

Board Meeting
January 18, 2018

ESTABLISH THE MASTER OF SCIENCE IN MOLECULAR AND CELLULAR
BIOLOGY, COLLEGE OF LIBERAL ARTS AND SCIENCES AND THE
GRADUATE COLLEGE, URBANA

Action: Establish the Master of Science in Molecular and Cellular Biology, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College

Funding: No New Funding Required

The Chancellor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, and Vice President, University of Illinois with the advice of the Urbana-Champaign Senate recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and the Graduate College to establish the Master of Science in Molecular and Cellular Biology.

The proposed non-thesis Master of Science in Molecular and Cellular Biology (MS in MCB) is directed toward students who seek advanced preparation for professional school or careers in industry, government, or academia, providing an option for advanced study in the field of molecular and cellular biology without requiring a research thesis component.

The departments in the School of Molecular and Cellular Biology at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign do not admit directly to their Master of Science programs; rather, the existing programs are used primarily for terminal degrees

awarded to doctoral students who have passed their qualifying examinations but have chosen to leave the program. The proposed MS in MCB will primarily serve two groups of individuals not currently served. The first group is students who take a gap year after completing the bachelor's degree prior to admission to professional or graduate school. This group often uses that year to complete volunteer and community outreach requirements for medical or other professional schools. The MS in MCB will provide an attractive option to this group of students, allowing them to deepen their science knowledge base, distinguishing them from others in the pool of applicants for their next program of study. The second group is students who plan to obtain employment in industry, government, or non-governmental organizations in sectors such as pharmaceutical and biotechnology, the chemical and food industry, and policy and regulatory agencies. A master's degree will make such opportunities in these sectors more favorable for graduates of the MS in MCB, providing them with greater laboratory skills and a deeper knowledge than their peers who have only a bachelor's degree.

The Board action recommended in this item complies in all material respects with applicable State and federal laws, University of Illinois *Statutes*, *The General Rules Concerning University Organization and Procedure*, and Board of Trustees policies and directives.

The Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs concurs with this recommendation. The University Senates Conference has indicated that no further Senate jurisdiction is involved.

The President of the University recommends approval. This action is subject to further review and approval by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.