

**College of Letters and Science Faculty Document 1111
February 23, 2026**

Recommendation of the Department of Geosciences, the Department of Geography, the Advisory Committee to the Conservation and Environmental Science programs, the L&S Academic Planning and Governance Committee, and the L&S Academic Policies and Curriculum Committee, to move the Department of Geography and the L&S programs in Conservation and Environmental Science (CES) into the Department of Geosciences, and to change the name of the Department of Geosciences to the Department of Earth, Environment, and Society.

Governance Path:

ACTION	Governance Review
Curricular Moves	SOIS Committee 3/2/26 SOIS Faculty 3/6/26
Curricular Moves	L&S APCC 3/13/26
Curricular Moves	SARUP Faculty 3/17/26
Geosci Dept Name Change and Dissolution of Geog Dept	L&S APGC 3/20/26
Curricular Moves, Name Change, Dissolution	L&S Faculty 4/10/26
Name Change	Senate Rules Committee Agenda 4/23/26 Meeting 4/30/26
Name Change	Faculty Senate Agenda 5/5/26 Meeting 5/12/26 (or 5/14/26)
Name Change	Provost, Chancellor End of May, possibly
CIM ENTRY	Name change, Curricular moves, Dissolution by 8/26
Curricular Moves	Campus APCC Agenda 8/26 Meeting 9/26 Campus GCC Agenda 9/26

	Meeting 10/26
Geog Dept Dissolution	Faculty Senate (Fall 2026 if possible)
EFFECTIVE DATE	Fall 2027

Recommendation:

That the L&S Faculty recommend to the Dean approval of the proposal to move the Department of Geography (its courses, curricular code, and programs) (GEOG) and the L&S programs in Conservation and Environmental Science (CES) (its courses, curricular code, and programs) into the Department of Geosciences (GEOSCI); to change the name of the Department of Geosciences to the Department of “Earth, Environment, and Society” (EES); and to dissolve the Department of Geography. (The EES Department would live, administratively, in L&S within the Division of Natural Sciences.)

Rationale:

In order to foster stronger collaborations and facilitate research and educational innovations, and due to the many disciplinary synergies between the fields of geology and geography and the interdisciplinary degree programs in CES (the latter of which are currently administered by a CES Advisory Committee whose members consist of faculty from Geography, Geosciences, and Biological Sciences), the Department of Geosciences, the Department of Geography, and the Advisory Committee of Conservation and Environmental Sciences have all voted independently to merge, and have approved both a shared P&P document as well as a proposed new name. (Operationally, Geography and CES have voted to join Geosciences, and Geosciences has voted to accept them.) The three units have voted to name this consolidated unit the “Department of Earth, Environment, and Society.” This name is reflective of the three curricular areas that will comprise the new unified Department.

The Executive Committee of the Department of Geography will consider tenure home moves from GEOG into the Department of Geosciences and GEOSCI will consider the reception of faculty tenure lines from the Department of Geography in early March. The Dean of the College of Letters and Science, given these Department and EC votes, agrees to move all relevant academic staff into the merged unit.

This consolidation is beneficial for all three entities and will result in a new name and identity for a new, merged department, while the existing programs housed under this new department retain their autonomy and their curricular codes. The chairs and other faculty of all three units have been engaged in the process and have developed a Policies and Procedures document that fully outlines program and personnel administration in the new,

merged unit. This P&P was approved by all program faculty (and by the CES Advisory Committee).

We deem this merger to be reactive to enrollment and funding circumstances and constraints, reflective of broader national trends, and also exciting for its potential for the unit as a whole.

Among the benefits of this merger is the enhanced facilitation of (interdisciplinary) research collaboration; an invigorated student community for CES majors (a popular and strong major); additional supports for graduate programs; further integration of the shared staff support position in CES and Geosciences; and additional opportunities for students in terms of research, experiential learning, and career placement.

Financially, combining two comparatively small faculties into one allows some economies of scale. Geography has ten faculty and Geosciences has eight, CES does not house tenure lines, but is supported by its Director, currently an instructional academic staff member who teaches CES courses. Combining them into one unit will bring them more in line with the size of other Natural Science Departments, both in terms of faculty and majors.

Given the increased possibilities in the new department, and plans to retain all current programs, any impact on students is only positive. We particularly anticipate a benefit to CES students who will now be housed in a department with many of the faculty whose courses contribute to their program.

Approved by L&S APCC on March 13, 2026.

Approved by L&S APGC on March 20, 2026.

Approved by L&S Faculty on March 20, 2026.