

Biological & Environmental Sciences and Geology
Draft Merger Plan
May 31, 2015

Goal: This is a plan to facilitate the merger of UTC's Geology Program with the Department of Biological & Environmental Sciences. The overall goal is have one unified department that maintains and promotes disciplinary identity, strengths, and resources. The merged department will offer four degree programs (B.S. Biology, B.S. Environmental Science, B.S. Geology, M.S. Environmental Science) and consist of over 1000 majors and 31 fulltime faculty. The merged department will be home to about 24 percent of the majors in the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), yet its operating budget will represent about 10 percent of the CAS operating budget (based on 2014/15 budget). Obtaining an adequate operating budget to support Biology, Environmental Science, and Geology students will remain a critical need. It is important to note that a merger of this magnitude requires careful consideration and time beyond what is described in this document.

ITEMS

1. Faculty Involvement – Faculty have already been involved and will continue to be involved in developing the merger details through face-to-face discussions and email.
2. Name: The Department of Biology, Geology, and Environmental Sciences (BGE). This is consistent with degrees, Division names, and other departments on campus. Two other options are Department of Biological, Geological, and Environmental Sciences (BGES) and Department of Life and Earth Sciences. The new name will be finalized in mid-June 2015.
3. Program Structure: One integrated department with three Divisions, representing the degree programs: Division of Biology, Division of Geology, Division of Environmental Sciences. The Divisions are intended to help preserve the disciplinary identity, prestige, and potential of our four degree programs. Preserving disciplinary identity is an important factor to facilitate student recruitment, faculty research and grantsmanship, and graduate employment. However, the department will function as an integrated faculty and administrative unit.
4. Administrative Structure: One unified department with shared administrators and administrative support staff. Administration will be provided by existing positions plus one new Associate Department Head. Initially, the new Associate Head will coordinate activities in the Geology program. This function is important to ensure a smooth transition and maintain the integrity of the Geology Division in the short term. Over time, as faculty learn about the respective disciplines, the duties of the associate heads will be adjusted to focus more on activities common to all divisions and less on individual disciplines, wherever feasible. Long term, a new Associate Head is important to cope with additional work and responsibilities associated with adding an additional academic program to a very large, understaffed, and under budgeted department. The Department Head and Associate Heads will coordinate their activities to avoid unnecessary duplication and maximize efficiency. General duties of the positions include:

Department Head (existing, Tucker): Overall departmental oversight and administration, faculty and staff evaluation, petitions, budget, represent and advocate for department.

Senior Associate Department Head (existing, Gaudin): Biology and Environmental Science course scheduling, petitions, overrides, general backup to Department Head

Associate Head 1 (existing, Carver): Coordinate Student Relations, Advising, Retention, Progression, Graduation, Course and Program Student Learning Outcomes, ~~and~~ Assessment, Student Scholarships and Awards, Student Events, A & P Course Scheduling

Associate Head 2 (new): Initially, this position will focus on coordinating activities in the Geology program, such as Geology course scheduling, Geology Student Relations, Advising, Retention, Progression, Graduation, Course and Program Student Learning Outcomes, Assessment, Student Scholarships and Awards, Student Events. Initially, this position will be selected by, and will work closely with, the existing geology faculty.

Administrative Assistant (existing, Shutters): Manage department front office, respond to or direct face-to-face, email, and phone inquires, general administrative assistance to department head and faculty, process faculty and student travel, purchase office supplies, enter course overrides, co-supervise student workers

Budget Specialist (existing, Locke): Bookkeeping and accounting for all state, lab fee, gift, and grant accounts; payroll, personnel hiring and termination paperwork, co-supervise student workers, faculty evaluation paperwork

Faculty Associate (existing, Murphy): Purchase research and teaching supplies and equipment, oversee lab safety, develop and maintain department website, department credit card holder, coordinate introductory biology labs, coordinate equipment maintenance and repair

5. Space: Programs and faculty will retain their existing space.

6. Bylaws: Faculty will integrate the two sets of bylaws into one set of bylaws. As part of this process faculty will review reappointment, tenure, and promotion criteria, considering characteristics unique to each program such as existing criteria, teaching loads, research activity, and related factors. There may be instances where separate disciplinary specific criteria and procedures will be retained within the combined bylaws. RTR committee composition will also be addressed in the bylaws. Existing Geology criteria will apply to Geology faculty and existing BES criteria will apply to BES faculty during academic year 2015/2016. This will provide sufficient time for faculty to fully consider ramifications of any proposed changes.

