

**UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
ACADEMIC PROGRAMS COMMITTEE
REQUEST FOR DECISION**

PRESENTED BY: Len Proctor, Chair, Academic Programs Committee of Council

DATE OF MEETING: December 16, 2010

SUBJECT: **College of Arts & Science: Termination of BA and BSc in Land Use and Environmental Studies**

DECISION REQUESTED:

It is recommended:

That Council approve the termination of the Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science programs in Land Use and Environmental Studies, effective May 2011.

PURPOSE:

University Council approves terminations of academic programs.

SUMMARY:

The Academic Programs Committee discussed this proposed program termination with Vice-Dean Harley Dickinson. In spite of the number of students in the program, this program received an evaluation of C during Systematic Program Review because it did not offer students enough interdisciplinary courses. The College has now established other environmental studies programs which are better focused academically and better resourced. Students in the program will have the opportunity to finish the program, but no new students will be accepted.

At its November 27 meeting, the Committee agreed to recommend that Council approve this program termination.

ATTACHMENTS:

Report Form for Program Termination

Report Form for Program Termination University of Saskatchewan

Department: Division of Social Sciences

College: Arts & Science

Program(s) to be deleted: Land Use and Environmental Studies

Effective date of termination: May 2011

1. List reasons for termination and describe the background leading to this decision.

The College of Arts and Science and the departments involved in the delivery of the Land Use and Environmental Studies program see the deletion of this program as an opportunity to refocus their resources on the delivery of current and newly developed environmental programs.

Background

The Land Use and Environmental Studies program was developed in the early 1970's in response to a growing interest in population and environmental problems. The earliest offering by the University of Saskatchewan to address this interest was an interdisciplinary course entitled 'Man and the Biosphere' organized by Dr. Tom Gilmour in Biology. This course was first offered in 1970-71 and involved professors from Geography, Economics, Biology, Plant Ecology and Agricultural Economics. The popularity of this course inspired this group of professors to establish the Land Use and Environmental Studies Program in 1972 to address the need for graduates with a general background in the physical nature of the environment and the determinants of human land-use. The program was designed to give students a basic understanding of the physical and biological environment and the economic framework within which decisions as to how to manage the environment are made. Consequently, students focus on biology, geography and economics in an attempt to provide a solid background in the biophysical environment as well as an understanding of the economic, political and social dimensions of resource management. The first Land Use and Environmental Studies degree was awarded in 1974. Until 1993, the LUES program was very small, graduating on average only 2 students per year. The number of graduates in both B.A. and B.Sc. programs increased dramatically in 1994 and 1995 and peaked at 31 in 1996. Since 1996, at least 10-20 students have graduated each year. Around 40 students are currently in the program.

Rationale

Contributing departments provided access to courses to support the program. For example, for several years immediately prior to SPR a 0.65 FTE sessional position was provided through the Department of Geography to support Diane Martz as the LUES academic coordinator, with the remaining 0.35 FTE used to deliver a 3 cue course. The Systematic Program Review in 2002, however, identified weaknesses in the LUES program arising from a lack of administrative support and a lack of adequate compensation for the time and effort needed to administer and develop the program. Additional weaknesses noted in the SPR documents relate to a lack of needed courses to integrate knowledge in this program and the inability of the Administrative Committee to respond to the demands of increased student numbers and the changing needs of the environmental industry.

Since the 2009-10 academic year, there are eight environmentally-focused programs on the U of S campus, four of which have been developed in the past two years. In the College of Arts and Science, two new programs have been developed: the B.A.Sc. in Environment and Society (Geography and Planning) and the B.Sc. in Environmental Biology (Biology). These programs will, to a large extent, replace the long-standing major in Land Use and Environmental Studies (LUES). Agriculture and

Bioresources has recently added a B.Sc. in Renewable Resource Management and Engineering has added an Environmental Engineering program for students. The RRM program will graduate its first students in 2011-12, and the Environmental Engineering program in 2010-11. In addition, faculty at the U of S also participate in the Advanced Emphasis in Environmental Impact Assessment through the Northern Studies/ University of the Arctic initiative. These five new programs join our existing offerings in Environmental Earth Science (EES) (B.Sc., Arts and Science), LUES (B.A. and B.Sc., Arts and Science) and Environmental Science (B.S.A., Agriculture and Bioresources).

The new programming initiatives represent a considerable investment of faculty time in their development and implementation. Furthermore, a significant commitment of departmental and college resources aimed at the delivery of the new programs has been made by the various departments and the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, the new programs provide a comprehensive range of environmental offerings, which allows students to choose a program that closely fits their educational and career goals. The launch of these programs should allow U. of S. to increase its total undergraduate enrolment in environmentally focused programming and increase the satisfaction of those students enrolled in the programs. As a consequence, the College of Arts and Science and the departments involved in the delivery of the program see the deletion of the LUES program as an opportunity to refocus their resources on the delivery of other existing and newly developed environmental programs.

