

ITEM -144-1002-R0709

Approval to establish a Bachelor of Science in Geography; The University of Montana—Missoula

THAT:

In accordance with Montana University System Policy, the Board of Regents of Higher Education authorizes The University of Montana—Missoula to establish a Bachelor of Science degree in Geography.

EXPLANATION:

Geography is often called a “synthetic” or “bridging” discipline because of how it integrates both physical and social sciences. At The University of Montana, the Geography Department has traditionally had representation on both the Science and Social Science General Education Subcommittees. Most Geography Departments offer both B.A. and B.S. degrees. Regionally, the University of Oregon, University of Wyoming, and University of Utah provide this choice for their students. Appendix A lists the degree programs offered by other regional universities. Although the Geography Department at The University of Montana currently only offers a B.A. degree, it has a curriculum that is as diverse and broad within the physical and information technologies as these other universities, and which should allow students a broad range of professional choices upon completion. This proposal will remedy this discrepancy between U.M. and other Universities in the region by creating a B.S. degree to complement the existing B.A. It will also move the option in Physical Geography to the B.S. from the B.A. This will better serve our existing students with interests in science, technology, and planning, broaden the appeal of Geography to a wider range of students, increase the attractiveness of the existing Physical Geography option, and uphold a “contractual agreement” between the Geography Department and the U.M. Administration to create a B.S. degree.

ATTACHMENTS:

A-D