



**MEMORANDUM**

**To:** Julio Frenk, President

**From:** Linda L. Neider  
Chair, Faculty Senate

**Date:** March 1, 2021

**Subject:** Faculty Senate Legislation #2020-53(B) – Name Change of the Department of Geography and Regional Studies TO the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development, College of Arts and Sciences

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The Faculty Senate, at its February 24, 2021 meeting, had no objections to the approval of the College of Arts and Sciences name change for the Department of Geography and Regional Studies TO the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development. The name change is being made to reflect the strong link between the field of geography and the field of sustainable development, and how the department has increasingly incorporated sustainable development into its courses and programs.


This legislation is now forwarded to you for your action.

LLN/rh

Enclosure

- cc: Jeffrey Duerk, Executive Vice President and Provost  
Leonidas Bachas, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Jose Maria Cardoso da Silva, Professor and Chair, Department of Geography and Regional Studies, College of Arts and Sciences  
Justin Stoler, Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Regional Studies, College of Arts and Sciences  
Guillermo Prado, Dean, Graduate School  
Patty Murphy, Associate Provost for University Accreditation, Office of Assessment and Accreditation

**CAPSULE:** Faculty Senate Legislation #2020-53(B) – Name Change of the Department of Geography and Regional Studies TO the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development, College of Arts and Sciences

APPROVED:  DATE: 4/16/21  
(President's Signature)

OFFICE OR INDIVIDUAL TO IMPLEMENT: Leonidas Bachas, College of Arts & Sciences

EFFECTIVE DATE OF LEGISLATION: IMMEDIATELY  
(Pending any further Board of Trustees approval)

NOT APPROVED AND REFERRED TO: \_\_\_\_\_

REMARKS (IF NOT APPROVED): \_\_\_\_\_



# Non-Curricular Proposal Submission Form

Please refer to the [Procedures for Program Changes](#) document for information on the approvals and notifications needed for program changes and the [Proposal Submissions Specifications](#) document for an explanation of the process and a list of the materials required.

*(Please note that change approvals can take 2 semesters to complete.)*

**FORM INSTRUCTIONS:**

1. Save/download the form as a pdf.
2. After completing the information below, print and scan the form.
3. Insert it with the background materials that are specified, in the order listed, and submit to [facsen@miami.edu](mailto:facsen@miami.edu).

**Please note:** only scanned versions can be accepted.

*Include this checklist at the beginning of each proposal.*

## KEY CONTACT PERSONNEL INFORMATION

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First Name

Last Name

Proponent's Title

Department, if applicable

School/College

E-mail

Phone

Title of Proposal

## MANDATORY MEMORANDA AND FORMAT

*Please check that each item listed below is included in the proposal package of materials, in the ORDER as listed. The applicable title (i.e. Letter of Explanation, Memo from the Dean, etc. ) is to precede each section in the materials.*

Only proposals conforming to this format will be accepted.

### 1. This completed checklist.

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### 2. Letter of explanation. (2-3 pages only, double spaced, 12 pt font)

Yes      No

If no, explain why:

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### 3. A memo from the dean(s) signifying approval of the faculty of the relevant School(s) / Colleges(s).

Yes      No

If no, explain why:

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### 4. A memo that all affected or relevant School / College Council(s) have approved.

Yes      No

If no, explain why:

**5. A memo from the department chair(s) signifying approval of the faculty of the relevant department(s).**

Yes      No

If no, explain why:

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**6. A memo from the Office of Accreditation and Assessment (OAA) if the proposal involves academic programs (degrees, certificates, majors, minors, concentrations, specializations, tracks, etc.) such as new programs, closing programs, or program changes (such as changes in requirements, program length, modality, name, location).**

Applicable      Not applicable.

If not, explain why:

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**7. A memo from the Graduate School Dean signifying approval of the Graduate Council (for graduate programs only) OR the University Curriculum Committee (for undergraduate programs only) recommendation form.**

Applicable      Not applicable.

If not, explain why:

**8. Academic Deans Policy Council (ADPC) approval, for interdisciplinary issues and as appropriate. Please consult with the Dean of the Graduate School or the Secretary of the Faculty Senate to check if this is needed.**

Yes                  No

If no, explain why:

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**9. Additional required documents as listed on the "Proposal Submissions Specifications," i.e. market analysis, budget information, assessment of library collections, etc. as specified.**

List additional documents included:

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End form.



April 3, 2020

To: Prof. Leonidas Bachas, Dean  
College of Arts & Sciences

From: Prof. José Maria Cardoso da Silva, Chair  
Department of Geography and Regional Studies

RE: Proposal to Rename the Department of Geography

Dear Prof. Bachas:

We request that the name of the Department of Geography and Regional Studies be changed to the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development. This proposal was approved by our faculty on April 2, 2019 with ten votes in support and one abstention. The rationale for this change is described below.

“Sustainable Development” is most commonly defined as development that meets present needs without compromising the needs of future generations. In other words, sustainable development aims to promote economic prosperity, social inclusion, environmental conservation, and good governance everywhere. Global priorities have been codified in the UN’s 17 [Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDGs) which provide a shared blueprint for future peace and prosperity.

Geography is the study of places and the relationships between people and their environments. Geographers explore both physical characteristics and human society on the earth’s surface. They also examine how human culture interacts with the natural environment and the manner in which locations and places impact people. Geography seeks to understand where things are found, why they are there, how they develop and change over time, and what needs to be done to reduce disparities and ensure good living standards for everyone, everywhere.

