Resolution 2011-12.B
Resolution for Renaming the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products to the
Department of Sustainable Biomaterials

Recommended by the Commission on Undergraduate Studies and Policies:

First Reading: September 26, 2011
Second Reading: October 10, 2011

Approved by University Council:
Approved by the President:
Approved by the Board of Visitors:

Effective: Spring Semester 2012

Whereas, the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products, established as a separate
department in the College of Natural Resources and Environment in 1979, has achieved national
prominence for the faculty work in teaching, discovery and engagement, and

Whereas, as faculty expertise has diversified during the life of the department to include
expertise in nanomaterials, drug delivery, adhesion science, advanced composites, non-timber
forest products, biofuels, aseptic packaging for food and pharmaceuticals, and biomaterials, and

Whereas, many peer programs across the country have evolved their department name changes
in the past decade to include such terms as Forest Biomaterials (NCSU), Renewable Materials
(Oregon State University), and the Center for Renewable Carbon (UT, Knoxville); and

Whereas, many institutes, centers and industries around the globe working with natural materials
and polymers for renewable product-use have adopted the term ‘biomaterials’ including: Kyoto
University’s Division of Forest and Biomaterials Science in Japan, the Max Plank Institutes’
Institute of Biomaterials in Germany, and the Comparative Biomaterials Laboratory in Canada; and

Whereas, the utilization of natural, renewable resources to produce useful bioproducts, materials
and bioenergy in a sustainable manner is an area of global importance, advancing Virginia Tech’s
strategic plan, and

Whereas, the inclusion of reference to biomaterials and sustainability in the department name
will bring broader recognition of its contributions and aspirations among prospective students,
research sponsors, and the general public, helping Virginia Tech demonstrate leadership in
academic programs focused on sustainability,

Therefore be it resolved, that the name of the Department of Wood Science and Forest Products
be changed to the Department of Sustainable Biomaterials.

RECOMMENDATION: That the above resolution renaming the Department of Wood Science
and Forest Products to the Department of Sustainable Biomaterials be forwarded to the President
and the Board of Visitors for approval and to the State Council of Higher Education in Virginia
(SCHEV) for notification.