



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** October 17, 2017

**TO:** Regina Eisenbach, Dean  
Academic Programs

**FROM:** Julia Johnson, Dean  
College of Humanities, Arts, Behavioral & Social Sciences

**SUBJECT:** B.A. in Geography, A-Form Feedback

I have reviewed the A form for the Bachelor of Arts in Geography submitted by the CHABSS Liberal Studies department. I conditionally support its addition to the University Academic Master Plan as a program of study within Liberal Studies.

The A form makes a strong case for the relevance of the B.A. in Geography to CSU goals, the CSUSM Long-Range Academic Plan, and the Missions of both CHABSS and CSUSM. Geography is also considered a "Broad Foundation Program" by the CSUSM Trustees. The A form identifies demand based on an existing Geography minor and identified feeder programs in area community colleges with whom Associate's Degree for Transfer (ADT) relationships could be articulated. The proposers present the B.A. In Geography as combining and building on two existing minors, Geography and Border Studies, as well as on existing faculty expertise including a new tenure-track hire in Physical Geography. The Liberal Studies program already has a GIS lab classroom that it uses for the delivery of existing GEOG courses. Cooperative relationships with the College of Science and Mathematics--crucial to ensure required courses in the major—have already been developed for the minor. The proposed major's interdisciplinary and cross-disciplinary emphases are a strength (as well as the source of potential challenges). While the program as proposed could not be launched with existing resources, a scaled back version of the program is feasible, as discussed below.

The potential of the program notwithstanding, a P form will need to address a number of crucial areas in more detail.

### Curriculum:

Offering inter- and cross-disciplinary curriculum—to say nothing of cross-college curriculum—presents challenges for a minor that are incrementally greater for a major, especially when numbers will be small in the early years. Given that course offerings must be dictated by Degree Planner data, the proposed course rotations to allow majors to complete their requirements will need to be very clear. Given the uncertainty of plans for D/D7, the major will need to be careful not to assume GE backfill to support program growth. As CAPC suggests, planning curricular pathways to articulate with ADTs will be crucial, as well as providing clear plans for how existing curriculum, rotations, and roadmaps (GEOG and BRS) will be modified for the major. The proposer has had conversations with College leadership about the overlaps and connections between Geography and Environmental Studies. The P form will need to address these connections and distinctions and address the following: Why should a college have both an Environmental Studies major and a Geography major? What are the important distinctions between these intellectual areas as they would be covered in CHABSS?

### Resources:

The proposal articulates a need for two additional tenure-track faculty early in the life cycle of the degree program. Given two tenure-track faculty with expertise in Geography and a search for a third underway--as well as additional faculty in Liberal Studies with expertise in Geography and Border Studies--the P Form should explain how the major could be offered with existing tenure-track faculty and lecturers, with a clear argument for why and when new faculty will be needed. While the faculty needs seem overstated, the needs for space and equipment may be understated given that the GIS lab is used not only for LBST courses but also by other departments such as AIS. A plan for computer refreshes, software purchases and updates, and lab staffing will need to be part of the planned resources for the program. The launch of a new B.A. will necessarily have an impact on current administrative staff as well, and the P Form should clearly address how the major will be administered within the current resources of LBST as well as providing any projected new needs in this area.

### Organizational Location and Relationship to Other Programs:

- The combination of two minors (Geography and Border Studies) will create a new unit and an additional B.A. within Liberal Studies. The P form will need to address the impact on LBST of the proposed new B.A. on the overall structure and challenges (a new Waiver program planned for launch in 2018, for example).
- The relationship with related majors, primarily, ENVS, should be addressed. How might the two programs develop curricular synergies and share resources?
- The A form notes the GIS Certificate that has been developed through Extended Learning, but not yet launched. Because needs for resources (GIS lab, staffing) might overlap, the P form should map out plans to create a synergistic rather than cannibalistic relationship between the two programs were they offered concurrently.

Thank you for the opportunity to review this A form.



