

**Office of the President  
California State University, Chico**



**Executive Memorandum 21-031**

**November 15, 2021**

**From:** Gayle E. Hutchinson, President

**Subject:** Approval to change the name of the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences

Upon the recommendation of the Academic Senate and the concurrence of the Provost, I approve changing the name of the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences to the Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences. The department will use the abbreviation EARTH. The name change and new department abbreviation will be effective immediately.

Additionally, the course subject matter abbreviation of GEOS will be changed to EARTH effective fall 2022.

<b>Policy Title:</b>	EM 21-031 Name change of the Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences
<b>Contact:</b>	Department of Earth and Environmental Sciences
<b>Supersedes:</b>	
<b>Revision:</b>	
<b>Enabling Legislation or Executive Order:</b>	

# College, Department, or Unit Name Change

**Current Name:** Geological and Environmental Sciences

**Proposed Name:** Earth and Environmental Sciences

**Complete only if applicable:**

**Propose Abbreviation to:** EARTH

**Propose Course Subject Abbreviation to:** EARTH

**Rationale for Change (attach additional pages if needed):**

See attached page.

## Signatures Required

The Department of Geological and Environmental Sciences  
has reviewed and approved this name change

Todd Greene 4/22/21  
Department Chair (or unit coordinator, director, etc) Date

The College of Natural Sciences  
has reviewed and approved this name change

David Hassenzahl Apr 22, 2021  
David Hassenzahl (Apr 22, 2021 14:58 PDT)  
College Dean (or chief administrator for unit) Date

J. Hill Sep 14, 2021  
J. Hill (Sep 14, 2021 14:54 PDT)  
NSC Curriculum Chair Date

**Send signature page with proposal attached to Curriculum Services at zip 128**

Note: The department will be notified of EPPC review date.

## Rationale for department name change

The department proposes to change its name from “Geological and Environmental Sciences” to “Earth and Environmental Sciences” to better encapsulate our department’s mission, expertise, and breadth. Earth and environmental sciences are interdisciplinary, integrating principles of physics, chemistry, biology, and mathematics, as well as quantitative and critical thinking skills, to address geological and environmental issues related to the solid earth, the biosphere, hydrosphere and the atmosphere. To this end, the department's programs and courses are designed to encompass a broad spectrum of basic scientific disciplines beyond geology that can be applied to key environmental issues facing our planet. By replacing the unfamiliar term “Geological” with the more familiar term “Earth”, we believe students will more easily recognize our department’s central mission to train the next generation of students to use an interdisciplinary approach to solve complex problems related to earth science.

We offer a number of degrees and programs in our department, including a B.S. degree in environmental science (with four options: applied ecology, hydrology, energy and Earth resources, and atmosphere and climate), a B.S. degree in geology, a B.S. degree in geoscience, an M.S. degree in environmental science, an M.S. degree in geoscience, and a minor in geology. However, all of the faculty and students in our department love to study various aspects of the Earth and the environment in which we live. Therefore, in order to integrate our two main undergraduate programs (Environmental Science and Geology), we recently updated our Geology curriculum to include more Environmental Science courses to create a more unified department. Earth and environmental scientists are problem solvers who address issues related to energy & water resources, natural disasters, climate change, and environmental protection. By changing our department name, we believe we can better attract and retain students who are motivated to learn and apply their skills to help address these key problems.