

## Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

### MEMO

**To:** The UVM Faculty Senate  
**From:** Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Laura Almstead, Chair  
**Date:** October 3, 2019  
**Re:** Approval of a request by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences to change the names of the Major and Minor in Ecological Agriculture

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On October 3, 2019, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

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The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a request from the Department of Plant and Soil Science in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) to change the names of the major and minor in Ecological Agriculture to a major and minor in Agroecology. The proposed name changes received support from the department faculty, the CALs Curriculum Committee, the CALs faculty, and Jean Harvey, Interim Dean of CALs.

Since 2004, when the major in Plant and Soil Science was split into a major in Ecological Agriculture and a major in Sustainable Landscape Horticulture, significant changes have occurred in the field of ecological agriculture. The term “agroecology” is increasingly used nationally and internationally to describe the theory and practice of applying ecology to agricultural systems. Within the Department of Plant and Soil Science at UVM, there are now two faculty research groups that focus on agroecology as well as a Certificate of Graduate Study in Agroecology. In addition, two of the primary courses for the major include the term agroecology in their name (PSS 021 Introduction to Agroecology and PSS 212 Advanced Agroecology).

The department believes that changing the names of the major and minor in Ecological Agriculture to a major and minor in Agroecology will reduce confusion among present students, better align the curriculum with an internationally recognized discipline, and improve marketing to new prospective students.

The name change has no effect on the curriculum in either program, course numbers, or course prefixes. The department is requesting a change in the current major code, ECAG, to AGRO.