

TO: Dr. Timothy Boosinger
Provost & Vice President for Academic Affairs

FROM: Paul Patterson
Dean, College of Agriculture

DATE: April 28, 2016

SUBJECT: Proposed BS in Agricultural Science

We are requesting permission to begin development and approval of a new undergraduate-level program, the BS in Agricultural Science.

Program Purpose and Description: The program will provide diversified agricultural education for those seeking positions in agricultural companies, producer groups, and agricultural extension agencies.

Justification for Request: This program will provide a general agriculture science degree that has been demanded from various stakeholder groups. Agribusiness firms today are very diverse and seek employees with broad knowledge. The program will also provide a double major option for Agriscience Education students. Currently, Alabama State Department Education mandates that each teacher preparation program be completed as a double major with the corresponding science or arts program; this program will serve that function for Agriscience Education students. The need for this program is also demonstrated by the number of Agriscience Education graduates that are recruited by agricultural agencies away from the secondary classroom.

State Need: No other four-year institutions in the state of Alabama offer a general agricultural science program at the undergraduate level.

Employment Opportunities: A degree in Agricultural Science will prepare students as practitioners in agricultural business, formal and non-formal education, extension education, and other agriculture-related fields. Graduates will be adept at developing and implementing programs that prepare individuals for the agricultural industry and keep the general public literate to the importance of the agriculture, food, fiber, and natural resources in our daily life. The program will offer a wide variety of career choices such as Extension Educator, Organizational Trainer, Consumer Relations Manager, Corporate Representative, and others.

Student Demand – Enrollment Projections: Creation of this degree will result in an immediate enrollment of approximately 40 undergraduate students as double majors. Based on a study of projected career growth, student enrollment for the program itself, not counting agriscience education students, is expected to be approximately 15 students per year.

Resource Requirements: All courses and instructors necessary for offering the program are already in place.

Recommendation: We ask that the Office of the Provost approve the request to plan and develop the proposed BS in Agricultural Science.