Approved by the Board of Trustees

January 18, 2024

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Board Meeting

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# RENAME THE DEPARTMENT OF ATMOSPHERIC SCIENCES, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES, URBANA

**Action:** Rename the Department of Atmospheric Sciences, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

**Funding:** No Funding Impact Anticipated

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, with the advice of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate, recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences to rename the Department of Atmospheric Sciences.

The existing departmental name, which has been in place for over 40 years, does not accurately represent the diverse range of scholarly activities and interests of current faculty. The proposed name, “Department of Climate, Meteorology, and Atmospheric Sciences,” is better suited to the faculty that is comprised of meteorologists, climate scientists, hydroclimatologists, atmospheric physicists, atmospheric chemists, as well as atmospheric dynamicists. Of relevance in this name-change proposal is that nearly all departmental faculty have some component of climate science in their respective research portfolios. Most also have an underlying meteorological application to their research, especially as related to weather forecasting.

The name “Department of Climate, Meteorology, and Atmospheric Sciences” will facilitate achievement of the departmental strategic goals regarding enhanced visibility and enhanced enrollment in the undergraduate program. Several peer institutions currently have a competitive advantage because they have explicit distinction between meteorology and atmospheric sciences. The proposed name makes explicit both of these areas of scholarship. The additional inclusion of the term “climate science” is uncommon and purposeful, as it allows for differentiation of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign program from peer institutions. This provides a unique opportunity of proactively gaining a competitive advantage over peers such as University of Michigan’s Climate and Space Sciences and Engineering department and Penn State’s Meteorology and Atmospheric Science department in terms of the recruitment of students with interests in climate science. Bringing the climate science focus to the forefront in the departmental name also helps communicate to other units on campus that this department conducts climate science research and is available as a resource for collaborative efforts with respect to climate and climate change.

Thus, to reflect current and future interests and activities of faculty and enhance visibility, the faculty unanimously endorse changing the department’s name to “Department of Climate, Meteorology, and Atmospheric Sciences.”

This departmental rename does not impact funding, faculty affiliations, or facilities. The only budgetary implications are those related to printing new business cards, banners, and other signage. These costs will be covered by the department.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The executive vice president and vice president for academic affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The president of the University of Illinois System recommends approval. This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.