Name change for Department of Geological Sciences to

* Department of Earth Sciences
* **Summary:** The Department of Geological Sciences proposes to change its name to "Department of Earth Sciences." The new name reflects the evolution of the teaching and research interests in the Department as well as national trends within the discipline. The name change highlights these shifts and is unanimously supported by the faculty as being absolutely necessary for the Department in terms of attracting students, future faculty, and support from external funding agencies.

**Justification:** An exceptionally talented and diverse set of faculty, students, and staff currently comprise the Department of Geological Sciences at UD. The major areas of study in the Department include geochemistry, geomorphology, hydrology, and geobiology, as well as more traditional research areas in geophysics, rock mechanics, and paleontology. Faculty in the department are engaging in multi- and interdisciplinary research significantly contributes to the Earth Sciences and translating their new concepts and theories to the classroom. Because of this approach to education, our program prepares students for employment in a wide variety of professional, environmental, and academic careers across a breadth of Earth Science sub-disciplines. As we have grown as a Department, the term "Geological Sciences" no longer accurately describes the range of scholarly and teaching activities of our faculty and the career paths of many of our students. Our goal in the 21st century is to continue to embrace the current diversity in our program and identify new pathways to attract a broad range of students.

Our proposed name-change from ‘Geological Sciences’ is largely based on the diversity of recent faculty hires that are not from traditional geology programs and have matriculated in diverse interdisciplinary Earth Science programs. All of current faculty are aware that the label "Geological Sciences" restricts our ability to recruit students and even new faculty who, in their search for a position are not looking for a traditional geology department, but rather a broader home that is inclusive of the range of our current expertise (e.g., environmental chemistry, geobiology, hydrology, paleoclimate).  Representing our Department to external funding agencies and to members of the public is made problematic by a name that no longer reflects our true scope.

We have approached our proposed name change carefully. We evaluated programs at national geoscience conferences (i.e., Geological Society of America and American Geophysical Union). We observed that many top programs, to which we need to remain competitive, have already changed their names away from Geology or Geological Sciences to acknowledge a broader Earth Sciences portfolio. Even at UD, our survey of undergraduates in our program and those broadly in Earth Science fields indicated they would have more readily found our program or our courses with a better understanding that we are not a traditional geology program.  However, we will continue to provide a geological sciences curriculum, in addition to more broadly-themed topics to be covered in the new academic programs we are developing.

**Coordination with Other Units:** The proposed name change was unanimously approved by the faculty of the Department of Geological Sciences in the Spring of 2018, and was approved by the Academic Council of the College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment in Fall 2018. Our change fits within the naming and organizational structure of our current college and has no clear overlap with other units on campus.

**Budgetary and Staffing Implications:** The name change has no immediate staffing implications. In terms of allied units that can be affected, we believe that the College of Earth, Ocean, and Environment (CEOE) may experience an increase in the number of students that identify our program as a major in their freshman and sophomore years, largely drawn from undecided majors. Thus, there may be additional undergraduates to manage, but we anticipate handling this modest growth with current resources. We also anticipate an increase in graduate applications, and we plan to increase the current size of our graduate student population in accordance with faculty capacity.  In longer-term we are preparing to grow our program with a new 4+1 program in Applied Earth Sciences and look forward to a concomitant increase in faculty size to accomodate the new program.

* RESOLUTION for renaming the Department of Geological Sciences:

WHEREAS,        in Spring of 2018 an internal review panel evaluating the Department of Geological Sciences recommended a more modern naming of the Department that reflects nationwide trends, the expertise of its current faculty, and the breadth of the Department’s current research, and

WHEREAS,    a name change will provide branding consistency with the name of the Department and is broader and more inclusive of research and teaching of the program;

RESOLVED, that the Faculty Senate approves a name change for the Department of Geological Sciences to the Department of Earth Sciences, effective July 1, 2019.