

# **Special Consideration Items**

5 June 2012

**TO:** Faculty Senate, Texas A&M University

**THROUGH:** Dr. Mark Zoran, Chair  
Graduate Council

**THROUGH:** Dr. Alan Sams, Executive Associate Dean  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**THROUGH:** Dr. David Reed, Associate Dean for Graduate Programs and Chair for College  
Graduate Program Council  
College of Agriculture and Life Sciences

**FROM:** Dr. David Baltensperger  
Interim Department Head

**SUBJECT:** Request to change the names of the Master of Agriculture, Master of Science and  
Doctor of Philosophy degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Management

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, I respectfully submit this proposal to change the title of the graduate degrees currently known as Master of Agriculture in Rangeland Ecology and Management, Master of Science in Rangeland Ecology and Management, and Doctor of Philosophy in Rangeland Ecology and Management to Master of Agriculture in Ecosystem Science and Management, Master of Science in Ecosystem Science and Management, and Doctor of Philosophy in Ecosystem Science and Management, respectively.

The proposed administrative changes would:

1. Be consistent with the departmental name following the merger of the Department of Rangeland Ecology and Management with the Department of Forest Science in 2007.
2. Involve no curriculum change and no change in program hours.
3. Better meet the desires of current students and expectations of employers. The proposed changes are motivated by the desire for continued success of the departmental graduate programs. Having graduate degree names consistent with the departmental name is essential

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*Approved by CC:  
9-6-12*

*David W. Reed*

*David Baltensperger*

to promote more effective branding identity for our graduate programs for an expanding educational marketplace.

4. Facilitate the department's phasing out of the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Forestry. The remaining graduate degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Management do not reflect the broad nature of the department's research, curriculum and training. However, M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Ecosystem Science and Management would be inclusive of all aspects of the department.
5. Result in no new costs beyond those the department can bear through progressive and steady re-publication of our informational and recruiting materials.

These proposed changes have strong support from the faculty and current graduate students in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management.

We emphasize that our faculty and our graduate students are engaged in research and other scholarly activities that encompass not only the ecology and management of rangelands, but also the ecology and management of forestlands, coastal ecosystems, wetlands, arctic tundra, and other major ecosystem types. A graduate degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management cannot encompass the current breadth and diversity of our research programs, and will severely hinder our ability to recruit graduate students. We are already seeing concern from potential graduate students who would like to study in our department, but who would not be interested in a degree in Rangeland Ecology and Management.

We are confident that the ability to offer M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Ecosystem Science and Management will not only enhance consistency and clarity with respect to our departmental name, but also will enhance our ability to recruit high quality graduate students from around the nation and the world.

# Texas A&M University

## New Certificate, Bachelors, Masters, or Doctoral Program

### ♦ Proposal Checklist ♦

Requested by the Department or Unit of : Department of Ecosystem Science and Management

#### Program Type, Level, Designation, Title, Description, Hours

Program Type      Certificate Program                       Degree Program   
 Program Level      Undergrad Certificate       Grad Certificate       Bachelor       Master       Doctoral   
 Degree Designation (i.e., BS, BA, MA, MS, MAgr, Med, PhD, EdD, etc.)                      M.Agr., M.S. & Ph.D.

Title of proposed program:                      Ecosystem Science and Management

Proposed CIP Code (if known):                      01.1106.00 05 (existing CIP code for Rangeland Ecology and Management)

Brief program description (provide a catalog description for undergraduate and graduate certificates):

This is a request to change the name of our existing degrees, M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D., from Rangeland Ecology and Management to Ecosystem Science and Management. Program hours will remain the same.

