefits identified would be the ability to better secure future faculty positions, to collaborate on curriculum, and to expand enrollment growth. Attached below is the Request for Change of Status of an Academic Unit as completed by Geography and Environmental Studies Chair Dr. David Larson and Anthropology Chair Dr. Laura Nelson. CLASS Dean Rountree and Provost Houpis have also approved the request.

**ACTION REQUESTED:**

On 4/18/13 CAPR members voted unanimously to accept the merger request from Geography & Environmental Studies and Anthropology and recommend that the Academic Senate approve this merger as requested; effective Fall 2014.

## REQUEST FOR CHANGE OF STATUS OF AN ACADEMIC UNIT

**Current Unit Name(s):** Department of Geography & Environmental Studies  
Department of Anthropology

**Type of Change requested:**  Formation;  Dissolution;  Name Change;  Merger

**New Unit Name:** Department of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies

**Proposed effective date of the change (catalog date):** 2014

**Criteria or reason for this action:**

Merging Anthropology with Geography & Environmental Studies benefits the university by bringing together into one academic unit three compatible disciplines which take the world throughout human history as their subject matter. All three fields of study feature an inherently interdisciplinary approach, integrating science, social science and humanistic curriculum and scholarship.

The proposed merger of the two departments primarily reflects 21<sup>st</sup>-century curricular imperatives and opportunities for collaboration and growth, yet also *reunites* two academic programs that comprised the former Department of Geography-Anthropology from this university's early years in the 1960s and 1970s. (The two programs were encouraged to become free-standing departments after their combined tenured and tenure-track faculty had reached 26.) Subsequently, Geography helped develop and then became the administrative home of the multidisciplinary Environmental Studies program. On other CSU campuses and at other American universities, Geography and Anthropology frequently comprise a single academic department (**D. Comparisons**). Also common are departments of Geography and Environmental Studies/Planning, or, in a case specific to San Francisco State, Geography and Human Environmental Studies. While the proposed Department of Anthropology, Geography, and Environmental Studies (AGES) will be the first so-named unit in the CSU system, the programmatic advantages are such that similar realignments could well appear in the years ahead.

Reduced operating budgets and fewer tenured and tenure-track faculty are issues facing all but a handful of CSU East Bay departments. Maintaining the quality and curricular breadth of academic programs presents a daunting challenge. For programs such as Anthropology and Geography & Environmental Studies, disciplines which variously examine human agency on the earth's surface, there are obvious drawbacks to continuing to act individually, particularly in the realm of securing future faculty positions, but also in the routine operations of any academic unit. Merging to form one administrative unit would present numerous opportunities for collaborative curriculum and creative ways to address university cost-efficiency mandates and to take fuller advantage of the opportunities for enrollment growth in expanding areas of interest like sustainability; and to contribute to the University's shared strategic commitments and newly minted institutional learning outcomes (ILOs).

Fall 2012:

	<b>Anthropology</b>	<b>Geography &amp; Environmental Studies</b>
Declared Majors	54	81
M.A. Students	22	23
Total Headcount	76	104

As a merged department, AGES would support 135 majors and 45 graduate students taught by 9 tenured full-time faculty, 2 FERP participants and a small cohort of lecturers. AGES would continue to be a significant contributor to the General Education program, primarily in Areas D and D4; and it would be the only CLASS department to offer courses in B6 (UD Science). The service function of the two departments is reflected in their SCU contribution to CLASS. During AY 2011-12, ANTH ranked 14th and GEOG/ENVT 17th with 3.51% and 3.13%, respectively, of the college's total SCU. As a merged department (13,836 SCU), the CLASS rank would have been 5th overall, comparable to Communication and Sociology & Social Services.

**A. Mission of the Academic Unit:**

**How does the proposed name/unit more clearly fit the mission of the academic unit?**

The Department of Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies (AGES) will offer a rich curriculum focusing on the physical and cultural landscapes of the world. The department integrates six distinct yet interlocking perspectives: physical and cultural geography; biological and cultural anthropology; and environmental systems and sustainability. The department's goals are to educate students about the geographical, cultural, and linguistic diversity of the globe; the evolutionary history of humanity, including the history of human biological and cultural adaptations to and alterations of the physical environment; and lessons for sustainable approaches to human/environmental coexistence into the future drawn from current best practices and diverse cultural experiences of resource stewardship.

**Does the change reflect a change in the unit's mission? Explain.**

The mission for each of the three undergraduate/graduate student learning outcomes will not change immediately. But merger and integration will bring opportunities to more fully align the department with the university's shared strategic commitments and its ILOs and use the collective strength of core faculty to meet 21st-century imperatives in our fields.

**B. Curricular implications:**

**Does the new name/unit reflect past changes in curriculum? No. Explain.**

The proposed change is structural in nature and does not reflect curriculum changes that have already occurred.

**Does it reflect plans for future curriculum changes? Yes. Explain.**

Efficiencies can be gained in the lower division through cross-listing ANTH 1300 (Cultural Anthropology) with GEOG 2300 (Cultural Geography) as an either/or requirement for both majors. In the upper division, courses on major world regions taught separately by both programs (South America, Southeast Asia, China and Japan) can be redesigned to incorporate critical themes of both disciplines and perhaps team taught. Furthermore, courses on Climate Change, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) and Air-Photo Interpretation, which feature geographic techniques, can be integrated into the Anthropology major. Similarly, Anthropology courses in archaeology and cultural resources, of increasing importance to the environmental consulting profession, can be integrated into the Environmental Studies major.

