

The Biology Department faculty oppose the use by one department of a title that includes such a broad descriptive term that includes programs and courses taught by other departments (online vote).

In the proposal for the Geography name change no mention is made that:

1) The Biology Department has had a specialization in Global Sustainability (i.e., M.A. Biological Sciences: Specialization in Global Sustainability) for as long as the Geography Department.

2) Numerous Biology students have graduated with that degree since its inception and several are currently enrolled in the program.

3) Both the Biology and Geography programs began from discussions of a working group that included, Geography, Biology, and Geology, as well as several other individuals. This working group arose because an earlier proposal to form a “stand alone” Master’s in Sustainability was not approved by the head of Graduate Studies at the time.

4) That working group established the two specializations that share three required core courses:

SUST 500 Social, political, and ethical dimensions of Sustainability  
SUST 501 Current challenges in Sustainability  
SUST 502 Science for Sustainability

5) SUST 502 (a required course in both programs) has been taught since the beginning of the both master’s programs by Biology and/or Geology faculty (usually co-taught by one faculty member from each department).

We feel that inclusion of this term by one department in their departmental title would be confusing to students as to all the options available to them for courses and programs that relate to sustainability as a broad, multi-disciplinary field.

We feel that a better approach would be the develop of a web link on the University’s catalog page that would act as a “clearing house” of information for academic programs and courses related to sustainability and environmental science. That would make clear to interested students all the options and possibilities that are available in these fields at Central. This idea has been proposed by the Geography Department and is strongly supported by Biology.