<u>Minimum program semester credit hours (SCH)</u>	<u>Certificates - 12 hours*</u>	<u>Bachelors - 120 hours</u>	<u>Masters - 30 hours</u>	<u>Doctoral</u>
			<u>32 thesis option or 36 non-thesis option for M.S.; 36 hours for M.Agr.</u>	<u>64 hours with a completed M.S., 96 hours with a B.S. but not M.S.</u>

Proposed program hours:                      \_\_\_\_\_

\*12 hours minimum to appear on transcript

#### Off-Campus or Distance Delivery

% of Program a student can take off-campus or through

	<u>Distance Education</u>	<u>Program Start Date</u>	<u>SACS Approval**</u>	<u>When Provost needs to inform SACS</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	25%	_____	Notification Only	-----
<input type="checkbox"/>	50%	_____	Approval Required	6 months before first day of program
<input type="checkbox"/>	80%	_____	Approval Required	6 months before first day of program
<input type="checkbox"/>	100%	_____	Approval Required	6 months before first day of program

\*\*Notification letter arranged through the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and sent by TAMU President.

#### Program Delivery Mode

Location

On-campus                      Texas A&M University, College Station

Broadcast / TTVN                      \_\_\_\_\_

Specific off-campus location\*\*\*                      \_\_\_\_\_

Distance Education / Internet      In-State       Out-of-State       Start Date \_\_\_\_\_

Out-of-Country                      Will this program be offered with another institution?      Yes       No   
 If yes, contact the Vice Provost for Academic Affairs for additional reporting requirements.

\*\*\*Is this an approved SACS location?      Yes       No       If no, a program prospectus must be sent to SACS.

Approved locations as of September 2009: TAMU-Galveston, TAMU-Qatar, University Center-The Woodlands, Dubai (EMBA)

#### Program Funding

Has program funding been finalized at the department or college level?                      Yes                       No

If no, explain or attach budget: \_\_\_\_\_

Will new costs for the first five years of the program be under \$2 million?                      Yes                       No

If new costs exceed \$2 million, coordinating board approval is required.

**Submitted by (Contact Person):**

Dr. Thomas W. Boutton

boutton@tamu.edu

Name

Email

Regents Professor and Texas AgriLife Senior Faculty Fellow,  
Associate Department Head for Graduate Programs  
Department of Ecosystem Science and Management

979-845-8027

Title

Phone

**Certification Statement**

By signing below, the Dean of the College certifies the proposed program complies with coordinating board standards. If the program is delivered through Distance Education, the Dean of the College certifies that they are following the *Principles of Good Practice for Academic Degree and Certificate Programs and Credit Courses Offered Electronically*.

*Use additional signature lines if program is between three or more departments or colleges.*

*David Baltensperger 6/6/12*

Signature, Department Head or Interdisciplinary Program Chair

Date

Dr. David D. Baltensperger

Signature, Department Head or Interdisciplinary Program Chair (if joint program)

Date

*Typed or Printed Name*

*Typed or Printed Name*

Chair, College Review Committee

Date

Chair, College Review Committee

Date

Dean of College

Date

Dean of College

Date

Chair, University Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council

Date

Chair, University Curriculum Committee or Graduate Council

Date

Additional Approvals Required: Faculty Senate and President.



## Revision of Program Request Form

**Directions:** An institution shall use this form to propose the modification of a degree. All sections should be completed unless noted otherwise.

*"Modification (Revision) of an authorized degree title requires Coordinating Board approval before it may be publicized. Minor modifications (revisions) which do not alter the content or nature of degree programs may be approved by Coordinating Board staff upon application from an institution."*