The net result of this merger will be more flexible, contemporary and robust programs in all three disciplines. For example, a new cross-listed lower-division course on sustainability can be added to both curriculums. GEOG 4330 (Sustainable Development) can then be cross-listed in all three majors; this will provide an assessment opportunity to capture the degree to which our undergraduate majors satisfy the new ILO on sustainability. If this new course is also GE approved and incorporated into the existing Certificate in Sustainable Resource Management (which could be renamed if needed), it would open the teaching and assessment opportunities for this ILO to a wider cadre of students. Another opportunity for cross-fertilization would be in the C.E. Smith Museum of Anthropology, which can be expanded to include, in its scope, issues of human geography and environmental studies. In recent years, Smith Museum exhibits on DNA and immigration, as well as the 2013 exhibit on apocalypse, are good examples of themes at the intersection of all three disciplines. Input from all three academic areas would enrich future exhibits, and students from all three disciplines will have the opportunity to gain active experience in this form of public outreach and communication.

Other opportunities for shared curriculum may become apparent once the faculty in all three disciplines begins to work more closely together.

**Do any planned changes impinge on other academic units? No. Explain.**

All Anthropology, Geography and Environmental Studies courses currently embedded in the International Studies major will continue to be offered on an annual basis. Anthropology's offerings of medical anthropology classes, electives in the nursing and health sciences program, will continue as scheduled. Geography's course contributions to the Social Science credential for secondary education and the Liberal Studies major will not be compromised. Geography and Environmental Studies offerings that serve as core courses and electives for programs in the College of Science will continue to be offered with the same frequency.

**Which other units have been consulted?**

Faculty of the two departments began discussing the merits of a merger in 2010. While there was general agreement that such a move would be mutually beneficial, it was decided to wait for the CLASS leadership to stabilize, until after the appointment of a permanent dean. Discussions resumed in 2011-12 involving faculty members in both departments, including one FERP participant. The Dean of CLASS was consulted and indicated strong support for the proposed merger. The idea was communicated to the Provost who, in his spring 2012 chair reappointment letters, wrote, "I encourage the Department of Geography and Environmental Studies and the Department of Anthropology to continue ongoing discussions regarding merger." A formal vote by all active members of both departments in fall 2012 unanimously (10-Yes, 0-No) supported merging the two departments.

The Director of International Studies, whose program is co-directed by faculty in both Geography & Environmental Studies and Anthropology, supports the merger.

In Winter Qt. 2013, the Council of Chairs of the College of Letters, Arts and Social Sciences reviewed the proposal. The Council approved the merger request unanimously (15 yes, 0 no, 0 abstention)

CLASS Dean: Kathleen Rountree, 2/26/2013 \_\_\_\_\_signature/date

**What are the plans for avoiding unnecessary duplication?**

The proposed department does not, and will not, duplicate any other unit on campus.

**C. Effect on the University:**

**How will the new name/unit assist students in finding the program they need?**

None of the established recognizable program names will be lost or altered in the merger. The merged department will place within one administrative unit three programs focused on solving real-world environmental and social problems, many from a cross-cultural perspective. Students will be directed to all of the relevant degree programs from one location.

**How does the new name/unit make clear the differences between the academic unit and others in the University?**

The new unit name, AGES, will reflect the commonality and integration of the only programs in CLASS with one foot firmly in science and the other in social science. These programs are interdisciplinary at their core and rooted in field work and the field experience. The unit name will correctly imply that the three disciplines collaborate in curricular and scholarly pursuits.

**What are the resource/cost implications of the change?**

This merger will be budget neutral. AGES will have a chair and an associate chair with 24 WTU assigned time distributed according to AGES department internal determinations, using the two 12 WTU allocations of the current two departments. The department office

will be staffed by the current Geography & Environmental Studies ASC. To facilitate faculty and student interaction across the disciplines, Anthropology will give up two faculty offices on the third floor of Meiklejohn Hall, moving some anthropology faculty (linguistic and socio-cultural specialists) to Robinson Hall. Due to the immovable nature of the museum and osteology collections, biological and archaeological materials and faculty will remain on the first floor of Meiklejohn. AGES will also retain one additional faculty office in Meiklejohn Hall to allow those anthropology faculty resident in Robinson Hall access to a computer and a desk when in Meiklejohn Hall, and for lecturer use. Ideally this office would be on the first floor of Meiklejohn Hall, consolidating space with the biological and archaeological faculty. All the above resource arrangements will be consulted with and approved by the CLASS Dean, according to university and college policies.

There is a long – multigenerational – history of mutual respect, goodwill and support between Anthropology and Geography & Environmental Studies faculty. All current faculty members are fully committed to creating an academic enterprise that can best serve current and future students in our respective disciplines. The departmental merger is being proposed to create opportunities for curricular innovation in an environment of finite resources, not as a solution to a current problem.

**D. Comparisons:**

**What names are used for comparable academic units in other Universities in the CSU System and nationwide?**

*CSU System:*

Cal Poly Pomona: Geography and Anthropology

CSU Stanislaus: Anthropology and Geography

*Nationwide:*

Louisiana State University: Geography and Anthropology

Rowan University: Geography/Anthropology

University of Nebraska: Anthropology and Geography

University of Southern Maine: Geography and Anthropology

University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire: Geography and Anthropology

**Approval of the Department Chair/Director(s)**

GEEN Department Chair: David Larson date 2/19/2013

ANTH Department Chair: Laura Nelson date 2/25/2013

**Approval of the College Curriculum Committee/Council**

CLASS Dean: Kathleen Rountree date 2/26/2013

**Approval of the Dean** Kathleen Rountree date 2/27/2013

**Approval of the Provost/VPAA** James Houpis date \_\_\_\_\_