

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR ADMINISTRATIVE REORGANIZATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA:  
SCHOOL OF EARTH, ENVIRONMENT, AND SUSTAINABILITY**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by the University of Iowa to administratively reorganize to create the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this request.

**Reason for proposed change.** The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences (CLAS) is proposing an administrative change that will close the departments of Earth and Environmental Sciences and Geographical and Sustainability Sciences and create a single administrative unit to be called the School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability (SEES).

CLAS reviewed the structure of comparable programs at a number of peer institutions and found that similar administrative and academic changes have increased opportunities for students, faculty and staff to benefit from new research directions and funding, enhanced collaborations across relevant natural and social systems disciplines, and expanded experiential and applied learning opportunities for students. Additionally, the proposed streamlined programs of study will provide administrative efficiencies in managing the undergraduate curriculum options for students.

The proposed restructure will:

- Create a new School of Earth, Environment, and Sustainability (SEES)
- Close the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
- Close the Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences
- Realign faculty and staff appointments and programs

**Effect on program configuration.** Faculty and staff currently appointed in the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences and the Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences will be moved to the proposed School of SEES.

Correspondingly, CLAS requests to make the following graduate and undergraduate administrative and curricular home changes:

Move the following degree programs from the existing Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences into the proposed SEES:

- BA degree in Environmental Policy and Planning
- MA and PhD degrees in Geography

The following program terminations from the existing Department of Geographical and Sustainability Sciences are being requested (see docket items AAC IV.F.2, IV.F.3 and IV.F.4):

- BS degree in Environmental Policy and Planning

- BA and BS degrees in Geography
- BS degree in Sustainability Science

Students interested in programs in Environmental Policy and Planning, Geography or Sustainability Science will be able to choose from the proposed new BA or BS degrees in Geographical and Sustainability Sciences or the existing BA or BS degrees in Earth and Environmental Sciences or the BA degree in Environmental Policy and Planning.

Move the following degree programs from the existing Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences into the proposed SEES:

- BA and BS degrees in Environmental Sciences
- PhD and MS degrees in Geoscience

The following closure from the existing Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences is being requested (see docket item AAC IV.F.1):

- BA and BS degrees in Geoscience

A new BA and BS in Geographical and Sustainability Sciences program in SEES is being requested (see docket item IV.G).

**Effect on students.** Current undergraduate students will benefit from the streamlined set of academic programs and the combined faculty and staff from the two departments. A unique feature of the undergraduate program will be its sharing of introductory-level courses across the three programs of study. This intersection will provide enhanced opportunities for students who are interested in working on these significant environmental and sustainability challenges to participate in integrated, interdisciplinary research and education opportunities. Graduate students will also benefit from interdisciplinary research and educational opportunities that are created with this new school.

**Effect on accreditation.** None of these programs have separate programmatic accreditation and there is no effect on Higher Learning Commission accreditation.

**Effect on resources.** With the merger of these two units, CLAS expects more for faculty, staff and students to collaborate in educational activities and interdisciplinary research. Additionally, the college anticipates increased revenue by attracting new students to SEES majors and through increased externally funded research. As educational and research initiatives expand, CLAS will assess and align facilities, faculty, staffing and other resources accordingly.

**Date of implementation.** Upon approval by the Board of Regents.