**Information:** Contact the System Office of Academic Affairs at 979-458-6072 for more information.

### Administrative Information

1. **Institution** – Texas A&M University, College Station, College of Agriculture and Life Sciences, Department of Ecosystem Science and Management
2. **Description** – Describe the program revision requested.  
Change the name of the Master of Agriculture, Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Rangeland Ecology and Management degrees to Master of Agriculture in Ecosystem Science and Management, Master of Science in Ecosystem Science and Management, and Doctor of Philosophy in Ecosystem Science and Management, respectively.
3. **Rationale for Modification** – Explain the reason for the revision.  
In 2007 the Departments of Forest Science and Rangeland Ecology and Management merged to form the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management. Since that time, the department has maintained two sets of degrees, the Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Forestry and Master of Science and Doctor of Philosophy in Rangeland Ecology and Management, along with the Master of Agriculture in Rangeland Ecology and Management. Modifying these degree names would: 1) Bring the titles in alignment with the departmental name in place since the 2007 departmental merger. 2) Better reflect to students and prospective employers the department's current approach of preparing scientists and professionals with the broad, integrative training needed for research and application of knowledge in rangeland, forest and wetland ecosystems across the rural-urban gradient. 3) Allow for more effective branding identity for ESSM graduate programs by making the degree titles consistent with the departmental name. This also would enhance student recruiting by more effectively portraying how the department affords students opportunities for attaining strong skills in the science and stewardship of natural and managed ecosystems. 4) Facilitate the department's phasing out of the M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Forestry. The remaining graduate degrees in Rangeland Ecology and Management do not encompass the broad nature of the department's research, curriculum and training. However, M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. degrees in Ecosystem Science and Management would be inclusive of all aspects of the department.
4. **Program Inventory** – Show how the revision would appear on the Coordinating Board's Program Inventory. Include all degree programs and corresponding Texas CIP codes affected by the change but do not include proposed administrative unit codes for the new academic unit(s).

01.1106.00 M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. in Ecosystem Science and Management

5. Summarize implications for classes, distribution of personnel, availability of facilities, and availability of equipment. –

This name change will have no direct implications for classes, personnel, facilities or equipment. Graduate course numbers already are listed by the ESSM prefix, no longer by the prefixes FRSC or RLEM. Renaming the graduate degrees would in fact align the degree title with the course prefix. There are no program hour or curriculum changes needed or planned to coincide with a change in the title of these master's and doctoral degrees.

6. Give information regarding any additional costs or savings. – Changing the titles of these degrees would result in no additional costs to the department or university. It will clarify the application process for prospective students and streamline the administration of the department's graduate programs.

7. Proposed Implementation Date – August 1, 2013

8. Contact Person –

Name: Dr. Thomas W. Boutton

Title: Regents Professor and Texas AgriLife Senior Faculty Fellow  
Associate Department Head for Graduate Programs  
Department of Ecosystem Science and Management

Email: [boutton@tamu.edu](mailto:boutton@tamu.edu)

Telephone: 979.845.8027

**Signature Page**

1. I understand that the Coordinating Board will update the program inventory of the institution to reflect the program degree revision, if no objections to the proposed revision are received during the 30-day public comment period.

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Chief Executive Officer

Date

2. TAMUS Office of Academic Affairs Approval

*On behalf of the A&M System, I certify that the Office of Academic Affairs has approved the program degree modification.*

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Frank B. Ashley III  
Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

Date



## I. **Impact**

### A. **Role and Mission** – Describe how the revision would affect the role and mission of the institution.

Changing the graduate degree titles in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management from M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. in Rangeland Ecology and Management to M.Agr., M.S. and Ph.D. in Ecosystem Science and Management would more clearly define how the department already contributes to the role and mission of Texas A&M University. The department serves students from all backgrounds and with diverse interests and goals. By affording students a blend of training in research and application of knowledge, the department prepares students to be leaders in their field to the benefit of local and global society and the environment.

### B. **Program Support and Development**

#### 1. Describe how the revision would affect existing degree programs and plans for new degree programs.

Changing the title of the ESSM graduate degrees from Rangeland Ecology and Management to Ecosystem Science and Management would not alter the department's existing degree programs. The curriculum, course offerings and degree expectations will remain fundamentally unaltered. Further, no new degree programs are planned. However, the more inclusive degree title of Ecosystem Science and Management may open opportunities for future course offerings within the department and collaboration with other departments should these fit with the department's, college's and university's strategic plan.

