Educational Policies Committee Program Proposal, College of Natural Resources, April 19, 2007 - New Emphases in Bachelor of Science in Geography

Utah State University

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AGENDA

MEETING OF THE
UTAH STATE BOARD OF REGENTS
TO BE HELD AT
DIXIE STATE COLLEGE, ST. GEORGE, UTAH

April 19 – 20, 2007

Utah State Board of Regents
Office of the Commissioner of Higher Education
Board of Regents Building, The Gateway
60 South 400 West
Salt Lake City, Utah 84101-1284
**Finances:** As this proposed emphasis involves only a clustering of existing courses, there is no anticipated budgetary impact.

**Environmental Stewardship**

**Need:** The emphasis in Environmental Stewardship is designed for students whose academic interests and/or career goals do not fall into the six primary emphases in Environmental Studies. While students will be required to complete 15 credits in addition to the Environmental Studies disciplinary core, no specific courses are prescribed. Instead, students will develop a customized emphasis in consultation with a faculty advisor, and must complete a form describing the intent of the emphasis, which specific courses will be included, and how they relate to the student’s goals. A university-approved minor may be used to meet this requirement.

**Institutional Impact:** The Department of Environment and Society believes the creation of this emphasis will better reflect one of the chief educational goals of the Environmental Studies degree, thereby improving the degree’s visibility and clarifying its image and meaning within the university. Students will benefit by an emphasis that more clearly identifies the focus of their undergraduate curriculum to prospective employers or graduate degree programs.

No new courses will be created as a result of this emphasis, and no new faculty, facilities or equipment will be required. The proposal should have no significant institutional impact within the College, Utah State University, or any other undergraduate programs in the Utah Higher Education System.

**Finances:** As this proposed emphasis involves only a clustering of existing courses, there is no anticipated budgetary impact.

**v. New Emphases in Bachelor of Science in Geography**

**Request:** Utah State University requests approval to create four new emphases within the existing Bachelor of Science degree in Geography, effective Spring 2007. The proposed new emphases are (1) Cultural/Social Geography, (2) Human Impacts on the Environment, (3) Planning and Analysis, and (4) Geographic Perspectives. These emphases were approved by the Utah State University Board of Trustees on January 12, 2007. The Department of Environment and Society administers the B.S. in Geography.

Currently the curriculum for this degree requires students to devote at least 12 credits toward a self-designed “specialization option” that reflects their educational goals and career interests. The department proposes to create a series of specific emphases that would represent typical programs of study taken by Geography majors.

The Geography curriculum provides a broad background in the basic themes of geography – human (cultural), physical, and regional geography – with a particular focus on the geography of environment and earth resources and on the technical skills of geographic information analysis. Students also are required to acquire depth of knowledge in a particular regional or technical area of geography of interest to them. Experience has taught us that most students wish to follow a few specific career paths, and they would like specific guidance about which courses will best help them follow those paths. Moreover, when they have earned the Bachelor’s degree, they would like their academic records to clearly indicate the paths they
have prepared to take. Therefore, the Department of Environment and Society faculty have identified specific courses that would most benefit students with particular goals. The proposed emphases are presented below.

**Cultural/Social Geography**

**Need:** The emphasis in Cultural/Social Geography provides additional depth beyond the core Geography curriculum in the study of interactions between human societies and the spatial characteristics of the earth and its environments. Courses in this emphasis help students learn more about specific cultures or cultural institutions, with particular emphasis on human geography in the developing world and non-Western cultures. Students will be required to take 12 or more credits from the following list of courses:

- **ANTH 3160** Anthropology of Religion (3 cr.)
- **ENVS 5550** Sustainable Development (3 cr.)
- **FREN 3550** or **JAPN 3100** or any other culture course offered as part of a foreign language program (3 cr.)
- **GEOG 4200** (second geographic area of study beyond the one chosen for Geography core) (3 cr.)
- **GEOG 5650** Developing Societies (3 cr.)
- **SOC 4710** Asian Cultures (3 cr.)

**Institutional Impact:** No new courses will be created as a result of this emphasis, and no new faculty, facilities or equipment will be required. The proposal should have no significant institutional impact upon Utah State University or other undergraduate programs within the Utah System of Higher Education.

**Finances:** There is no anticipated budget impact of this proposed emphasis.

**Human Impacts on the Environment**

**Needed:** The emphasis in Human Impacts on the Environment focuses on coursework that helps students understand how human activities both currently and in the past have come to affect the Earth’s biological and physical components, and to provide a solid foundation in understanding tools and programs that are being developed to manage and mitigate those impacts. Students will be required to take 12 or more credits from the following list of courses:

- **ENVS 3600** Living with Wildlife (3 cr.)
- **ENVS 5000** Collaborative Problem-Solving for Environment and Natural Resources (3 cr.)
- **ENVS 5550** Sustainable Development (3 cr.)
- **ENVS 5570** Sustainable Living (3 cr.)
- **HIST 3950** Environmental History (3 cr.)
- **WILD 2200** Ecology of our Changing World (3 cr.)
- **NR 2220** General Ecology (3 cr.)
- **WILD 4600** Conservation Biology (3 cr.)
Institutional Impact: No new courses will be created as a result of this emphasis, and no new faculty, facilities or equipment will be required. The proposal should have no significant institutional impact upon Utah State University or other undergraduate programs within the Utah System of Higher Education.

Finances: There is no anticipated budget impact of this proposed emphasis.

Planning and Analysis

Need: The emphasis in Planning and Analysis is designed to provide additional depth for students who are interested in pursuing careers in bioregional, municipal, or other types of planning. It combines additional coursework in geographic information analysis with specific courses in planning, site design, and community development. Students will be required to take 12 or more credits from the following list of courses:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Course Code</th>
<th>Course Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ENVS 3000</td>
<td>Natural Resource Policy and Economics</td>
<td>4 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVS 5000</td>
<td>Collaborative Environmental Problem-Solving</td>
<td>3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENVS 5300</td>
<td>NR Law &amp; Policy</td>
<td>2 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GEOG 3610</td>
<td>Rural/Urban Planning</td>
<td>3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LAEP 3700</td>
<td>City &amp; Regional Planning</td>
<td>3 cr.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WATS 5930</td>
<td>Geographic Information Analysis</td>
<td>4 cr.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Institutional Impact: No new courses will be created as a result of this emphasis, and no new faculty, facilities or equipment will be required. The proposal should have no significant institutional impact upon Utah State University or other undergraduate programs within the Utah System of Higher Education.

Finances: There is no anticipated budget impact of this proposed emphasis.

Geographic Perspectives

Need: The emphasis in Geographic Perspectives is designed for students whose academic interests and/or career goals do not fall into the three primary emphases. While students will be required to complete 12 credits in addition to the Geography disciplinary core, no specific courses are prescribed. Instead, students will develop a customized emphasis in consultation with a faculty advisor and must complete a form describing the intent of the emphasis, which specific courses will be included, and how they relate to the student’s goals. A university-approved minor may be used to meet this requirement.

Institutional Impact: No new courses will be created as a result of this emphasis, and no new faculty, facilities or equipment will be required. The proposal should have no significant institutional impact upon Utah State University or other undergraduate programs within the Utah System of Higher Education.

Finances: There is no anticipated budget impact of this proposed emphasis.
Commissioner’s Recommendation

The Commissioner recommends the Regents approve the institutional requests on the Information Calendar of the Career and Technical Education, and Student Success Programs Committee as described above. No action required.

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Richard E. Kendell, Commissioner

REK/LS/JMC