

Dear Colleagues,

The College of Arts and Sciences and the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences wish to establish a cross-college major currently named “Environment and Sustainability.” As per the formal proposal, this major is a modified and broader version of the existing Environmental and Sustainability Sciences (ESS) major in CALS, modified to make it a cross-college major open to students in both CALS and A&S, and broadened to include a humanities concentration while retaining the existing social science and science concentrations.

In addition to there being a formal proposal, there is a statement outlining support for the major committed by the two colleges. This commitment from the respective colleges represents a strong endorsement of this major and a recognition that adequate resources must be committed to make the major a success.

The proposal under consideration has been widely vetted with faculty from both colleges:

- A cross-college Committee on Interdisciplinary Curricula in Environmental Studies and Environmental Sciences developed an initial proposal (submitted in Feb 2016).
- The initial proposal was widely distributed, and the colleges collected feedback at two well-attended faculty fora and via written comments.
- A second committee reviewed this feedback along with input from the deans, and produced a refined proposal (submitted Aug 2016).
- The colleges then solicited further feedback from all faculty in both colleges. In order to assess faculty interest, especially among A&S faculty, faculty were invited to express an interest in participating in this program. Roughly 25 A&S faculty not associated with the existing ESS major expressed interest in teaching for the proposed major, and roughly two-thirds of these also expressed interest in advising majors.
- The second committee reviewed this second round of feedback and produced the final proposal now under consideration (submitted Nov 2016).
- The final proposal was reviewed by both the A&S Educational Policy Committee and the CALS Curriculum Committee, and both bodies endorsed this proposal.

This extensive process of faculty engagement has resulted in what we consider to be a strong curriculum that creatively links the sciences, social sciences, and humanities in the area of environment and sustainability, as well as a major that will be highly desirable to students in both colleges. We thank you for taking the time to consider this proposal.

Sincerely,

Ted O’Donoghue
Senior Associate Dean
College of Arts and Sciences

Max J. Pfeffer
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