



FOR CONFIRMATION

PUBLIC

CLOSED SESSION

TO: Executive Committee

SPONSOR: Cheryl Regehr, Vice-President & Provost
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PRESENTER: As above
CONTACT INFO:

DATE: March 17, 2020 for March 24, 2020

AGENDA ITEM: 6(g.)

ITEM IDENTIFICATION:

Name Change of Academic Unit: Change in the name of the Department of Geography, at the University of Toronto Mississauga, to the Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment.

JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:

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:

The change to the name of the *Department of Geography* to *Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment* received approval from the University of Toronto Mississauga Academic Affairs Committee on February 11, 2020.

HIGHLIGHTS:

The University of Toronto Mississauga (UTM) is proposing to change the name of the existing *Department of Geography* to the *Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment* effective July 1, 2020.

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, environmental science and environmental management. It will also better represent the teaching and research expertise across all these areas in the academic unit and the diversity of students' interests. The proposed name is similar to many Canadian institutes with departments in the area.

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, including the Tri-campus Graduate Department of Geography and Planning. The change does, however, signal an important evolution in the identity of the Department and will allow for better marketing and recruitment.

Consultation occurred with faculty members in the Department of Geography and with undergraduate and graduate students through email and meeting discussion; all were in favour of the proposed name change. Consultation occurred with the associated departments at UTM and the Department of Geography and Planning, Faculty of Arts and Science and Department of Human Geography, University of Toronto Scarborough. Additional decanal consultation was sought at the Faculty of Arts and Science and University of Toronto Scarborough. No concerns were identified.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:

Any new/additional financial obligations resulting from this change will be met at the Divisional level.

RECOMMENDATION:

Be It Confirmed by the Executive Committee,

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

DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:

Proposal to Rename an Academic Unit

University of Toronto Mississauga Proposal to Rename an Academic Unit

CURRENT Department Name:	Department of Geography
PROPOSED Department Name:	Department of Geography, Geomatics and Environment
Faculty / Academic Division:	University of Toronto Mississauga
Faculty / Academic Division contact:	Amrita Daniere Vice-Principal Academic & Dean, UTM vpdean.utm@utoronto.ca
Dean's Office contact	Yen Du Program & Curriculum Officer Office of the Dean, UTM yen.du@utoronto.ca
Department / Unit contact:	Yuhong He Chair, Geography Yuhong.he@utoronto.ca
Effective date of unit name change:	July 1, 2020
Version Date:	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 changes¹. 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

¹ 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)

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 Lehnerr, 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.