

Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

MEMO

To: The UVM Faculty Senate
From: Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Colby Kervick, Co-Chair
Date: September 2, 2021
Re: Approval of a proposal from the Graduate College and Larner College of Medicine for a no contest termination of the Ph.D. in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics

On September 2, 2021, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a proposal from the Graduate College and the Larner College of Medicine (LCOM) for a “no-contest” termination of the Ph.D. program in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. The Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Ph.D. program stopped accepting new students in 2013. At that time the Graduate College and the campus-wide interdisciplinary Cell and Molecular Biology program partnered with the College of Medicine, the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics and other departments in the College of Medicine to support an expanded campus-wide interdisciplinary Ph.D. program in Cellular, Molecular, and Biomedical Sciences (CMB). Given the sustained success of the CMB program, the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics has no plans to actively recruit into their departmental Ph.D. program again.

This proposal was supported by Dr. Cynthia Forehand and the graduate college executive committee. A vote of the departmental faculty for terminating the Ph.D. program in Microbiology & Molecular Genetics was unanimous. A total of 18 faculty voted, 18 in favor of termination and none opposed. Termination of the Ph.D. program in Microbiology & Molecular Genetics, is also supported by the Larner College of Medicine Graduate Education Committee, Chaired by Dr. Christopher L. Berger, Associate Dean for Undergraduate & Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Training, and senior leadership, including Dean Richard L. Page and Senior Associate Dean for Research Gordon L. Jensen.

The last Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Ph.D. student graduated in May, 2018. Thus, there are no current students who need to be accommodated during the termination process. The Department notes that terminating the Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Ph.D. will allow them to continue to commit resources, including faculty mentoring and teaching efforts to help train and support Ph.D. students, to the CMB program. In addition, resources in the Graduate College that fund 10 Graduate Teaching Assistant stipends in support of undergraduate teaching in Microbiology and Molecular Genetics are currently allocated to support doctoral students in the CMB program. If approved by the Faculty Senate and Board of Trustees, the no contest termination should go into effect during the 2022-23 catalog year.