7. Webpage: The Geology website will be integrated into the BES website. The department Faculty Associate (Murphy) will maintain and update the integrated website, with input from Geology faculty and the new Associate Head 2. The website structure will reflect an integrated department with Divisions of Biology, Environmental Sciences, and Geology.

8. Budget: The Geology budget will be integrated into the BES budget. Presently BES has separate state operating accounts for Biology and Environmental Sciences. Maintaining separate Geology state accounts would be consistent with the present practice in BES. Non-state accounts will be retained and used for existing designated purposes.

9. Evaluation: The Department Head will conduct EDO evaluations and the RTR committee and Department Head will perform their respective duties in the faculty reappointment, tenure, and promotion processes. The Department Head will conduct staff evaluations (SPDR).
10. Major Rosters: Persons responsible for generating and maintaining a list serve of majors for the four academic programs will be determined.
11. Advising: The department Professional Advisor will assign a geology faculty advisor for each geology major. The geology students will be divided equitably among the geology faculty. BES students will continue to be advised by department faculty and the Professional Advisor.
12. Summer School Teaching: Every fall semester the Department Head will distribute a form to faculty to gauge faculty interest in teaching during the upcoming summer. The Department Head will coordinate with the Associate Heads as they develop summer schedules.
13. Course Syllabi: All faculty will submit syllabi to the department Administrative Assistant.
14. Building and Room Access: A standard procedure to request building and room access for students and faculty will be developed.
15. Office Supplies: Faculty submit request to Administrative Assistant.
16. Teaching and Research Equipment and Supplies: Faculty submit requests to Faculty Associate.
17. Travel Requests: Faculty submit requests to Administrative Assistant.
18. Faculty Committee Assignments: Every summer, the Department Head will distribute a form to faculty to determine faculty preferences for departmental committee assignments for the academic year. The existing BES list of committees will be updated to include committees unique to Geology that are appropriate for crossover with BES faculty. The Department Head will consider faculty preferences when assigning faculty to committees and will strive to ensure the faculty of each division are adequately represented on committees.
19. Curriculum Impacts: The departmental curriculum committee will 1) propose catalog revisions to reflect merger (e.g. – department name), 2) assess whether there is duplication in environmental science and geology curriculum and propose revisions if warranted, and 3) consider whether existing course designations (BIOL, ESC, GEOL) and cross listing practices should be modified. Any curriculum decisions impacting Geology curriculum will involve at least two Geology faculty on the curriculum committee.

BES & GEOLOGY MERGER TIMELINE

BES Head Meeting with PGA Head & Faculty to Discuss Merger	April 16, 2015	Complete
BES Faculty Meeting to Discuss Geology Merger	April 17, 2015	Complete
BES Head Meeting with Geology Head & Faculty to Discuss Merger	April 21, 2015	Complete
BES Head Meeting with Dean & Provost to discuss Merger	April 24, 2015	Complete
BES Head Meeting with PGA Administrative Assistant, BES Administrative Assistant, and BES Faculty Associate, and BES Associate Head to discuss Merger Plan	May 21, 2015	Complete
Draft Merger Plan to BGES Faculty for Input	May 22, 2015	Ongoing
BES Head Meeting with Geology Faculty for Input	May 29, 2015	Complete
Draft Merger Plan to Dean & Provost	May 31, 2015	Complete
Mailboxes created for Geology Personnel in Holt 215 Mailroom	June 12, 2015	Complete
Department Name Finalized	June 22, 2015	
Order Letterhead and Business Cards with New Department Name and Address	June 22 – July 1, 2015	
Notify UTC Mailroom of New Geology Address beginning July 1, 2015	June 22, 2015	
Geology Mail delivered to Holt 215	July 1, 2015	
Geology budget transferred to BES	July 1, 2015	
Geology office supply purchasing transfers to Administrative Assistant, Holt 215	July 1, 2015	
Geology travel approvals and reimbursement processing transfers to Administrative Assistant/Department Head	July 1, 2015	
Geology personnel files and department records transferred to Holt 215	July 1, 2015	
Geology personnel paperwork processing responsibility transfers to BGES Accounting Specialist Position	July 1, 2015	
Purchasing of Geology teaching and research equipment and supplies transfers to Faculty Associate, Holt 215	July 1, 2015	
Submit Requests for Catalog Revisions to reflect Merger	July 1, 2015	
Merge BES and Geology Websites	Summer 2015	
Select Associate Head 2 for Geology	Summer 2015	
Draft Merged Bylaws including RTR criteria and procedures to Dean & Provost	April, 2016	