#### 2. Indicate how many students and faculty there would be in the proposed administrative unit, by level and by degree program.

During the academic year 2011-2012, there were 48 total faculty members (26 core faculty members, 22 research or extension faculty members), 39 Doctor of Philosophy students, 32 Master of Science students, and 4 Master of Agriculture students in the Department of Ecosystem Science and Management. The department also had 21 students in the Master of Natural Resource Development programs, which will not be affected by the proposed degree title change. These totals are indicative of what the department expects for faculty and student numbers in future academic years.

#### 3. Describe how the proposed administrative unit would compare to existing administrative units at the same level (e.g., department, college, school, etc.) in terms of cost and number of students and faculty supported.

The proposed administrative unit for this program would be identical to the present administrative unit in terms of cost and number of students and faculty supported.

### C. **Accreditation** – Explain how the change would affect accreditation or re-accreditation.

Because there will be no changes in the core graduate program, course offerings or degree expectations that result from changing the master's and doctoral degree titles from Rangeland Ecology and Management to Ecosystem Science and Management, this degree title change should have no effect on accreditation or re-accreditation through the Society of American Foresters or Society for Range Management, the two main accrediting bodies for the ESSM department.

- D. **Resources** – Describe how the change would affect resources (e.g., number of employees, salaries of key administrators and faculty, the course inventory, facilities, and equipment) for the next five years.

This name change will have no implications for classes, personnel, facilities, equipment or salaries over the next five years beyond any strategic planning already underway in the department. Graduate course numbers already are listed by the prefix ESSM, no longer by FRSC or RLEM. Renaming the graduate degrees would in fact align the degree title with the course prefix. It will clarify the application process for prospective students and streamline the administration of the department's graduate programs.

## II. Costs and Funding

**Five-year Costs and Funding Sources** – Use this table to show five-year costs and sources of funding for the change. (New five-year costs that equal or exceed \$2 million must be approved by the Coordinating Board at one of its quarterly meetings.)

<b>Five-Year Costs</b>		<b>Five-Year Funding</b>	
Personnel <sup>1</sup>	\$0	Reallocated Funds <sup>3</sup>	\$0
Facilities and Equipment	\$0	Anticipated New Formula Funding <sup>4</sup>	\$0
Library, Supplies, and Materials	\$0	Special Item Funding	\$0
Other <sup>2</sup>	\$0	Other <sup>5</sup>	\$0
<b>Total Costs</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>\$0</b>

1. Report costs for new administrative positions and new support staff. For new faculty, prorate individual salaries as a percentage of the time assigned to administer the new academic unit and any new programs under that unit. If existing faculty and support staff will be reassigned to administer the academic unit, include personnel costs necessary to maintain existing administrative efforts and existing programs. (e.g., costs of adjuncts to cover courses previously taught by faculty who would now administer a new academic unit.)
6. Report other administrative costs here (e.g., new accreditation costs, travel directly related to administrative unit.)
7. If existing funding would be used to support the new administrative unit, indicate the funding sources and how the reallocation of funds would affect existing administrative units and programs.
4. Not generally applicable to administrative change requests. Show formula funding for students new to the institution in tables of costs and funding for new degree programs.
5. Report other sources of funding such as debt service, gifts, in-hand grants, and likely future grants that would directly support the new administrative unit.

### Signature Page

1. Adequacy of Funding – The chief executive officer shall sign the following statement:

*I certify that the institution has adequate funds to complete the administrative change and to support any new or reorganized academic unit(s). Furthermore, the change will not reduce the effectiveness or quality of existing programs, departments, schools, or colleges.*

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Chief Executive Officer

Date

2. System Office of Academic Affairs Approval

*On behalf of the A&M System, I certify that the Office of Academic Affairs has approved the administrative unit.*

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Frank B. Ashley III  
Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs

Date