RECOMMENDATION OF THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR THE UWM INTERDEPARTMENTAL MAJOR IN "BIOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF CONSERVATION" TO CHANGE THE NAME OF THE MAJOR TO "CONSERVATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCE"

Recommendation for Action

That the name of the "Biological Aspects of Conservation" major be changed to "Conservation and Environmental Science," effective Semester II, 1999-2000.

Rationale

The new name will provide a more accurate description of the course work available to, and training received by, students who major in this interdepartmental program. The science of conservation has developed rapidly over the past decade, and had become increasingly interdisciplinary. Conservation problems are not simple, and finding solutions often requires the integration of knowledge from the diverse sciences of biology, chemistry, geography, and geology. Although the current curriculum incorporates courses in these areas, the current name does not convey the interdisciplinary nature of the major.

Additionally, the new name will assist students when applying for jobs and/or graduate school programs. The current name is vague with respect to the course “content” available to majors. The new name will help to eliminate some of this confusion by bringing this program in line with similar programs throughout the country.

Finally, when the Biological Aspects of Conservation major was initiated in the 1970s, the majority of the "conservation-oriented" research at UWM was located within the Departments of Botany and Zoology. Botany and Zoology merged into the Department of Biological Sciences in the mid-1980s. Since then, research and teaching related to conservation has continued to develop and expand within the contributing departments - not just in Biology. As such, the name change will better convey the true interdepartmental and interdisciplinary nature of the program, and assist in the further development of its integrated curriculum.

Approved by:  Date

Biological Aspects of Conservation Committee  September 23, 1999
Department of Biological Sciences Faculty  October 18, 1999
Department of Chemistry Faculty  November 23, 1999
Department of Geography Faculty  October 6, 1999
Department of Geosciences Faculty  October 12, 1999
L&S Faculty  November 22, 1999