

The University Senate of Michigan Technological University
Proposal 23-20
(Voting Units: Academic)

**Proposal to Change Concentration Title from “Law and Society” to
“Policy, Law and Society”**
Department of Social Sciences

Contact: Susanna Peters, Law and Society Program Director, speters@mtu.edu

1. General description and characteristics: This proposal is to change the title of the “Law and Society” concentration in the BS “Social Sciences” degree program to “Policy, Law, and Society.”

2. Related programs: The University of Michigan has a concentration in “Law, Justice & Social Change.” Michigan State University has a “Social Relations and Policy” degree.

3. Rationale: There are two key rationales for the title change. First, the new name more accurately captures the breadth of courses included in the curriculum by identifying policy as a core area of interest. Over the last few years the department has added policy- connected course work and capstone projects to the concentration and is seeing an increase in students interested and involved in the broader policy-related implications of what they are learning. Their projects have included research in areas ranging from environmental and energy policy, to work on municipal governance, health, youth and criminal justice. Thus, changing the title to “Policy, Law and Society” reflects the curriculum as it has evolved with emerging trends in the discipline.

Second, the proposed title is more appealing to students interested in a range of fields, not only in the field of law (which the current name “Law and Society” suggests), and better enables them to aspire to participate in graduate degree programs in a variety of disciplines. Indeed, the new name better reflects our own graduate departmental strengths and offerings. We currently offer MS and PhD degrees programs in environmental and energy policy and have an accelerated MS program in this area. The name change helps students who have an interest in environmental and energy policy to position themselves to take advantage of this opportunity. In addition, in our surveys and discussions with students, students overwhelmingly indicate that the new name is a positive change that reflects their own interest and experiences.

4. Accreditation requirements. No additional accreditation requirements

5. Planned implementation. Fall 2020

Approved by Dept. of Social Science faculty: October 23, 2019

Approved by CSA Dean: Dec. 7, 2019

Approved by Dean’s Council: Jan. 10, 2020

Approved by the University Senate:

Approved by Provost: