Approved by the Board of Trustees

March 20, 2025

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Board Meeting

March 20, 2025

ESTABLISH THE DEPARTMENT OF SURGERY AND DIGESTIVE HEALTH, CARLE ILLINOIS COLLEGE OF MEDICINE, URBANA

**Action:** Establish the Department of Surgery and Digestive Health, Carle Illinois College of Medicine

**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 Carle Illinois College of Medicine to establish the Department of Surgery and Digestive Health.

Currently, the Carle Illinois College of Medicine (CIMED) has two departments: the Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences and the Department of Clinical Sciences. While the Department of Biomedical and Translational Sciences has approximately 187 faculty, the Department of Clinical Sciences houses approximately 600 faculty members, most of whom have a zero percent appointment yet play a vital role in the curriculum’s clinical education delivery. The Department of Clinical Sciences faculty represent a diverse array of specialties within a single department. The current departmental structure has posed administrative challenges and is atypical compared to other medical schools, whose departments are specialty specific.

This proposal is one of four action items to reorganize the Department of Clinical Sciences to a more specialty-specific model. This restructuring will allow CIMED to better focus on specific areas while maintaining and enhancing interdisciplinary collaboration. With clear departmental identities, faculty will have a stronger sense of ownership in their field and connection to the college, making them more effective collaborators when working across specialties. The proposed restructure mirrors organizational models of leading medical schools and healthcare systems, emphasizing specialization and interdisciplinary collaboration. This strategic transformation is expected to enhance faculty recruitment efforts, appealing to faculty seeking opportunities in specific medical areas. Current CIMED faculty are strongly supportive of the proposed reorganization, with over 93 percent in favor in an all-faculty vote taken in 2024.

The Department of Surgery and Digestive Health will be responsible for academic, research, and clinical aspects pertaining to surgical and digestive health. It will be comprised of surgery and digestive health faculty that are currently under the umbrella of CIMED’s Department of Clinical Sciences. It will be governed according to bylaws established by the department’s faculty that align with the college’s bylaws and University of Illinois *Statutes*. The department head will be appointed to a five-year term, renewable upon appropriate review as outlined by the Board of Trustees on the recommendation of the chancellor/vice president and the president after consultation with the CIMED dean and members of departmental faculty. Other than shifting their affiliation to the Department of Surgery and Digestive Health, there is no impact on faculty, staff, teaching loads, or facilities, and no additional funding is required.

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.