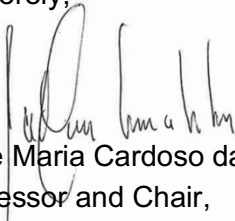
The longstanding, strong link between Geography and Sustainable Development has been discussed in the academic world for decades (e.g., Purvis and Grainger 2004; Whitehead 2006). In fact, Geography is considered the most fundamental discipline for students interested in pursuing careers in Sustainable Development because designing and implementing Sustainable Development Goals requires the core strengths of the discipline of Geography: integrative, place-based thinking, at multiple scales. The linkage between Geography and Sustainable Development has been recognized in the US and abroad, as several departments of Geography formally list research and teaching on Sustainable Development among their major goals. One of the top UK departments of Geography (University of Saint Andrews) went beyond that and add Sustainable Development to its name. We would like to be the frontrunners of this idea in the US.

The Department of Geography and Regional Studies at the University of Miami has embraced Sustainable Development as its [unifying research theme](#) for several years. We have been offering courses that are strongly linked to the SDG agenda related to **global health, urbanization, food and water, population dynamics, environmental conservation, and climate change**. No other unit at the University offers comparable breadth and depth related to the SDGs (Table 1). Our students also receive cutting-edge training in modern geospatial methods and analytical tools that allow them to integrate, visualize, and model socio-environmental issues, including GIS, Remote Sensing, survey research, and spatial statistics.

Our department was the first in the College to offer an undergraduate course dedicated to sustainable development. In addition, we have been: (1) mainstreaming and reinforcing the key concepts of sustainable development in the syllabi of our core courses, (2) expanding our elective courses to explore in-depth important components of sustainable development (e.g., Sustainable Food; Sustainable Cities; Biogeography and Conservation; Global Human Rights; Climate Change and Security), and (3) adding new courses that allow the students to explore social problems by using geospatial methods and tools (e.g., GIS for Health and Environment; Crime Mapping and Analysis; GIS and Environmental Modelling). More recently, we collaborated with the College of Architecture to offer a Master in Professional Sciences in Urban Sustainability and Resilience.

To replace "Regional Studies" by "Sustainable Development" in the name of the department is a natural outcome of a process that has evolved for several years. We are happy to provide more information if requested.

Sincerely,



José Maria Cardoso da Silva, Ph.D.  
Professor and Chair,  
Department of Geography and Regional Studies

#### References

Purvis, Martin, and Alan Grainger, eds. (2004). Exploring Sustainable Development: Geographical Perspectives. Routledge.

Whitehead, Mark. (2006). Spaces of Sustainability. 1st edition. Routledge.





UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
COLLEGE of  
ARTS & SCIENCES



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Ashe Building, Suite 227 Fax: 305-284-5637  
Coral Gables, Florida 33146 www.as.miami.edu

November 9, 2020

TO: Willy Prado, Dean, Graduate School  
Linda Neider, Chair, Faculty Senate

FROM: Leonidas Bachas, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'L. Bachas'.

SUJECT: Proposal to change the name of the Department of Geography and Regional  
Studies to **Geography and Sustainable Development**

I am writing to express my full support of the Proposal to change the name of the Department of Geography and Regional Studies to **Geography and Sustainable Development**. On April 27, 2020, the Faculty of the College of Arts and Sciences unanimously voted in favor of this name change. Please note that for the College Faculty to approve the change, the College Council has to approve it first. And, this was done at the meeting of the College Council on April 13, 2020.

I am forwarding the proposal to the Graduate School and the Senate for action. The reason for proposing the name change to "Geography and Sustainable Development" is very practical. The name change will reflect what the department has increasingly been doing and what has been done in the field of geography for many years.

For your convenience, attached you will find a copy of the proposal. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me.



**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: November 13, 2020

TO: Jose Maria Cardoso da Silva, Chair, Geography and Regional Studies  
College of Arts and Sciences

FROM: Patty Murphy, Associate Provost   
Office of University Accreditation

RE: Renaming of Geography and Regional Studies Department to Department of Geography  
and Sustainable Development

The College of Arts and Sciences notified me on 11/1/2020 of its intent to rename the Department of Geography and Regional Studies to the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development. This change is being made to reflect the strong link between the field of geography and the field of sustainable development and how the department has incorporated sustainable development into its courses and programs.

SACSCOC does not require notification or approval of changes to academic departments.

Please contact me if you have any questions at [pattymurphy@miami.edu](mailto:pattymurphy@miami.edu).

cc: Faculty Senate  
Karen Beckett, University Registrar  
Leonidas Bachas, Dean, College of Arts and Sciences  
Guillermo Prado, Dean, Graduate School

UNIVERSITY OF MIAMI  
GRADUATE SCHOOL




Graduate School  
P.O. Box 248125  
Coral Gables, FL 33124-3220

Phone: 305-284-4154  
Fax: 305-284-5441  
graduateschool@miami.edu

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: January 22, 2021

TO: Linda Neider  
Chair, Faculty Senate

FROM: Guillermo (Willy) Prado   
Dean, Graduate School

SUBJECT: Proposed Name Change to the Department of Geography and Regional Studies

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The Department of Geography and Regional Studies submitted a proposal to change the name of the Department of Geography and Regional Studies to the Department of Geography and Sustainable Development. The proposal was discussed at the meeting of the Graduate Council on Tuesday, January 19, 2021. No concerns were expressed by Council members.

CC: Jose Maria Cardoso da Silva, Professor and Chair, Department of Geography and Regional Studies, College of Arts & Sciences  
Justin Stoler, Associate Professor, Department of Geography and Regional Studies, College of Arts & Sciences  
Leonidas Bachas, Dean, College of Arts & Sciences  
Tiffany Plantan, Director of Education, Graduate School  
Patty Murphy, Associate Provost for University Accreditation, Office of Assessment and Accreditation