Transition

To enable students enrolled in the LUES program to complete their program of studies, it is proposed that the College of Arts and Sciences continues to support the delivery of the LUES 400.3 class for the 2010-2011 and 2011-2012 academic years. All other courses required for the LUES program are offered on a regular basis by the various departments involved as part of their regular course offerings so that there is no need for special arrangements.

Faculty in the Department of Geography and Planning and the Chair of the administrative committee of the LUES program will work with the Undergraduate Students Office of the College of Arts and Science to communicate to students that they must declare their major in LUES by the last day of classes in December, 2010. Students who fail to comply with this deadline will be directed to other environmental programming in the College. Information sessions will be organized for the fall of 2010 to inform students of the proposed changes and to facilitate an informed decision on identifying a major in the environmental field.

2. Technical information.

2.1 Courses offered in the program and faculty resources required for these courses.
LUES 400.3 – this course will be offered for the next few years to allow students to finish the program. It will be deleted after that. This program has been administered by an interdepartmental committee – no faculty resources are formally assigned to this program.

2.2 Other resources (staff, technology, physical resources, etc) used for this program.

All resources used in this program will be redirected to other existing programs in the College.

2.3 Courses to be deleted, if any.

LUES 400.3, likely in 2014.

2.4 Number of students presently enrolled.

43 students have declared this Major.

2.5 Number of students enrolled and graduated over the last five years.

	2005-6	2006-7	2007-8	2008-9	2009-10
Students enrolled	38	46	55	54	43

	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Degrees granted	7	15	16	17	10

3. Impact of the termination.

Internal

3.1 What if any impact will this termination have on undergraduate and graduate students? How will they be advised to complete their programs?

LUES 400.3 will continue to be offered for the next few years to allow students to finish the program. Students who continue in the program beyond that time, but within the 10 year limit from their initial enrolment, will be advised on a case-by-case basis, to determine appropriate substitute courses to complete the program requirements.

3.2 What impact will this termination have on faculty and teaching assignments?

None anticipated.

3.3 Will this termination affect other programs, departments or colleges?

Students interested in environmentally-focused studies will choose from other such programs available which will result in a slight increase in enrolment in those programs.

3.4 If courses are also to be deleted, will these deletions affect any other programs?

No.

3.5 Is it likely, or appropriate, that another department or college will develop a program to replace this one?

No. The variety of environmentally-focused programs currently available is likely adequate to cover demand.

3.6 Is it likely, or appropriate, that another department or college will develop courses to replace the ones deleted?

No department has yet to indicate that they are planning to develop a replacement course.

3.7 Describe any impact on research projects.

No impact.

3.8 Will this deletion affect resource areas such as library resources, physical facilities, and information technology?

No.

3.9 Describe the budgetary implications of this deletion.

Minimal budgetary implication. Withdrawal of one 3 credit unit offer to sessional lecturer.

External

3.10 Describe any external impact (e.g. university reputation, accreditation, other institutions, high schools, community organizations, professional bodies).

Students may be unhappy to learn that this program will be unavailable in the future, but we anticipate that once they learn about the other programs available, they will be equally satisfied or better.

3.11 Is it likely or appropriate that another educational institution will offer this program if it is deleted at the University of Saskatchewan?

No. There are existing programs at the University of Saskatchewan which will continue to offer this content.

Other

3.12 Are there any other relevant impacts or considerations?

No impact.

3.13 Please provide any statements or opinions received about this termination.

No statements were received.



MEMORANDUM

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCE

DIVISION OF SOCIAL SCIENCES

TO: Cathie Fornssler, Secretary, Academic Programs Committee

FROM: Harley Dickenson, Vice-Dean (Social Sciences)

DATE: October 21, 2010

RE: Deletion of the B.A. and B.Sc. programs in Land Use and Environmental Studies

This memo confirms that the College of Arts and Sciences supports the deletion of the B.A. and B.Sc. programs in Land Use and Environmental Studies.

The proposal to terminate the program was submitted to the College Course Challenge in April 2010, and was approved by the Committee on Academic Programs and Standards for Humanities, Fine Arts and Social Sciences on May 7, 2010. The proposal was approved at the Division of Social Sciences meeting on September 24, 2010, and at the Division of Science meeting on September 27, 2010.

No students have graduated with a BA degree in Land Use and Environmental Studies in the past 5 years. The BSc has been more successful, but there is a general belief that these students will be as well served, if not better, by College programs in Environmental Biology, Environmental Earth Sciences and Environment and Society, and other environment-focused programs offered by the Colleges of Agriculture & Bioresources and Engineering. Deletion of this program will help to reduce duplication of program offerings, and make the best use of limited resources.

Harley Dickinson