# California State University

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## SAN MARCOS

333 S. Twin Oaks Valley Rd.  
San Marcos, CA 92096

### MEMORANDUM

DATE: March 10, 2017

TO: Kimberley Knowles-Yáñez, Chair of Liberal Studies

FROM: CHABSS CAPC

RE: A-form for Geography BA

The CAPC of CHABSS reviewed the A-Form proposal for the creation of a Bachelors of Arts degree in the area of Geography. **The committee unanimously voted to support the proposal and believes that the addition of the Geography BA would benefit students and the university as a whole.** The proposers clearly lay out the importance to the university and local area of providing a degree in Geography and the potential demand for both majors and graduates in the field. CAPC is not requesting changes to the A-Form as it moves forward. However, during our discussion several points were raised, and we will briefly note these in the hope that these comments will aid in a forthcoming P-form. It is important to note, that our intent is not to undermine the proposal, but rather to note issues that will be raised in the next step of creating the program.

Much of the discussion focused on the potential structure of a Geography program in the CHABSS College and its impact on teaching throughout the university. Currently, GEOG courses are taught as part of the Liberal Studies Department, and the proposal indicates that the two current minors housed in Liberal Studies, Border Studies and Geography, will be leveraged in the creation of the new Bachelors of Art degree. The creation of a new program will require substantial collaboration with the dean's office and the college governance committees. Several questions were raised in our discussion regarding how the curriculum would need change from what is currently offered to produce a fully-fledged major. Would the minors continue independently or would they be subsumed into the new major? Would the degree be offered with areas of concentration, and how would those be arranged? A specific challenge discussed would be working not only across departments in CHABSS, but also across colleges (e.g., CSM). These cross-discipline offerings are valuable, but require additional coordination and support from multiple sources. On the issue of coordination, it would be helpful in the future P-form to provide a roadmap for common Associate Degree Transfers so that articulation is clear. The final question was would future Geography BA program remain in Liberal Studies department and how would BA program and the minors be managed? Depending on the implementation, the changes being proposed could require additional staffing and departmental resources (e.g., program director release, future laboratory and office space, and administrative staff) that are not clearly indicated in the current form.

Overall, as described above, CAPC believes that the addition of Geography BA would benefit the students, the university, and the Southern California area. We fully support this proposal and look forward to its implementation.

CHABSS CAPC committee

Jacquelyn Kilpatrick (Humanities and Arts representative)

Joonseong Lee (Behavioral and Social Sciences Representative)

Rebecca Lush (Humanities and Arts representative)

Laurette McGuire (At-Large Representative)

Carrick Williams (Chair, Behavioral and Social Sciences Representative)


Domenica Pearl (UAS Representative, Ex-Officio)

Martha Stoddard Holmes (Associate Dean, Ex-Officio)



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**Date:** September 29, 2017  
**TO:** Dr. Martha Stoddard-Holmes  
Associate Dean for Instruction and Academic Programs  
**FROM:** Scott Greenwood   
Co-Chair, Hiring and Academic Planning Committee (HAPC)  
**RE:** Geography A-Form

The members of HAPC thank their colleagues in the Liberal Studies Department for an extremely well-written and thorough proposal for a Bachelor of Arts in Geography. The proposal makes a very strong and clear case for the addition of a Geography degree to the College curriculum and the HAPC members offer their unanimous support for the proposed degree. The only area where the committee members took a dissenting position was under item "#4: Resources" regarding the anticipated need for a total of two additional faculty lines in physical or human geography and geographic techniques over a period of 5 years from the launch of the degree. As the degree is described in the A-form the members of HAPC believe that only one of these positions will be needed given that the Liberal Studies Department already has two faculty members specializing in Geography (Drs. Greig Guthey and Elizabeth Ridder), and the department is in the process of hiring another faculty member specializing in Environmental Geography (with an anticipated start in Fall 2018).

The HAPC members wish to once again thank the Liberal Studies Department for a very fine proposal and wish them the very best in creating a new and wonderful degree for the College's curriculum.