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## Department of Interdisciplinary Studies Formed to Support Current Offerings

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## Department of Interdisciplinary Studies Formed to Support Current Offerings

### Quick Facts

- To be housed in Bancroft Hall, the new department will provide focus and structure for students and faculty who are pursuing interests that cross multiple disciplines.
- Marsha Bollinger, a geology professor and chair of the Faculty Conference, will chair the new Department of Interdisciplinary Studies.



*Marsha Bollinger*

ROCK HILL, S.C. - Winthrop's [College of Arts and Sciences](#) will create a new **Department of Interdisciplinary Studies** to provide an academic home for the college's existing interdisciplinary degree programs and minors and to foster development of additional programs.

To be housed in [Bancroft Hall](#), the new department will provide focus and structure for students and faculty who are pursuing interests that cross multiple disciplines and who have expressed the need for such a department. **Debra Boyd**, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, said the department "will enhance program flexibility and maximize use of existing resources and faculty expertise."

University officials said the new department will begin operations in August. "The College of Arts and Sciences is the logical location to house this effort that will organize existing programs in the College and develop new interdisciplinary efforts. Existing multi-disciplinary programs that are situated in other departments, such as integrated marketing communication, will remain in those departments for the time being," said **Tom Moore**, vice president for academic affairs.

Boyd will assemble a group of faculty to develop and evaluate proposals focusing on interdisciplinary and individualized programs of study.

**Marsha Bollinger**, a geology professor and chair of the Faculty Conference, will chair the new Department of Interdisciplinary Studies. She will be an excellent fit, Boyd said, because the nature of Bollinger's work has been interdisciplinary since she was an undergraduate student and because Bollinger has extensive experience in collaborative program development.

She also spent a sabbatical year in 2006-07 in Washington, D.C., serving as a Science and Technology Policy Fellow through the American Association for the Advancement of Science at the [Department of Energy](#).

Bollinger said she has always enjoyed working on projects and problems that involve many disciplines, whether the combination is biology and geology, earth science and education, or science and public policy. She has directed Winthrop's environmental program for a decade and served as the **Dalton Endowed Chair in Environmental Sciences and Studies**.

"This position has required me to attempt to understand many disciplines with which I had had little contact, for instance psychology and philosophy, and has continued to broaden my interests in and appreciation for addressing issues from multiple perspectives," Bollinger said.

The new department will not require new resources but will use existing resources in the college.

**Programs to be housed in the department include:** the B.A. in Environmental Studies, the B.S.in Environmental Sciences, the Master of Liberal Arts degree, and 10 interdisciplinary minors: African American Studies; Environmental Studies; Geography; Gerontology; International Studies; Medieval Studies; Peace, Justice, and Conflict Resolution Studies; Social Sciences; Sustainability Studies (pending approval); and Women's Studies.

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