

ILLINOIS STATE
UNIVERSITY



Graduate School

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TO: Susan Kalter, Chairperson, Academic Senate

FROM: Denise Wilson, Chair, Graduate Curriculum Committee

RE: Executive Summary – Proposal for the New Biological Sciences Ph.D. Sequence in Neuroscience and Physiology

The Graduate Curriculum Committee approved and is forwarding for Academic Senate review the attached proposal to add a new Ph.D. Sequence in Neuroscience and Physiology.

The School of Biological Sciences provided the following rationale for adding this new sequence:

- The primary motivation for proposing a Ph.D. sequence in Neuroscience and Physiology is that doctoral students in the School of Biological Sciences and studying in these two fields have striking unmet curricular needs. Currently, there are only two Ph.D. Sequences in the School, Behavior, Ecology, Evolution, and Systematics (BEES) and Molecular and Cellular Biology (MCB). While attractive for doctoral students wishing to pursue graduate study in the fields served by these sequence, neither offers the canonical conceptual grounding required for doctoral students wishing to pursue graduate study in neuroscience and behavior. Simply put, neuroscience and behavior are profoundly different areas than those served by Sequences in BEES and MCB, and a separate and dedicated Sequence in Neuroscience and Behavior is necessary to best meet the teaching needs of doctoral students interesting in studying neuroscience and physiology.
- Secondary motivations for proposing a Ph.D. sequence in Neuroscience and Behavior are instilling a sense of belonging to a cohort among doctoral students interesting in studying neuroscience and behavior and a device to enhance doctoral student recruitment.

The proposed Ph.D. Sequence in Neuroscience and Behavior will not affect other existing campus programs. The School anticipates that the creation of the Sequence will help to attract a modest number (1-2 per year) of high quality Ph.D. students to the School of Biological Sciences' graduate program. The program has the capacity to accept these additional students.

The Ph.D. Sequence in Neuroscience and Physiology will require the addition of two new courses at the 400 level, BSC 430 Neuroscience (3 hours) and BSC 435 Mammalian Physiology (3 hours). These two courses will form the core of the proposed sequence along with Biostatistics (BSC 490 and 420.27).

The Graduate Curriculum Committee supports the proposal to add this new sequence.

Attachments