

**Utah System of Higher Education
Changes to Existing Academic Program Proposal
Cover/Signature Page - Abbreviated Template**

Institution Submitting Request:

University of Utah

Program Title:

Current
Department of Biology

Proposed (if applicable)
School of Biological Sciences

Sponsoring School, College, or Division:

College of Science

Sponsoring Academic Department(s) or Unit(s):

College of Science

Classification of Instruction Program Code¹:

26.0101

6 - Digit CIP

Min/Max Credit Hours for Full Program Required:

/ Max Cr Hr Min Cr Hr / Max Cr Hr

Proposed Effective Term for Program Change²: Immediately following review
Institutional Board of Trustees' Approval Date:

Program Change Type (check all that apply):

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Name Change of Existing Program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Consolidation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Restructure
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Transfer to a new academic department or unit
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Suspension
<input type="checkbox"/>	Program Discontinuation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Reinstatement of Previously Suspended Program
<input type="checkbox"/>	Out-of-Service Area Delivery Program

Chief Academic Officer (or Designee) Signature:

I, the Chief Academic Officer or Designee, certify that all required institutional approvals have been obtained prior to submitting this request to the Office of the Commissioner.


Dr. Ruth V. Watkins, Senior Vice President

Date:

☐ I understand that checking this box constitutes my legal signature.

¹ For CIP code classifications, please see <http://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/cipcode/Default.aspx?y=55>.

² "Proposed Effective Term" refers to term when change to program is published. For Suspensions and Discontinuations, "effective term" refers to the term

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the program will suspend admissions.

Program Change Description - Abbreviated Template

Section I: The Request

University of Utah requests approval to change name from Department of Biology to School of Biological Sciences effective Fall 2017. This action was approved by the institutional Board of Trustees on _____.

Section II: Program Proposal

Program Change Description/Rationale

Present a brief program change description. Describe the institutional procedures used to arrive at a decision for the change. Briefly indicate why such a change should be initiated. State how the institution and the USHE benefit by the change.

The Faculty of the Department of Biology requests that the administrative structure for the Department of Biology be changed to a single School structure, to reflect the broad and interdisciplinary scope of this large unit. The Department of Biology currently has 49 tenure-track faculty, and is in the process of hiring at least two additional faculty this year. Biology is third most popular major on campus with ~1300 majors and premajors. The scientific interests in the department are exceptionally broad and include many different biological disciplines such as Biochemistry, Physiology, Ecology, Neuroscience, Cell Biology, Plant Biology, Ecosystems Studies Microbiology and Genetics. At other major research institutions, these disciplines are often represented by individual departments.

The change in our title to the School of Biological Sciences will enhance our ability to recruit talented faculty, post docs and graduate students. And it will put us on par with other major institutions, including our PAC-12 peers, where the discipline of Biology is often organized at the level of School.

The change in name from a Department to a School of Biological Sciences is consistent with other Schools on campus as well as other institutions. The Department of Biology offers a similar number of degrees when compared to other Schools on campus (e.g., Dance, Computing). Furthermore, with 49 faculty, the number of tenure-track faculty in the Department of Biology far exceeds the number in other Schools. In fact, the Department of Biology is the largest single department on the main campus.

The department also offers numerous degrees BA, BS and within the undergraduate degree, three emphases are possible: 1) Environmental & Organismal Biology, 2) Cell & Molecular Biology and 3) Biochemistry, and more are under consideration. We also offer two distinct emphases within the PhD. The department also offers the M.S. degree, an undergraduate Teaching degree. We have a proposal that has been approved by the Trustees to offer a BS/MS degree.

Combining the faculty, staff and students into a School as one single unit meets the definition of a School as found in University of Utah Policy 6.001 Section 3A, and will benefit the institution and the USHE by having a unit of Biology that is on par with our peer institutions and representative of the numerous areas of specializations within the School of Biological Sciences.

The faculty voted on January 11, 2017. 40 faculty members present (Department Chair included, did not vote, but endorsed the voting decision in a separate letter contained in this file), 39 faculty members voted: 37 in favor; 1 against; 1 abstain, to make the Department of Biology the School of Biological Sciences.

Consistency with Institutional Mission/Institutional Impact

Explain how the action is consistent with the institution's Regent-approved mission, roles, and goals. Institutional mission and roles may be found at higheredutah.org/policies/policyr312/. Indicate if the program will be delivered outside of designated service area; provide justification. Service areas are defined in higheredutah.org/policies/policyr315/. Will faculty or staff structures be impacted by the proposed change?

The change in name from a Department to a School is consistent with the institutional guidelines:

"A school is generally a large unit of instruction and should incorporate multiple areas of specialization that are reflected in the degrees offered. A school often includes interdisciplinary cooperative efforts. A school generally offers both undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Faculty are appointed to a school and may earn tenure in the school. The administrative head of a school is usually called a director, but this person's administrative level is equal to that of a department chair. The director reports to the dean of the college to which the school belongs."

Currently, the Department governance consists of two "Interest Groups", with faculty self-selecting into a group or groups, and electing two representatives per group to serve on the Executive Committee of the Department that advises the chair. In order to sustain and advance the biological sciences, an infrastructure that allows the disciplines to thrive while fairly distributing the administrative load is required. Indeed, several recent reports from the College of Science and Graduate School have recommended a change in departmental infrastructure. The department has recently approved a change in the infrastructure to replace the Interest Groups with formal Divisions that it will implement at the beginning of the 17/18 academic year. These divisions are not free-standing ones, they are meant to best support the faculty needs within specific biological disciplines and to act as integrated units. Hiring and the RPT process will remain inclusive activities that will take place at the level of the School, not within each division.

