



UNIVERSITY PLANNING COMMITTEE
Wednesday, December 11, 2019 at 10:30 AM
Gilmour Hall, Council Room (Room 111)

AGENDA

Page

OPEN SESSION

- 1. MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING – NOVEMBER 20, 2019 (OPEN SESSION)**
- 2. BUSINESS ARISING**
- 3. CHAIR'S COMMENTS AND UPDATE**
- 4. REPORT FROM UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL**
[Undergraduate Council Report \(APPROVAL\)](#)
- 5. OTHER BUSINESS**

5 - 11

REPORT TO THE UNIVERSITY PLANNING COMMITTEE
from the
UNDERGRADUATE COUNCIL

a. Program Closures

i. Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences and Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences Co-op

At its December 10, 2019 meeting, the Undergraduate Council will review for approval, a proposal to close the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences* and *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences Co-op* programs. The proposed closures are the result of a recently undertaken review of the undergraduate programs within the School of Geography and Earth Science (SGES). The review revealed significant overlap between the *Honours Environmental Sciences* and *Honours Geography and Environmental Sciences* programs. The effective merger of the two programs involves the closure of the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences* (and its corresponding Co-op program) and the modification of the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences* program. The newly merged program will retain the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Environmental Sciences* name and have the same admission requirements as the closed *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences* program.

No new students will be admitted into the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences* program. However, students will be able to be admitted into the Co-op program until September 2020. Further details of the proposed program closures are outlined in Attachment I of the circulated report.

It is now recommended,

that the University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to Senate, the closure of the *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences* and *Honours Bachelor of Science in Geography and Environmental Sciences Co-op* programs, subject to approval by Undergraduate Council, and set out in the attached.

ii. Honours Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies

At the same meeting, the Undergraduate Council will review for approval, a proposal to close the *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies* program. The proposed closure is also the result of SGES review which determined there was significant overlap between the *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Geography*

and *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies* programs. The two programs will be merged and renamed the *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Environment & Society* program. The merger of the two programs involves the closure of the *Honours Geography and Environmental Studies* program and the subsequent modification of the existing *Honours Geography* program (including name change). The newly established *Environment and Society* programs will be named the following: *Combined Honours Bachelor of Arts in Environment & Society and Another Subject*, *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Environment & Society*, and *Bachelor of Arts in Environment & Society*.

Further details of the proposed program closure are outlined in Attachment I of the circulated report.

It is now recommended,

that the University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to Senate, the closure of the *Honours Bachelor of Arts in Geography and Environmental Studies* program, subject to approval by Undergraduate Council, and set out in the attached.

iii. Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography

At the same meeting, the Undergraduate Council will review for approval, a proposal to close the *Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography* program. The program closure is in response to recommendations stemming from the SGES review of undergraduate programs. The proposed closure addresses the observed redundancies and the low student demand in recent years.

Further details of the proposed program closure are outlined in Attachment II of the circulated report.

It is now recommended,

that the University Planning Committee approve, for recommendation to Senate, the closure of the *Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography* program, subject to approval by Undergraduate Council, and set out in the attached.



**University Planning Committee: FOR APPROVAL
December 11, 2019**

November 12, 2019

TO: Associate Vice-President (Faculty)
Chair, Undergraduate Council

FROM: Dr. Maureen McDonald, Dean, Faculty of Science
Dr. Jeremiah Hurley, Dean, Faculty of Social Sciences

SUBJECT: Program Closure/Merger of Honours Geography & Environmental Science and Honours
Geography and Environmental Studies



During the 2018-19 academic year, the School of Geography and Earth Science (SGES) undertook a comprehensive review of its undergraduate programs. The SGES program review involved focus groups with program students, an online survey of Level III students asking about program choice, meetings with academic advisors in Science and Social Sciences, and an analysis of SGES program and course enrolment data.

The review found significant overlap between the Honours Environmental Sciences and Honours Geography and Environmental Sciences programs. For this reason, SGES recommended merging these programs into a single Honours Environmental Sciences program (also available as a Coop program).

The review also found significant overlap between the Honours Geography program and the Honours Geography & Environmental Studies program. For this reason, SGES recommended merging these programs into a renamed Honours Environment & Society program. The new name signals the program's central focus on the interrelationship between human societies and the built, social, economic and natural environments they inhabit; and the explicitly interdisciplinary nature of the program, which spans Environmental Studies, Human Geography, Geographic Information Science, and Urban Studies.

For details, see Major Modifications section below.

As per the proposed changes, the Faculty is proposing to do the following:

- Notify students that the existing Honours Geography & Environmental Science program is no longer available and direct Level I students who intended to register in this program to the merged Honours Environmental Science program. Admissions requirements to the merged program will be the same as those required for Honours Geography & Environmental Science. All currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to complete their program requirements.

