

UNIVERSITY SENATE

UNIVERSITY AT ALBANY

STATE UNIVERSITY OF NEW YORK

Introduced by: UAC

Date: May 10, 2010

Suspend Admissions to the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences BA

IT IS HEREBY PROPOSED THAT THE FOLLOWING BE ADOPTED:

1. That admissions be suspended to the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences BA
2. That this takes effect for the fall 2010 semester.
3. That this proposal be forwarded to President George M. Philip for approval.

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| University at Albany – State University of New York | | | |
| College of Arts and Sciences | Course Action Form | Proposal No. | 09-136 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> New Course <input type="checkbox"/> Cross-Listing <input type="checkbox"/> Shared-Resources Course <input type="checkbox"/> Deactivate / Activate Course (boldface & underline as appropriate) | Revision of: <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Number Title Credits Other (specify): | <input type="checkbox"/> Description <input type="checkbox"/> Prerequisites Proposal to suspend admission to the Earth & Atmospheric Sciences BA |
| Department: Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences | To be effective (semester/year): Fall 2010 | | |
| Course Number | Current: _____ | New: _____ | Credits: _____ |
| Course Title: _____ | | | |
| Course Description to appear in Bulletin: _____ | | | |

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Prerequisites statement to be appended to description in Bulletin:

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| If S/U is to be designated as the only grading system in the course, check here: | <input type="checkbox"/> | |
| This course is (will be) cross listed with (i.e., CAS ###): | | _____ |
| This course is (will be) a shared-resources course with (i.e., CAS ###): | | _____ |

Explanation of proposal:

Proposal to suspend admission to the Earth & Atmospheric Sciences BA See page 2.

Other departments or schools which offer similar or related courses and which have certified that this proposal does not overlap their offering:

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| Chris Thorncroft  | | 12-17-09 |
| Approved by Chair(s) of Departments having cross-listed course(s) (PRINT NAME/SIGN) | Date | Dean of College (PRINT NAME/SIGN) |
| | | Date |
| | | Edelgard Wulfert  Edelgard Wulfert 2/4/10 |
| Janna Harton | 2/3/10 | |

Proposal to Suspend Admission to the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences (E&A) BA Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences (December 2009)

The Earth and Atmospheric Sciences Bachelors Degree (E&A BA) has been offered for over a decade now. Though originally crafted to provide a viable degree for students interested in the Earth and Atmospheric Sciences, and who would work in related areas (i.e. not research or primary positions for which our BS degrees are intended), the reality of this degree's popularity and career fostering ability to date is unquestionably **not** what we had hoped for. Consider the following:

1. Of 185 total undergraduate majors in DAES now, only twelve are E&A BA majors;
2. Never has the number of E&A BA majors been more than this dozen or so count;
3. In the decade since awarding the first E&A BA, we are unable to identify a single graduate that has gone on to distinction in his/her career;
4. Some current E&A BA students and several in recent memory comprise a subset of students that are unquestionably the weakest that faculty members here have ever encountered;
5. Our hope that the lesser requirements of this degree would not simply attract the weakest strata of student has not been realized; this is exactly what is happening;
6. The Atmospheric Science and Environmental Science BS degrees continue to flourish, growing in popularity and reputation, in stark contrast to the E&A BA;
7. The "Earth" component of this degree becomes more problematic with time as the ending of the undergraduate and graduate Geological Sciences programs follows an inevitable evolution.

For these manifest reasons, the faculty members of Atmospheric and Environmental Sciences request that University governance approve suspension of admission to the E&A BA as of the beginning of the fall 2010 semester. Any remaining students, of course, would be allowed to finish their degree under the current curriculum.

We tried an experiment; it did not work out. Though there is no serious overhead as far as courses specific to this particular degree, we feel that it nonetheless makes sense to end the degree. It's not a matter of our inability to offer relevant courses due to diminished faculty, but rather, more fundamentally, acknowledgement that this degree is not providing the appropriate depth and foundation required for post-graduation success, coupled with the fact that it necessarily funnels in the weakest students. It is far better for all concerned to concentrate on the Atmospheric and Environmental Science BS degrees that we know are unquestionably of higher rigor and which provide our graduates with competitive ability in the focused areas these degrees were designed for.