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Institution

Radford University

Nature of Proposed Change

Radford University requests permission to merge the Department of Geospatial Science and the Department of Geology into the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences. This change only impacts the administrative structure and has no impact on the curriculum.

Purpose of Proposed Change

The proposed organizational change is to create a more productive and efficient administrative structure by combining the Department of Geospatial Science and the Department of Geology.

Mission

The proposed organizational change will not alter or change Radford University's mission. The mission of Radford University states:

As a mid-sized, comprehensive public institution dedicated to the creation and dissemination of knowledge, Radford University empowers students from diverse backgrounds by providing transformative educational experiences, from the undergraduate to the doctoral level, within and beyond the classroom. As an inclusive university community, we specialize in cultivating relationships among students, faculty, staff, alumni, and other partners, and in providing a culture of service, support, and engagement. We embrace innovation and tradition and instill students with purpose and the ability to think creatively and critically. We provide an educational environment and the tools to address the social, economic, and environmental issues confronting our region, nation, and the world.

The proposed merger and name change aligns with the mission of Radford University.

Rationale for Proposed Change

Due to recent and upcoming retirements, the Department of Geology will consist of two faculty members (three if we are successful in a current search) and the Department of Geospatial Science will have four faculty members come Fall 2024. To create a more productive and efficient administrative structure, we propose merging these two departments into one unit starting in Fall 2024.

The Department of Geospatial Science in coordination with the Department of Geology are proposing the "Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences" as the name of the department because of the change in administrative structure. This name reflects the unique position of Geospatial Science in the Commonwealth; it is the only undergraduate program in Virginia. The name also reflects that the field of geology has shifted away from traditional oil and gas and mining and toward engineering and environmental work – infrastructure, natural disasters, water, sea level rise, environmental clean-up, etc. Our students will have to understand the Earth as a system within their future employment. Additionally, the term "Earth Sciences" reflects

opportunity for curricular developments that we hope will come about by the merger of these faculty under one umbrella.

Academic Programs

The proposed name change will not impact curricular offerings administered by the college. All programs from the Department of Geospatial Science and the Department of Geology will continue in the Department of Geospatial and Earth Sciences.

Resources/Budget

This administrative combination will result in small budget savings associated with one fewer chair stipend and 12 credit hours per year fewer course releases.

