

AACR 3

Office of the President
May 3, 2011

Members, Board of Trustees:

ACADEMIC DEGREE RECOMMENDATION

Recommendation: that the Board of Trustees approve the establishment of a Doctor of Philosophy degree with a major in Integrated Plant and Soil Sciences (CIP Code: 01.1199, PROG: GS PHD IPSS), effective in the Fall 2011 Semester.

Background: Graduate faculty in the departments of Forestry, Horticulture, and Plant and Soil Sciences propose an umbrella degree program to provide an integrative and creative approach to graduate education in the plant and soil sciences. The objectives are to build strength in the current M.S. and Ph.D. programs in Crop Science, Plant Biology, Molecular Biology and Biochemistry, Horticulture, and Soil Science by combining them into an overall Integrated Graduate Program in Plant and Soil Sciences. The integrated program offers advantages in student recruitment, training, assessment, program student numbers, and administrative efficiency. The program would provide a unique opportunity to cultivate and exploit the benefits that can be derived from an interdisciplinary approach to graduate education and research.

The IPSS program would provide (a) a dynamic environment that can evolve interdisciplinary credentials and programs tailored to suit the needs of current and future graduate students in the plant and soil science disciplines and develop options responsive to developing scientific trends in agricultural science; (b) interdisciplinary coursework required of all students in the program without creating intrusive changes to the existing graduate curricula; (c) the opportunity for increased visibility and identity for research programs currently without a graduate identity; (d) a more inclusive approach to graduate education for existing graduate programs and faculty.

With the establishment of the new IPSS degree, admission to existing doctoral programs in Crop Science, Plant Biology, and Soil Science will cease. Students already enrolled in the programs will have the option to continue their existing program or be grandfathered into the new IPSS program. The existing programs will be suspended once the last enrolled student has graduated.

This program has the approval of the appropriate Councils and University Senate, and it has completed the forty-five day review by the Council on Postsecondary Education. The provost of the University supports this recommendation.

Action taken: Approved Disapproved Other _____