

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**REQUEST FOR A PROGRAM NAME CHANGE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY:
FROM BACHELOR OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN PUBLIC SERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION
IN AGRICULTURE TO BACHELOR OF SCIENCE PROGRAM IN
AGRICULTURE AND SOCIETY**

Action Requested: Consider recommending approval of the request by Iowa State University to change the name of the Bachelor of Science Program in Public Service and Administration in Agriculture to the Bachelor of Science Program in Agriculture and Society in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

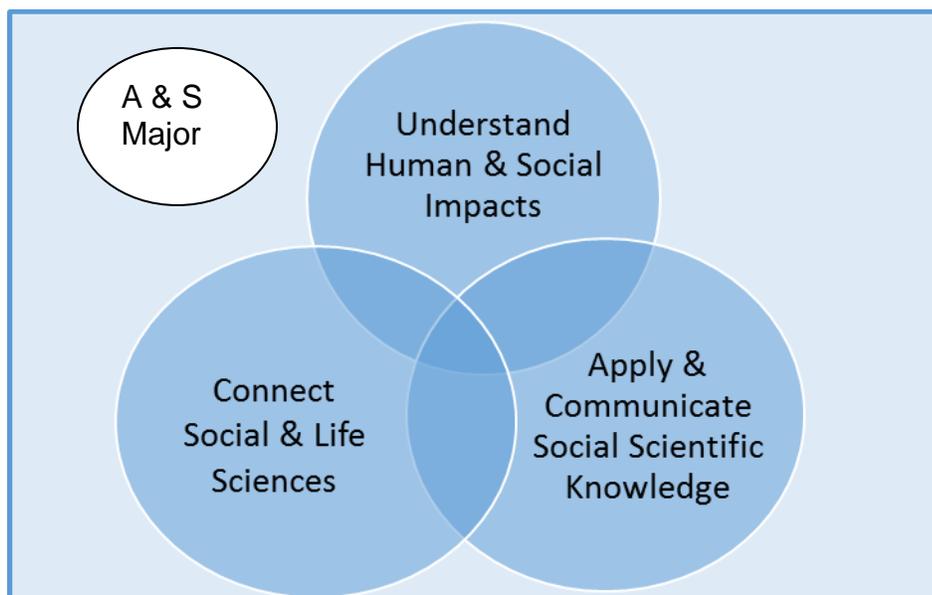
Executive Summary: The proposed program name change will create a clearer focus on the preparation of students for careers in the private sector and public policy rather than the administration of public service. This request has been reviewed by the Board Office and the Council of Provosts and is recommended for approval. This request addresses the Board of Regents Strategic Plan priority to pursue “educational excellence and impact” and Goal #8 – “Iowa’s public universities and special schools shall be increasingly efficient and effective.”

Background:

- ◇ **Description of program.** This interdisciplinary program has been in existence for approximately 30 years and it emphasizes the application of social science knowledge to agriculture and rural problems, and draws upon the expertise of faculty in sociology, economics, and political science. Students receive a broad-based education in communications, science, humanities, and the ethical, economic, and social aspects of agriculture. The program includes core courses in sociology, economics, and political science. The program, which is housed in the Department of Sociology in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, has grown from approximately 25 students in 2007 to 40 students currently.
- ◇ **Reason for proposed name change.** The current name, “Public Service and Administration in Agriculture,” is cumbersome, confusing, and obsolete. The name was appropriate when the program was established; at that most, most of the students were interested in working in the public and non-profit sectors. However, for at least the past decade, the majority of students have been primarily interested in working in the private sector and in public policy with little interest in the administration component of public service.

The proposed program name, “Agriculture and Society,” better emphasizes that the program is focused on the social and human sides of agriculture and the application of social science knowledge to a broad range of issues related to agriculture and society, not only administration and public service. The proposed name will strengthen the ability of students to market themselves to a broader array of companies, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations that work on agricultural issues and are increasingly interested in hiring graduates who can apply and communicate social scientific knowledge to agricultural issues. Program graduates will have the skills and knowledge to work in a range of fields related to agriculture, including policy analysis, government relations, public relations, communications, marketing, and sales.

The proposed name will correlate to faculty strengths in the sociology department that teaches courses relevant to agriculture, including the sociology of agriculture, rural institutions and organizations, environment, technology, and development. The proposed name will emphasize the application of social science knowledge to issues related to agriculture and society, complementing existing programs in the College, including Global Resource Systems, and Agricultural Studies.



- ◇ Comparable name at other institutions. The proposed program name is unique. At the University of Missouri, a similar program is named Agricultural Education.
- ◇ Consistency with accreditation requirements. This program is not accredited.
- ◇ Effect on program configuration. The number of credit hours will remain the same. Currently, the core program requirements are 46 credits in Sociology, Political Science, and Economics. The core requirements with the proposed name change will include 31.5 required credits and 15 credits chosen from a list of classes that apply a social science understanding of issues related to agriculture. This will allow students to select courses that reflect their specific career interests and develop expertise for future employment. The political science classes that focus on local government, public administration and management of the public sector will no longer be required.
- ◇ Effect on students. Current students and those already admitted to the program will have the option of retaining the current program title (Public Service and Administration in Agriculture) or changing to the proposed name (Agriculture and Society) without affecting their coursework. All students admitted after August 2014 will be admitted to the Agriculture and Society Program.

- ◇ Effect on resources. Costs incurred by the proposed name change will be minimal. The Department of Sociology will use its human and technological resources to revise the website and promotional materials with the new name. These materials will be shared with the College to minimize their costs in revising their website and promotional materials.
- ◇ Proposed name consistent with College mission. The proposed name change addresses the College's mission to "educate future leaders, conduct mission-oriented basic and applied research and share new knowledge for the betterment of Iowa and the world" by developing the following skills and competencies in graduates:
 - ⇒ Recognize, analyze, and evaluate the critical human and social factors (e.g., practices, policies, laws, institutions) impacting agriculture.
 - ⇒ Understand the social dimensions of agriculture and its connections with food and environmental systems.
 - ⇒ Develop problem solving, critical thinking, and leadership skills to positively influence human impacts on agriculture.
 - ⇒ Understand the perspectives of diverse stakeholders and develop strategies to communicate clearly and effectively to a range of audiences.
- ◇ Date of implementation. The proposed program name change will become effective upon approval by the Board of Regents and will be included in the University's General Catalog. The anticipated implementation date is August 2014.