

MICHIGAN STATE
U N I V E R S I T Y

Attachment 2

June 6, 2012

MEMORANDUM

TO: MSU Board of Trustees

FROM: Kim A. Wilcox, Provost *KAW*

RE: Recommended Merger of the Departments of Crop and Soil Sciences and Plant Pathology to form the **Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences**

Recommendation:

BE IT RESOLVED that the Trustee Policy Committee recommends to the Board of Trustees that the Department of Crop and Soil Sciences and the Department of Plant Pathology be merged to form the Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences.



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Background

As you know, all Colleges have been exploring ways to promote synergy, effectiveness, and efficiency through program alignments and structural changes. Such changes should also provide the opportunity for enhancing academic reputation and distinction.

The College of Agriculture and Natural Resources has proposed the merger of the two departments which represents a significant and important change in the structure of plant, soil plant-pathogen, and microbial sciences at Michigan State University. The new department will build on the disciplinary alignments in the current departments in the areas of microbiology and microbial ecology, plant-microbe interactions and disease resistance, pest management, and plant breeding and genetics. The new Department will promote horizontal integration across major issues facing plant, soil, plant disease, and microbial science, but will support vertical disciplinary organization.

The merger will not adversely affect currently enrolled students: graduate and undergraduate students currently enrolled will complete their degree programs under the conditions under which they enrolled.

The merger will not change the tenure status or current rank of any of the faculty. New bylaws will ensure that no current faculty will be disadvantaged by

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this process, and will describe a mentoring system for junior faculty. It will also outline the process by which faculty evaluations and promotion and tenure recommendations are developed and communicated.

Consultation about the merger has included faculty and students within the affected departments, including a joint faculty meeting held in May, 2011. Academic Governance consultation included Committee on Academic Policy, the University Graduate Council, and the University Committee on Faculty Affairs. There were no concerns relative to the merger.

I support the recommendation and President Simon concurs with the request for approval of the merger of the Departments of Crop and Soil Sciences and Plant Pathology to form the **Department of Plant, Soil and Microbial Sciences**. The effective date of the change would be July 1, 2012. The effective date for the academic program/curriculum is Fall, 2013.

C: Interim Dean Doug Buhler
Associate Provost Linda Stanford
Director Dave Byelich