

Board Meeting
April 11, 2006

ESTABLISH CENTER FOR STRUCTURAL BIOLOGY,
OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR RESEARCH, CHICAGO

Action: Approve the Establishment of the Center for Structural Biology, Office of the Vice Chancellor for Research, Chicago

Funding: No Funding Required

The Chancellor at Chicago with the advice of the Chicago Senate, the Graduate College, and the Vice Chancellor for Research, recommends the establishment of a new research unit, the Center for Structural Biology.

“Structural Biology” provides insights into how proteins, nucleic acids, and carbohydrates function and interact with one another. Development of drugs to treat diseases relies on knowledge of the structure of the protein targets, derived by structural biology methods.

The Center for Structural Biology was approved by the Illinois Board of Higher Education on a temporary basis in 2000, and is now being proposed for permanent approval. During the temporary period, the center has attracted approximately \$10.4 million of external funding for equipment and infrastructure.

The mission of the Center is to provide training for undergraduate, graduate, and postdoctoral students in structural biology approaches and equip them for careers in the biomedical field and in biotechnology. It also provides a synergistic

environment for research excellence by bringing together a core group of researchers whose major research projects employ structural biology approaches as a principal tool. It allows for coordination of the acquisition of major research equipment needed for structural biology studies. Finally, it contributes to sustaining the Illinois pharmaceutical and agricultural sectors, and promotes the health and welfare of the people of Illinois through discoveries about the bases of human diseases, including those caused by bacterial and viral infections.

The Center for Structural Biology is led by a director and consists of technical staff, administrative staff, and affiliated faculty members. The director reports to the Vice Chancellor for Research at Chicago. An Internal Advisory Committee and an External Advisory Committee have been established to review and evaluate the work of the Center.

The Vice Chancellor for Research has committed \$170,000 per year for the support of the Center, but most funding for Center-related resources has come from extramural grant funding.

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 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, pending further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.