



**FOR RECOMMENDATION**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** UTM Academic Affairs Committee

**SPONSOR:** Professor Amrita Daniere, Vice-Principal, Academic & Dean  
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**PRESENTER:** Professor Yuhong He, Chair, Department of Geography  
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**DATE:** February 4, 2020 for February 11, 2020

**AGENDA ITEM:** 5

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Name Change of Academic Unit – Change in the name of the *Department of Geography* to the *Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment*

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

Under section 5.1 of its *Terms of Reference*, the Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) is responsible for name changes of academic units.

Name changes in academic divisions (excluding namings) are considered by the Academic Board and confirmed by the Executive Committee (*AB Terms of Reference, Section 5.2.7*).

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. UTM Academic Affairs Committee [For Recommendation] (February 11, 2020)
2. Academic Board [For Approval] (March 12, 2020)
3. Executive Committee [For Confirmation] (March 24, 2020)

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

No previous action was taken on this proposal.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

This is a proposal to change the name of the existing Department of Geography at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) to the Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment. The proposed new name of the Department will better reflect the growth of the discipline at UTM, which now encompasses not only physical and human geography but also geographical information science (GIS), environmental science and environmental management. With robust teaching and research expertise across all these areas, it is important that the department's name

also demonstrate the breadth present in the unit. A new name of Geography, Geomatics and Environment will help to increase the prominence of the Department as well as capture new audiences, while offering expanded graduate program and employment opportunities to their graduates.

The proposed change in name of the Department will not impact the academic offerings of the unit or any other unit at UTM or within the University of Toronto. The change does, however, signal an important evolution in the identity of the Department and will allow for better marketing and recruitment.

The Department has consulted faculty, students, and staff within the unit as well as cognate department chairs and program directors across the UofT tri-campus. All were in support of this change.

**FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no net implications for the campus' operating budget.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Be it Recommended,

THAT the name of the Department of Geography be changed to Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment, effective July 1, 2020.

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**DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

Proposal to Rename an Academic Unit

## University of Toronto Mississauga Proposal to Rename an Academic Unit

<b>CURRENT Department Name:</b>	Department of Geography
<b>PROPOSED Department Name:</b>	Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment
<b>Faculty / Academic Division:</b>	University of Toronto Mississauga
<b>Faculty / Academic Division contact:</b>	Amrita Daniere Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, UTM <a href="mailto:vpdean.utm@utoronto.ca">vpdean.utm@utoronto.ca</a>
<b>Dean's Office contact</b>	Yen Du Program & Curriculum Officer Office of the Dean, UTM <a href="mailto:yen.du@utoronto.ca">yen.du@utoronto.ca</a>
<b>Department / Unit contact:</b>	Yuhong He Chair, Geography <a href="mailto:Yuhong.he@utoronto.ca">Yuhong.he@utoronto.ca</a>
<b>Effective date of unit name change:</b>	July 1, 2020
<b>Version Date:</b>	December 18, 2019

The Department of Geography at the University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) is proposing to re-name their unit to the **Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment**, effective July 1, 2020. The proposed name change will better reflect the evolution of the discipline encompassing Geography as a subject area and emphasize inherent interdisciplinary. Similar academic units across many Canadian universities have adopted similar names and have already successfully undergone similar name changes<sup>1</sup>. An environmental scan identified many Canadian institutes with similar department names, such as the Departments of Geography, Environment & Geomatics at both the University of Guelph and the University of Ottawa; Departments of

<sup>1</sup> Analysis of department names listed in the Canadian Association of Geographers directory of Geography Departments in Canada ([https://9831505f-422a-4b48-87e1-cf86cfd89f14.filesusr.com/ugd/513bc6\\_1c0fafb45b344c5496359447c334ba81.pdf](https://9831505f-422a-4b48-87e1-cf86cfd89f14.filesusr.com/ugd/513bc6_1c0fafb45b344c5496359447c334ba81.pdf))

Geography & Environmental Studies at seven (7) universities (Carleton University, Ryerson University, and Wilfrid Laurier University among them); as well as Departments of Geography and [the] Environment at five (5) schools (including Lakehead University and Mount Allison University). Given this, it is important for UTM's Department of Geography to demonstrate their appreciation of the changing disciplinary landscape at this time.

The department currently offers a wide range of undergraduate programs in Physical Geography, Human Geography, Geographical Information Science (GIS), Environmental Science, and Environmental Management but its name does not reflect this diversity of programming or student interest. The overall enrollment counts in 2018 Fall are 244 for Physical Geography Programs, 260 for Human Geography Programs, 210 for the Environment Science program, 170 for Environmental Management Programs, and 245 for GIS programs. It is important to have a department name that is reflective of the strong enrollments across all programs and is inclusive of all students, alumni, and affiliated professors.

