

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: November 4, 2017
Re: Approval of a proposal submitted by the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources and the Graduate College to change the existing Leadership for Sustainability Concentration of the Master of Science in Natural Resources to a separate Master of Professional Studies in Leadership for Sustainability

At its meeting on November 4, 2017, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a proposal submitted by the Rubenstein School of Environment and Natural Resources (RSENR) and the Graduate College to change the existing Leadership for Sustainability Concentration of the Master of Science (MS) in Natural Resources to a separate Master of Professional Studies (MPS) in Leadership for Sustainability. If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, the MPS degree will be offered beginning fall 2018. Students currently enrolled in the MS in Natural Resources Leadership for Sustainability Concentration could choose to receive a MS or a MPS degree.

A Master of Professional Studies degree is a degree concentrated in a field of applied studies (<https://scs.georgetown.edu/what-is-mps-degree/>). The current Leadership for Sustainability Concentration is an online/minimum residency curriculum with a culminating project. This concentration is designed for emerging leaders who are rooted in their home organization/community and are committed to deepening their capacity to catalyze change and collaborate within and beyond their chosen professional field. The curriculum explores leadership practices inspired by the wisdom of nature and grounded in a critical inquiry of the mindsets, assumptions, and patterns of power and privilege that underlie change-making efforts. Since its initiation in 2015, the concentration has had remarkable success in recruiting a diverse group of students, and was recently recognized in an article in *Insight into Diversity* entitled Changing the Face of Climate Change (<http://www.insightintodiversity.com/changing-the-face-of-climate-change-science/>).

No curricular changes are planned as part of the proposed change. Moving the current MS in NR Leadership for Sustainability to a MPS degree simply provides graduates of the program a degree that better reflects the training provided by the current curriculum. MPS degrees are often interdisciplinary, and are designed for current or aspiring professionals with an emphasis on professional skills, a

description that perfectly describes the Leadership for Sustainability curriculum. Although MPS degrees are relatively common nation-wide, if approved, this would be the first MPS degree offered by UVM.

The request to change the Leadership for Sustainability Concentration in the MS in NR to a MPS in Leadership for Sustainability was supported by RSENR Dean Mathews and was unanimously approved by the RSENR Curriculum Committee and the faculty. The requested change was also supported by CDE Dean Belliveau, the Graduate College Executive Council, and Cynthia Forehand, Dean of the Graduate College.