



State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
RHODE ISLAND BOARD OF EDUCATION  
80 Washington Street  
Providence, Rhode Island 02903-3400

Enclosure 5a6.  
July 16, 2015

Barbara S. Cottam  
Chair

July 10, 2015

Council on Elementary and  
Secondary Education

To: Council on Postsecondary Education

Daniel P. McConaghy  
Chair

From: Commissioner Jim Purcell, Ed.D.

Subject: Notice from the University of Rhode Island: creation of the  
Interdisciplinary Minor in Restoration Science and Management

Amy Beretta, Esq.

The University of Rhode Island is proposing to create a minor in Restoration Science and Management (RSM) within the College of Environment and Life Sciences (CELS). The minor will draw upon coursework from the departments within CELS to enable students to gain the skills relevant to restoring or rehabilitating damaged ecosystems, and acquiring competencies in undertaking restorations which complement their majors. Competency in this field also requires interdisciplinary training within the fields of ecology, environmental science, economics, and communication. Students who complete this minor will be highly competitive candidates for graduate study or employment.

Colleen A. Callahan, Ed.D.

Karin Forbes

Jo Eva Gaines

Marta V. Martinez

Lawrence Purtill

Joyce L. Stevos, Ph.D.

Rationale

Offering the minor in restoration science and management formalizes the structure for study in this increasingly important and growing area within the life and social sciences. Adding this minor provides students with an organizational framework for the study of restoration and provides them with opportunities for participation in restoration projects and internships in preparation for graduate study and or employment.

Council on Postsecondary  
Education

William Foulkes  
Chair

Michael Bernstein

Curriculum

The RSM minor requires students to complete 18 credits (13 at the 200-level or above): 7 credits of required courses and 11 credits of supporting electives including 3-6 credits of experiential or hands on learning in a restoration project.

Dennis Duffy, Esq.

The Honorable Thomas Izzo

Judy Ouellette

Required Courses (7 cr.):

- NRS 401: Foundations in Restoration Ecology
- NRS 543: Public Engagement with Science

Kerry I. Rafanelli, Esq.

John J. Smith, Jr.

Experiential Learning Courses (3-6 cr.) selected from:

- NRS 395: Research Apprenticeship in Natural Resources Science
- NRS 397: Natural Resources Internship
- GEO 397: Geoscience Internships
- NRS 491: Special Projects
- NRS 492: Special Projects
- NRS 495: Advanced Natural Resources Apprenticeship
- NRS 497: Natural Resources Cooperative Internship

Dr. Jeffery A. Williams

*Henry J. King*

Dear Sirs:

I have the honor to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 10th inst. in relation to the above matter.

I am sorry to hear that you are unable to attend the meeting on the 15th inst. I will be glad to discuss the matter with you at any other time.

I am, Sir, very respectfully,  
Yours truly,  
Henry J. King

Very truly,  
Henry J. King

**Supporting Courses (4-8 cr.)** selected from:

- BIO 262: Introductory Ecology
- GEO 103: Understanding the Earth
- GEO 320: Earth Materials
- NRS 445: Invasive Species Science, Management and Policy

Students may use other courses that have some aspect of ecosystem restoration as a central focus with the permission of the program director. Additionally, there are various restoration projects that students would have the opportunity to join while completing their RSM minor:

- Narrow River Restoration
- Agronomy Grassland Restoration
- White Horn Brook Restoration
- Oyster Shell Recycling and Reef Restoration
- Potowomut Marsh Restoration
- Coral Reef Restoration
- Block Island Native Phragmites Restoration

**Employment**

Students who achieve their degree with a minor in Restoration Science and Management will be equipped with the necessary skills to compete for employment in government, NGOs, business and academic sectors that focus on restoration, sustainability and resiliency. Graduates with this minor could also seek employment from one of the organizations they intern with throughout the course of the minor, including; Save the Bay, the Rhode Island Audubon Society, the Environmental Protection Agency, the US Geological Survey, and others.

**Institutional Role**

By adding a minor in restoration science URI is meeting the vision statement in the Academic Plan which calls for curricula that emphasize the university's distinctive strengths in "environment/alternative energy/ [and] green economy". Additionally, the proposed minor is supported by a CELS initiative to hire faculty who could contribute to the development of interdisciplinary study and the university-wide focus on hands-on active learning.

**Interinstitutional Considerations**

There appear to be no other minor programs or bachelor's degree programs in restoration sciences in Rhode Island. Nationally, there are several colleges and universities offering ecology restoration programs including at the University of Northern Iowa, University of Maryland, University of Buffalo, University of Montana and Texas A&M.

**Students**

This minor should attract a group of diverse students at URI. Students who would enroll in the RSM minor may include those seeking a degree in a related field, those interested in environmental issues, and those attracted to work with environmental organizations. Students with majors in communications, business, and political science may also wish to add this minor.

**Staff Review**

RIOPC staff reviewed the proposal for the minor in restoration science and management. This program is within the mission, role and scope of the University and does not require Council approval.