The new leadership structure will consist of Department Chair, Associate Chair and three Division Heads. The Associate Chair's responsibilities will be primarily related to Student Affairs including curriculum management, instructor oversight, undergraduate and graduate affairs, supervision of the advising team. The three new Divisions are 1) Cell & Molecular Biology; 2) Genetics & Evolution and 3) Ecology & Physiology. Each new Division will consist of faculty whose primary area of research aligns with a particular group. This new structure is consistent with that in other schools. The heads of each division will have responsibilities related to the members of their section such as assisting in the hiring process, mentoring junior faculty, reviewing faculty productivity, serve as the point of contact to those in their unit, participate in departmental leadership, provide input on RPT and recognize faculty, staff and students for excellence.

Suspension, Discontinuance, or Reinstatements ONLY

If suspending a program, indicate the statewide impact of this change. Explain the reason for suspension and the anticipated length of time for the suspension.

N/A

If discontinuing the program, indicate the statewide impact of this change. Explain how currently admitted students may complete the program within a reasonable period of time compatible with accreditation standards either through either (1) enrollment of students at other institutions of higher education; or (2) courses being taught for a maximum of two years after discontinuation of the program or until no admitted students remain who are entitled to complete the program, whichever comes first.

N/A

If reinstating a program, indicate the statewide impact of this change. Explain the reason for reestablishing the program and explain any changes being made to original program.

N/A

Finances

What costs or savings are anticipated from this change? If new funds are required to implement the change, indicate expected sources of funds. Describe any budgetary impact on other programs or units within the institution.

The new divisional structure requires compensation for the additional administrative tasks undertaken by the division heads and associate chair. The costs towards implementing these changes are as follows:

Division Head - \$10,000 (total \$30,000 for three Division Heads)

Associate Chair - \$20,000

Total: \$50,000

Biology requests that these costs will be evenly split between the College of Science and the SVPAA.

The change in name to a School will also allow the School of Biological Sciences to seek donors to name the School, and thus it may generate new revenue for the School and University.



October 10, 2017

Professor David Kieda, Dean
The Graduate School
University of Utah

Dear David:

I am writing in support of the academic program proposal from the Department of Biology to change its name from the "Department of Biology" to the "School of Biological Sciences." The proposed name change reflects the broad and interdisciplinary scope of this large unit, potentially enhancing its ability to recruit faculty and graduate students. The proposed name change is also consistent with other major institutions, including our PAC-12 peers, where the discipline of Biology is often organized at the level of School. I believe that the name change may have positive benefits, as outline in the proposal, in recognizing a more effective organizational unit structure.

The proposal from Biology has been shared and discussed with the Chairs of the three other departments in the College of Science (Chemistry, Math, Physics and Astronomy) and no significant concerns have been raised.

The name change does not indicate any initiative from the College of Science or the University to expand the Biology program beyond its anticipated current growth, or to provide new funding beyond that noted in the proposal. In terms of College governance and funding streams, the "School of Biological Sciences" (assuming the name change occurs) will be treated in exactly the same manner as the other three departments in the College of Science.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Henry S. White'.

Henry S. White
Dean, College of Science

Cc: R. Watkins, Senior Vice President of Academic Affairs
B. Bromley, Chair, Department of Physics and Astronomy
C. Burrows, Chair, Department of Chemistry
D. Dearing, Chair, Department of Biology
D. Khoshnevisan, Chair, Department of Mathematics



Memorandum

To: Henry White, Dean, College of Science
Ruth Watkins, Senior Vice President, Academic Affairs
From: Denise Dearing, Chair, Department of Biology
Date: March 15, 2017
Subject: Request to Change the Name of the Department of Biology

The Department of Biology requests to change its name to that of the School of Biological Sciences. The title of “School” more accurately reflects the broad and interdisciplinary scope of this large unit (49 tenure-line faculty). This proposal has been approved by both the Biology Executive Committee and the Faculty, where it received overwhelming support. I am writing to offer my strong support of the proposed name change.

The change in name from a Department of Biology to a School of Biological Sciences is consistent with other Schools on campus as well as other institutions. The Department of Biology offers a similar number of degrees when compared to other Schools on campus (e.g., Dance, Computing). Furthermore, with 49 faculty, the number of tenure-track faculty in the Department of Biology far exceeds the number in other existing Schools (e.g., School of Computing). In fact, the Department of Biology is the largest single department on the main campus. Finally, the name change will be more consistent with those at other major institutions, including our PAC-12 peers; Biology is often organized at the level of School. This change will allow us to better compete for the most talented graduate students, post docs and faculty.

If approved, the School of Biological Sciences will remain under the administration of the College of Science. There is no intent for the School to become an independent unit on par with a College. The internal administrative structure of the department currently consists of two sections. The faculty is presently engaged in long-term planning discussions to determine if this 2-division structure is the best design for the future. It is possible that more sections/divisions will be added. At the moment, there is no plan to create separate departments within the School as the department feels that one of its fundamental strengths is its unity.