

Program Suspension Proposal: B.S. in Wood Science and Technology.

Summary: The B.S. degree in Wood Science and Technology (WSC) is offered through the School of Forest Resources (SFOR). This degree is one of five separate degree programs offered by the School. Enrollment in WSC has been low, despite efforts to recruit additional students. NSFA proposes to suspend the B.S. degree in Wood Science and Technology. SFR's intent is to develop a new major in Forest Bioproducts and Bioenergy.

Rationale for suspension of program: The B.S. degree in Wood Science and Technology is one of five separate degree programs offered by the School of Forest Resources. The variety of degrees reflects the fact that two departments merged less than five years ago to form the School of Forest Resources and both former units had separate degree programs. The WSC degree program has been characterized by low enrollment for many years. Enrollment over the past five years averaged fewer than 12 students and remained fairly steady. Since AY 05-06, we have typically conferred fewer than 2 degrees per year (Table 1. Five year summary of enrollment and degrees conferred).

Table 1. B.S. Degree in Wood Science and Technology: Enrollment in program and number of degrees conferred annually from AY 2005 – 2006 to present:

<u>Academic year</u>	<u>Fall enrollment count</u>	<u>No. degrees conferred</u>
AY 2005 – 2006	9	1
AY 2006 – 2007	11	1
AY 2007 – 2008	12	1
AY 2008 – 2009	15	3
AY 2009 – 2010	12	2
Five year average	<12	<2

It is difficult to justify offering a degree option for this small number of students. Therefore, we propose to suspend the B.S. in WSC while investigating alternative options.

Relationship of the program suspension to institutional mission: Maine is ~90% forested and has a very significant forest products industry. This sector is one of the largest among Maine's manufacturing industries with an economic impact to the state's economy in the billions of dollars annually. Research, education and outreach to this sector are an important part of our land grant mission. Suspension of the B.S. degree in WSC will not impact our current efforts in forestry and forest products research or public service. The University maintains active research programs related to forestry, wood, forest bioproducts, forest-based recreation and forest resources. This includes several research centers and institutes, such as the AEWC, Forest Bioproducts Institute and Center for Research on Sustainable Forests. Despite the importance of this industry to the Maine economy, our degree program in wood science and technology is not attracting significant numbers of students. SFOR has been reviewing their educational programs and proposed significant modifications. Suspension of the current WSC degree program is a step in the transition to a new curriculum in Forest Bioproducts and Bioenergy.

Assignment of faculty during the suspension period: Faculty having expertise in wood science and technology will continue to deliver courses on this topic. These courses contribute to fulfillment of degree requirements in the other degree programs within the School of Forest Resources. They will be developing new replacement courses for the new B.S. in Forest Bioproducts and Bioenergy. Suspension of the B.S. degree in Wood Science and Technology is not linked to the elimination of any current personnel.

Impact of the program suspension on students: Students currently enrolled in the B.S. in Wood Science and Technology will have the option of completing their degree or transferring to the new Forest Bioproducts and Bioenergy degree program once approved

Timetable for program suspension: We wish to suspend admission to the B. S. in Wood Science and Technology degree program immediately. The program would remain suspended while an alternate curriculum in Forest Bioproducts and Bioenergy is developed. Concurrently, a proposal to eliminate the Wood Science and Technology degree will prepared, reviewed and evaluated. We expect those later steps to be completed by spring 2011.

Input obtained from meeting and discussion with the appropriate faculty and AFUM: The faculty of SFOR has been concerned with the low enrollment in the WSC program. They reviewed their degree programs and developed a document outlining proposed changes. This plan is being reviewed by the faculty and shared with external stakeholders for input. The SFOR faculty believe that the study of forest bioproducts and bioenergy production will offer students many opportunities. They are enthusiastic about adding this dimension to their curricula. Discussions about the logistics of bringing forward new courses, phasing out degree programs, and changing the curricula occurred at a faculty meeting with the Dean. Plans to suspend the WSC degree were supported.

Respectfully submitted,

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