

Resolution 2020-2021F

Resolution to Approve New Degree, Bachelor of Science in Plant Science with New Majors: Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture; and to Discontinue Degrees: Bachelor of Science in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences and Bachelor of Science in Horticulture

Recommended by the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies

First Reading: January 25, 2021

Faculty Senate waived right to comment: January 29, 2021

Staff Senate:

Graduate Student Assembly:

Student Government Association:

Second Reading: February 8, 2021

Approved by University Council:

Approved by the President:

New Degree/Majors–

First Effective Date to Declare: Fall 2021

First Effective Date to Graduate: Spring 2025

Discontinued Degrees/Majors–

Last Effective Date to Graduate: Spring 2026

WHEREAS, the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences (SPES) was formed in 2018 from the merger of three departments: Crop and Soil Environmental Science (CSES), Horticulture (HORT), and Plant Pathology, Physiology, and Weed Science (PPWS) within the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences; and

WHEREAS, the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences (SPES) now has a broader and more integrated mission than previous departments; and

WHEREAS, the faculty determined that the merger of two degrees, the Bachelor of Science in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences and the Bachelor of Science in Horticulture, into the Bachelor of Science in Plant Science would best serve the students by providing a unified, integrated curriculum with a wider breadth of subject material and expertise that would make graduates of the program more competitive for jobs in the public and private sector; and

WHEREAS, the proposed Bachelor of Science in Plant Science will offer four majors: Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture that each provide a discrete and specialized knowledge of a disciplinary or interdisciplinary area to prepare students for graduate school or employment in governmental agencies, agribusiness firms, and biotechnology companies; and

WHEREAS, with strong forecasted employment in the Plant and Soil Science fields, we anticipate that the new degree and majors in the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences,

along with a new and focused recruitment and retention strategy, will significantly increase undergraduate student enrollment; and

WHEREAS, the School of Plant and Environmental Sciences is committed to providing coursework and experiential learning fitting the VT-shaped curriculum to produce graduates with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of highly qualified Plant and Soil Scientists to fill employment vacancies; and

WHEREAS, no new resources will be required to initiate the new Bachelor of Science in Plant Science with Majors in Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture; and

WHEREAS, letters of support have been received from all departments whose courses students in the Plant Science degree program would take; and

WHEREAS, the new Bachelor of Science in Plant Science with Majors in Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture would be an identifiable curriculum that clearly signals the expertise and career focus of Plant and Soil scientists; and

WHEREAS, the new Bachelor of Science in Plant Science with Majors in Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture are anticipated to attract 20-30 additional students per year interested in pursuing careers in the Plant and Soil Sciences to Virginia Tech; and

WHEREAS, with the approval of the Bachelor of Science in Plant Science degree, the Bachelor of Science in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences and Bachelor of Science in Horticulture will be discontinued.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Bachelor of Science in Plant Science with Majors in Crop and Soil Sciences, Landscape Design and Turfgrass Science, Plant Science, and Environmental Horticulture be approved effective Fall 2021 and the proposal forwarded to the President, the Board of Visitors, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) for approval, and to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) for notification.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Bachelor of Science in Crop and Soil Environmental Sciences and Bachelor of Science in Horticulture be discontinued effective Spring 2026, and the proposal forwarded to the President, the Board of Visitors, and the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia (SCHEV) for approval, and to the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) for notification.