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Office of the President
December 13, 2005

Members, Board of Trustees:

CHANGE IN NAME OF THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGY

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve a change in the name of the College of Arts and Sciences Department of Geology to the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences, effective in the spring 2006 semester.

Background: Over the last fifteen years, the entire context of earth sciences (or geology as it is commonly known) has changed. The discipline has evolved from a profit-oriented, exploitative approach to one that emphasizes understanding the earth as a system and the remediation of current and past environmental ills. The word “geology” conveys to most people the concept of rocks or the study of rocks, but as practiced today, the field is much broader than the study of rocks. Overall, the field has become more interdisciplinary and environmental in scope. The proposed name change reflects the faculty’s desire to become part of an ongoing and significant trend in the discipline. The new name has the advantage of reflecting the more traditional geologic role of studying and understanding the earth, while at the same time conveying the integral nature of its more applied environmental role.

The proposal has been approved by the department faculty and the Arts and Sciences College Council; reviewed and recommended by the Senate Committee on Academic Organization and Structure; and recommended by the University Senate. The Interim Provost of the University supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____