

Board Meeting  
March 12, 2020

ESTABLISH THE BACHELOR OF SCIENCE IN PLANT BIOTECHNOLOGY,  
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURAL, CONSUMER AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
SCIENCES, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Bachelor of Science in Plant Biotechnology, College of Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences

**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 Agricultural, Consumer and Environmental Sciences to establish the Bachelor of Science in Plant Biotechnology.

The proposed Bachelor of Science in Plant Biotechnology (B.S. in Plant Biotech) has been a successful concentration within the Bachelor of Science in Crop Sciences degree program for more than 20 years. In recent years, this concentration has the largest number of students enrolled compared to other available concentrations within the Crop Sciences degree. Elevating the concentration to a degree will increase visibility. In addition, the current concentration has grown beyond its original intent, becoming distinct from the other concentrations within Crop Sciences. Many of the core requirements are not part of the other concentrations. Thus, elevation of the concentration to the proposed B.S. in Plant Biotech degree would enhance the program's

identity, provide greater prominence to this area of diverse expertise, and better reflect the distinctness of this plan of study. Many students are interested in learning about and acquiring skills in innovative biotechnology-based solutions for addressing urgent global challenges to agriculture and food security. The B.S. in Plant Biotech incorporates coursework in crop sciences, molecular biology, genetics and genomics, biochemistry, plant protection, and data analysis to provide a comprehensive education in the field of technology. This interdisciplinary curriculum prepares students for careers in a variety of fields across the plant biotechnology sector. As the quantity and diversity of biotech crops grown worldwide continues to increase, graduates of the B.S. in Plant Biotech will help meet the growing demand for students trained in plant biotechnology.

Current facilities, including library resources, are adequate to support the program. Capacity exists within departmental courses that will serve as core courses for the major. The Plant Biotechnology and Molecular Biology concentration within the Bachelor of Science in Crop Sciences will be phased out as students currently enrolled in the program graduate or transfer to the new degree program. The concentration would be eliminated only when there are no longer any enrolled students.

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.