Established in 2003 as part of a major restructuring of the administrative and academic units at UTM, the Department of Geography has since grown into a highly successful, vibrant, and collaborative academic unit that excels in all facets of research, scholarship, and teaching. Reflective of a department spanning the physical and social sciences, the teaching and research expertise of our faculty is very strong, diverse, and defined by a number of areas as follows:

- **Human Geography:** Amrita Daniere, Pierre Desrochers, Vincent Kuuire, Nicole Laliberte, Joseph Leydon, Tara Vinodrai, Alan Walks, and Kathi Wilson;
- **Physical Geography:** Laura Brown, Tim Duval, Igor Lehnherr, and Trevor Porter;
- **Environmental Science and Management:** Laura Besco, Tenley Conway, Monika Havelka, Shashi Kant, Barbara Murck, and Andrea Olive; and
- **Spatial Analysis and Geomatics:** Ron Buliung, Matthew Adams, Yuhong He, and Jue Wang.

The proposed new name of Geography, Geomatics and Environment will signal the department's disciplinary developments while garnering greater external and internal recognition for the breadth of expertise and accomplishments of our faculty and students. Its broader appeal will also help to capture new audiences to further expand undergraduate academic offerings and outreach while offering graduating students a wider expanse of graduate programs and employment opportunities in which to apply their skill set.

Consultation occurred with faculty members in the Department of Geography and with undergraduate and graduate students through email and meeting discussion; all were in favor of the proposed name change. We also consulted with associated departments at UTM (9 departments in total), the Geography Departments at the UTSG and UTSC, and other units where GGR faculty have affiliations (e.g. Institute for Management &

Innovation, Centre for Global Change Science, School of Cities, Munk School, and School of Environment).

At UofT, the names of the other academic units offering undergraduate programs in the area are: Department of Geography and Planning, Faculty of Arts and Science and the Department of Human Geography, University of Toronto Scarborough. The UTM name change will not affect the department's relationship with the tri-campus Graduate Department of Geography and Planning, offering the tri-campus graduate programs of MA in Geography, MSc in Geography, and PhD in Geography. The response from all units consulted was favorable to the proposed name change. One unit would like to take this as an opportunity to explore a stronger relationship between our department and their unit, so we can look for ways to work together for mutual benefit. The administrative offices at UTM including the Registrar's Office have been made aware of this proposal.

Additional decanal consultation was sought at the Faculty of Arts & Science and UTSC. No concerns were identified.

This name change will not affect the names of the undergraduate programs currently offered by the department and has no tri-campus implications. Resource implications are expected to be minimal (minor updates in the way of on-campus signage, institutional recruitment materials and academic calendar, departmental marketing materials and business cards, etc.). Most of these revisions will be made through the course of the regular annual update process so will not incur additional costs to the Department or UTM. The remaining costs associated with this name change have been accounted for at the departmental level.

# Department Name Change

## Geography

**Academic Affairs Committee**  
**February 11, 2020**



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# From Geography (GGR) to Geography, Geomatics, and Environment (GGE)

- **Name Change:** GGR to GGE
- **Recognize:**
  - Disciplinary developments
  - Breadth of expertise and accomplishments of our faculty and students
  - Mirror changes in geography departments across Canada



# Geography, Geomatics and Environment (GGE)

- **Geography** is the study of places and the relationships between people and their environments.

- <https://www.nationalgeographic.org/encyclopedia/geography/>

- **Geomatics** is defined as the discipline concerned with the collection, distribution, storage, analysis, processing, presentation of geographic data or geographic information

- *Geomatics Canada* Ottawa: Natural Resources Canada ISSN 1491-5480

- **Environment** is the interdisciplinary and integrative study of the natural and built environments, their influences on us, and our dependence and impacts on them.

- Prof. Barbara Murck, UTM



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# Geography UTM - Programs and faculty expertise

## Major Programs & Enrolment:

- Human Geography: **260**
- Physical Geography: **244**
- Geographical Information Science (GIS): **245**
- Environmental Science: **210**
- Environmental Management: **170**

## Faculty Expertise:

- **Human Geography (7.5):** Amrita Daniere, Pierre Desrochers, Vincent Kuuire, Nicole Laliberte, Joseph Leydon, Tara Vinodrai, Alan Walks, and Kathi Wilson;
- **Physical Geography (4):** Laura Brown, Tim Duval, Igor Lehnherr, and Trevor Porter;
- **Spatial Analysis and Geomatics (4):** Ron Buliung, Matthew Adams, Yuhong He, and Jue Wang;
- **Environmental Science and Management (4.5):** Laura Besco, Tenley Conway, Monika Havelka, Shashi Kant, Barbara Murck, and Andrea Olive



# Geography departments across Canada

- Department of Geography, Environment & Geomatics, **University of Guelph** and **University of Ottawa**
- Departments of Geography & Environmental Studies at **7 universities** (Carleton University, Ryerson University, and Wilfrid Laurier University among them)
- Departments of Geography and [the] Environment at **5 schools** (including Lakehead University and Mount Allison University)
- Department of Geography and Environment Management, **University of Waterloo**



# Consultation process

- Faculty and staff in the Department of Geography
- Undergraduate and graduate students
- Relevant departments and units (20 in total)

# Impact

- No impact on **undergraduate programs** currently offered by the department
- No **tri-campus** implications
- Minimal **resource implications** (minor updates in the way of on-campus signage, institutional recruitment materials and academic calendar, departmental marketing materials and business cards, etc.)
- Revisions through the course of the current regular annual update process (Curriculum Committees)

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