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Board Meeting

July 17, 2025

ESTABLISH THE DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY IN ENGINEERING TECHNOLOGY AND MANAGEMENT FOR AGRICULTURAL SYSTEMS, COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES AND THE GRADUATE COLLEGE, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering Technology and Management for Agricultural Systems, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and the Graduate College

**Funding:** No new funding required

The chancellor, University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, and vice president, University of Illinois System, with the advice of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Senate, recommends approval of a proposal from the College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences and the Graduate College to establish the Doctor of Philosophy in Engineering Technology and Management for Agricultural Systems (PhD in ETMAS).

The proposed PhD in ETMAS addresses the growing demand for advanced expertise in emerging agricultural technologies such as robotics, automation, artificial intelligence, industrial biotechnology, and data analytics. The program will prepare future faculty, researchers, and technology service providers for disciplines at the intersection of technology and food and agricultural systems. Through interdisciplinary education and research experience in engineering technology for food and agricultural systems, the

program will help graduates develop holistic problem-solving skills for food and agricultural systems and strategies for managing technology implementation in agriculture.

This thesis-based program emphasizes generating and publishing new knowledge in engineering technology management for agricultural systems. Graduates will be prepared for academic positions, research roles in industry and government, leadership positions in the food and agricultural industry, and public service and research in federal, state, nonprofit, and private organizations. Graduates will have a competitive edge in roles that bridge technology and agriculture across academia, industry, and the public sector.

The PhD in ETMAS will be comprised of existing courses taught by faculty already on campus. With projected enrollment of 10 to 20 students at full implementation, enrollments in these courses will increase only slightly. Impact on faculty, staff, and facility resources is expected to be small and manageable. The majority of students in the proposed program will be supported on faculty research grants that include tuition coverage, with some graduate teaching assistant positions offered primarily for teaching expertise as part of professional development and helping with the college’s teaching mission.

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 of Illinois System recommends approval. This action is subject to further review by the Illinois Board of Higher Education.