

## VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

### A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

#### Establishment of a Graduate Certificate Program in Urban Ecology in the College of Forest Resources

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the College of Forest Resources to offer the Graduate Certificate in Urban Ecology, effective immediately. The Graduate Certificate program will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled by the Graduate School in the 2010-2011 academic year

#### BACKGROUND

In September 2005, the Graduate School Council received a proposal from the graduate faculty of the College of Forest Resources to offer a Graduate Certificate program in Urban Ecology. The Urban Ecology program was established in 2001 through funding from the National Science Foundation's Integrative Graduate Education and Research Traineeship (IGERT) program. Urban Ecology is the study of the social, economic, geophysical and political drivers of human settlement, quantifies the pattern of land cover change resulting from settlement, determines how changes in land cover and human activity affect human society and ecological processes, and investigates the policy process response to and modifications of these changes. Strategies to address major issues as the planning of urban growth and investment in public infrastructure are dependent upon the synthesis of extraordinarily complex and rapidly evolving knowledge in a broad range of disciplines. The Urban Ecology program will prepare students by providing them an understanding of theory and practice, conducting socially-relevant research focused on urban ecology, and learning to work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team—a requisite for work in the field. The Graduate Certificate program will require twenty-five credits. Fifteen students will be admitted annually to the program. Priority will be given to students supported by the NSF IGERT program, but students not currently in the program will be recruited as well.

The Graduate School Council considered the proposal on October 6, 2005 and raised several issues that the College of Forest Resources was requested to address in a revised proposal. In late October 2005, the College submitted a revised proposal which was considered by the Graduate School Council on December 1, 2005. The Council recommended that the proposal to establish a Graduate Certificate in Urban Ecology be approved and to be effective immediately.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the Dean of the College of Forest Resources, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will be informed of the Board of Regents' action on the Graduate Certificate in Urban Ecology.