January 10-11, 2008

ITEM 138-1001-R0108 **Approval to establish a B.S. degree in Geosciences with suggested courses of study in 1) Earth History, Evolution, and Resources and 2) Water, Climate, and Environment**

THAT: In accordance with Montana University System Policy, the Board of Regents of Higher Education authorizes The University of Montana – Missoula to establish a B.S. Degree in Geoscience with suggested courses of study in 1) Earth History, Evolution, and Resources and 2) Water, Climate, and Environment

EXPLANATION: The Department of Geosciences at The University of Montana-Missoula currently offers Bachelor of Science degrees in Geology, Environmental Geology, and General Geology. These degree options no longer adequately reflect the breadth of faculty expertise within the department; nor do they adequately represent the subject material that is taught across the Geosciences undergraduate curriculum. In response to a major diversification in faculty expertise resulting from five new tenure-track hires within the last five years, the Department of Geosciences not only has changed its name from the Department of Geology, but it has expanded its research and curricular offerings to include programs in glaciology and snow science, fluvial geomorphology, geodynamics, crustal metamorphism, and landscape evolution. In the last five years, The Center for Riverine Science and Stream Renaturalization also was established within the Geosciences Department, reflecting the significant expansion in the department's research and teaching mission. As a result of its new curricular offerings and faculty-led research programs, the Department of Geosciences seeks permission to replace our current B.S. degrees with a B.S. degree in Interdisciplinary Geosciences, designed to be as flexible as possible, and a B.S. degree in Geosciences. The latter degree - which is the focus of this level II request - involves a more specific set of Geoscience and cognate science requirements and has two different courses of study: 1) Earth History, Evolution, and Resources; and 2) Water, Climate, and Environment.