

Proposal to Change the Name of the Department of Geological Sciences

The Department of Geological Sciences proposes to change its name to the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences. There are several reasons that this proposed change is requested. First, the name more accurately characterizes the nature of the broad subject matter taught and the research conducted in the Department, and it more accurately reflects the long-term strategic plan of the Department. The Department faculty conduct research and teach courses in the core geological and geophysical science fields, in the planetary sciences and in the environmental sciences. The current name does not reflect this breadth. Even more noteworthy is that the Department houses the Environmental Studies program, but there is no obvious connection between that program and the Department by name. The Department strategic plan calls for development of the planetary and environmental programs to build upon and complement our existing strengths. The proposed name change is one step in the implementation of that plan.

Second, we believe that the current name does not encourage recruitment of students interested in environmental or planetary sciences. By changing the name to include these 'key' words it is our hope that the Department will have a greater visibility to prospective students which will increase recruitment of students to CWRU and to our Department. Finally, changing the name also reflects trends in the discipline. Departments are increasingly dropping the terms 'geology' or 'geological sciences' and including 'environmental' and 'planetary'. This will be discussed in more detail below.

From a historical perspective this is not the first time that the Department has changed its name. At the time of federation the Department of Geology and Geography (WRC) and the Department of Geology and Mineralogy (CIT) were merged into the Department of Geology (CWRU). Seven years later the name was again changed to 'Department of Earth Sciences', partly to reflect the 'non-geology' faculty that were members of the Department following the merger. Five years later, in 1979, it was felt that the new name was not sufficiently 'modern' and it was changed to 'Department of Geological Sciences'. That has been the Department name for the last 32 years.

A general survey of names of departments at comparison institutions (Table 1) shows that there is neither a standard name used by most departments nor are there many departments that have retained the terms 'geology' or 'geological sciences'. For example, of the 15 institutions listed in Table 1, only one has a department with the name 'Department of Geological Sciences' and only 7 have any form of 'geo' in their title, while 11 have the term 'earth' in the department name, 6 have the term 'environmental' in the department name and 5 have the term 'planetary' in the department name.

It will probably be necessary to change the Department code used for course numbering from GEOL to something else. The faculty have no strong preference, but offer two suggestions, EEPS and EARTH as possibilities.

At this time the faculty of the department do not anticipate any substantive changes to the degree programs, only a change in the name of the Department. The degree program names will need to be changed to reflect the new department name on the diplomas.

Table 1. Department names at comparable and peer institutions.

Institution	Department Name
Johns Hopkins University	Earth and Planetary Sciences
Rochester University	Earth and Environmental Sciences
University of Chicago	Geophysical Sciences
Washington University	Earth and Planetary Sciences
Columbia University	Earth and Environmental Science
Ohio State University	School of Earth Sciences
University of Michigan	Geological Sciences
Caltech	Geological and Planetary Sciences
Duke University	School of Environmental and Earth Sciences
	Earth and Ocean Sciences
Harvard University	Earth and Planetary Sciences
MIT	Earth, Atmospheric and Planetary Sciences
University of Pennsylvania	Earth and Environmental Sciences
Princeton University	Geosciences
Stanford University	Geological and Environmental Sciences
	Geophysics
	Environmental Earth Systems Science
Yale University	Geology and Geophysics



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MEMORANDUM

TO: Alan Levine, Chair, Faculty Senate
Elizabeth Woyczynski, Secretary of the
University Faculty

FROM: Cyrus C. Taylor

SUBJECT: Motion to Amend the By-laws of the College of Arts and Sciences

DATE: April 21, 2011

In accordance with the provisions to amend the By-laws of the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, the following motion has been approved in a faculty-wide vote. We now await Senate action in anticipation of approval by the University Board of Trustees at the earliest possible date.

MOTION: To approve the request to rename the Department of Geological Sciences as the Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences; and to amend the By-Laws of the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences, Article X. Section 32— Departments by replacing “Geological Sciences” with “Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences.”

This motion passed by a vote of 168 in favor, 5 against, and 0 abstentions. A total of 173 ballots were cast.

October 15, 2011

**RESOLUTION TO APPROVE RENAMING
THE DEPARTMENT OF GEOLOGICAL SCIENCES TO THE
DEPARTMENT OF EARTH, ENVIRONMENTAL,
AND PLANETARY SCIENCES**

WHEREAS, Article II, Section 1 of the By-Laws of the Board of Trustees (“By-Laws”) for Case Western Reserve University (“the University”) states in relevant part that the Board of Trustees shall have powers to oversee the educational programs of the University and grant degrees; and

WHEREAS, Article V, Section A, Par. 2. of the Constitution of the University Faculty states in relevant part that the Faculty Senate shall make recommendations to the president for consideration and transmittal to the Board of Trustees with respect to policies governing the establishment or discontinuance of departments within constituent faculties, the renaming of departments, or the merging of departments; and

WHEREAS, on April 21, 2011, the faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences voted to approve the renaming of the Department of Geological Sciences to the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences; and

WHEREAS, on September 28, 2011, the Faculty Senate voted to approve the renaming of the Department of Geological Sciences to the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences; and

WHEREAS, the recommendation of the Faculty Senate to approve the renaming of the department was transmitted to the President for consideration and transmittal to the Board of Trustees.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:
the Board of Trustees of Case Western Reserve University approves the renaming of the Department of Geological Sciences to the Department of Earth, Environmental and Planetary Sciences and authorizes the College of Arts and Sciences to take and to oversee all necessary actions in order to rename the Department of Geological Sciences to the Department of Earth, Environmental, and Planetary Sciences.

APPROVED
by the
CASE WESTERN
RESERVE UNIVERSITY
BOARD OF TRUSTEES
Libby Keefer
SECRETARY OF THE
CORPORATION