- Notify students that the Coop version of the Honours Geography & Environmental Science program will be phased out. Admission will be last available in September 2020. All currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to complete their program requirements.
- Notify students that the existing Honours Geography & Environmental Studies program is no longer available and direct Level I students who intended to register in this program to the merged Honours Environment and Society program. Admissions requirements to the merged program will be the same as those required for Honours Geography & Environmental Studies. All currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to complete their program requirements.
- Notify students that the existing Honours Geography program will be renamed Honours Environment and Society. All currently enrolled students will be given the opportunity to graduate with the existing program name, but they can also elect to graduate with the new name.

Students were consulted extensively during the program review process (in focus groups and surveys), and the broader student population has been made aware of these impending changes through email communications from the SGES Associate Director (Undergraduate):

SGES Program Changes

I want to update you on some exciting changes to our undergraduate programs. Before I outline what's changing (and what's not changing), let me be clear that these revisions will not impact to you as current program students, although there are some changes that you can choose to adopt if you wish (see 1.c and 2.a below). If you have specific questions, please feel free to contact Kara Salvador or myself for further information. We'll also be organizing information sessions in the winter term to provide additional guidance for students.

Let me offer some context for the changes. As some of you know, we undertook a review of our undergraduate BA and BSc programs last year. This involved focus groups with students in BA and BSc program, an online survey of Level III students asking about program choice, meetings with academic advisors in Science and Social Sciences, and an analysis of SGES program and course enrolment data. From the review, we learned a number of things:

- *On the BSc side, students and academic advisors felt we had too many programs and the differences between them were not clear. This was particularly the case for our Honours Environmental Sciences and Geography & Environmental Sciences programs.*
- *On the BA side, we noted significant overlaps between our Human Geography and Geography & Environmental Studies programs.*
- *Across all programs, many students in focus groups and online surveys were very interested in environmental issues, expressing both academic interest and personal concern with current environment challenges.*
- *Many students value flexible programs that offer multiple pathways to degree completion (e.g., some BA students take courses on climate science, while many BSc students take urban planning, environmental policy and sustainability courses)*

On the basis of the review, we are making a number of changes that we believe will better showcase the strengths of the school and ensure future growth in enrolments.

1. Science

- a. *Our Honours Earth and Environmental Sciences program is not changing.*
- b. *We are merging our Honours Environmental Sciences and Geography & Environmental Sciences programs to create a single, flexible program that will allow students to take course from across the school. This program will retain the Honours Environmental Sciences name. As of Fall 2020, there will be no new students admitted to Honours Geography & Environmental Sciences. However, if you're currently in Level II and thinking about the co-op option for Honours Geography and Environmental Science, you will still be able to enroll in co-op for the 2020-21 academic year.*
- c. *We are changing the name of Honours Biology and Environmental Science to Biodiversity and Environmental Sciences as of Fall 2020. This reflects a growing focus in ecological and environmental research generally (and in this program specifically) on how diverse organisms are able to adapt to their changing environments at both the community and ecosystem levels. If you are currently in this program you will graduate with the existing name, but you can choose to graduate with the new name if you wish.*

2. Social Sciences

- a. *The big change to our BA programs is that we are merging our Honours Geography and Geography & Environmental Studies programs into a single program that will be called Honours Environment and Society. We believe this name captures our central focus on the dynamic interrelationship between human societies and the environments (built, social, economic and natural) they inhabit; and the interdisciplinary nature of our courses, which span Environmental Studies, Human Geography, Geographic Information Science, and Urban Studies. This change will have no impact if you are currently enrolled in one of the existing programs unless you would like to graduate with the new program name. Please contact Kara if this is something you're interested in.*
- a. *Reflecting the new program name, we are changing our GEOG course codes to ENVSOCTY. This means that when you go to register this summer all of our social science courses in the undergraduate calendar and on Mosaic will be listed under ENVSOCTY. For the most part, the course titles and descriptions will remain the same.*

As faculty members, we are really excited by these changes and firmly believe they will help us to welcome even more students into our programs and courses in the coming years. Again, please contact Kara or myself if you have further questions.

Faculty members within SGES have been made aware of these impending changes through review process and an associated SGES retreat. The revisions were given unanimous faculty support. More broadly, the

changes were discussed and voted on the Faculty of Science Academic Planning & Policy Committee, and General Faculty. The changes to the Honours Geography and Honours Geography & Environmental Studies BA programs were also discussed and approved by the Faculty of Social Sciences Undergraduate Curriculum Committee.

The above changes are being made in the best interests of students, faculty, and the Faculty of Science.

25 November 2019

TO: Associate Vice-President (Faculty)
Chair, Undergraduate Council

FROM: Dr. Jean Wilson, Director, Arts & Science 

SUBJECT: Program Closure, Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography Program

In 2018-19, the School of Geography & Earth Sciences (SGES), which was undertaking a comprehensive review of its undergraduate programs, approached Arts & Science about a significant overlap between the Combined Honours Arts & Science and Geography and Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography Programs. After careful consideration, Arts & Science, in consultation with SGES, decided to deal with the redundancy by closing the Combined Honours Arts & Science and Human Geography Program, for which there had in any case in recent years been little student demand.