

## Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate

### MEMO

**To:** The UVM Faculty Senate  
**From:** Curricular Affairs Committee of the Faculty Senate, Laura Almstead, Chair  
**Date:** January 9, 2020  
**Re:** Approval of a request by the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences in conjunction with the Graduate College to change the name of the PhD in Animal, Nutrition, and Food Sciences to the PhD in Animal Biosciences

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On January 9, 2020, the Curricular Affairs Committee approved the actions recommended in the following memo.

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The Curricular Affairs Committee approved a request from the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences (CALs) in conjunction with the Graduate College to change the name of the PhD in Animal, Nutrition, and Food Sciences (ANFS) to the PhD in Animal Biosciences with a new program code of ABIO. This name change is accompanied by a substantial change proposal to remove the Nutrition and Food Sciences tracks from the existing ANFS PhD, and establish the existing Animal Science track requirements as the curriculum for the Animal Biosciences PhD. The curriculum and name change proposals received support from the CALs curriculum committee and the Graduate Executive Council as well as the Interim Dean of CALs and former Chair of the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences, Jean Harvey, and the Graduate College Dean, Cynthia Forehand. *[Note that the name change requires a Faculty Senate vote; the associated curricular changes are a report out item for the Faculty Senate.]*

The current ANFS PhD curriculum includes common core of courses and three tracks students select from for specialized study: nutrition, food sciences, or animal science. Following the inauguration of the PhD in Food Systems in 2015, the Department of Nutrition and Food Sciences decided to recruit doctoral students through that program and discontinue doctoral recruitment through the ANFS PhD. For the past two years, the ANFS PhD catalogue page has included a note indicating that only the Animal Sciences track is accepting students. After reviewing the ANFS PhD Animal Sciences track, faculty involved in the program decided that the existing requirements, admission requirements, and advising structure are appropriate to meet their goals for graduate students. A plan for assessing the program was included in the proposal. The planned curricular changes and new name should have little to no impact on the current Food Systems PhD program.

Demand for a PhD program in Animal Biosciences has remained steady even as students interested in the nutrition and food sciences aspects of the ANFS PhD were shifted to the Food Systems PhD. Currently, there are six PhD students in the Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences, and ten students have completed the Animal Science track of the ANFS PhD in the past five years. The department indicates that faculty regularly receive inquiries from potential graduate students interested in a PhD program in animal science (example emails were provided in the proposal).

At present, the scholarly expertise of the Animal and Veterinary Sciences graduate faculty extends beyond the traditional animal agriculture-based disciplines, and includes ongoing collaborations with faculty in the Larner College of Medicine, and funding support in which the focus includes human disease. The department feels that the proposed new name for the program captures the interdisciplinary quality of the program, and hopes that the changes will allow for additional collaborations with other graduate programs (e.g. the Cellular, Molecular and Biomedical Sciences doctoral program).

The Department of Animal and Veterinary Sciences will continue to provide support for up to nine teaching/research assistantships distributed between Master's and doctoral students, with priority given to PhD candidates. Costs associated with the proposed curriculum and name changes (e.g. website updates; publication of a brochure) will be minimal and covered by the department.