

MEMORANDUM

TO: Graduate Studies Committee
FROM: Blaine Golden, Assistant Registrar
DATE: September 27th, 2021
SUBJECT: Rename Veterinary Sciences – PhD and MS

Please find attached a proposal from the College of Veterinary Medicine to rename the PhD and MS in Veterinary Sciences to Biomedical Sciences. This is considered a “streamlined” action and does not require review by the Catalog Sub Committee.

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Elizabeth Chilton, Provost and Executive Vice President 

SUBJECT: Rename Veterinary Sciences – PhD and MS

DATE: September 1, 2021

The attached proposal from the College of Veterinary Medicine to rename the PhD and MS in Veterinary Sciences to Biomedical Sciences has been reviewed by the Provost's Office. We have no concerns about the proposal. The college conferred with the deans of the Elson S. Floyd College of Medicine and the College of Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences. Neither college expressed concern about potential confusion of this degree with other graduate degrees.

We judge the proposal ready for the Senate review process.

PROPOSAL TO RENAME A DEGREE PROGRAM

DEANS: Send this completed proposal in Word version electronically to the Office of the Provost: provost.deg.changes@wsu.edu

Current Degree Title:	Veterinary Sciences PhD & MS
Proposed Degree Title:	Biomedical Sciences PhD & MS
Academic Program:	Veterinary Sciences
Academic Plan:	Multiple: Combined Anatomic Pathology Residency; Combined Clinical Microbiology Residency; Immunology and Infectious Diseases; Integrative Physiology and Neuroscience; Clinical and Translational Sciences
Number of Credits:	
Department(s) or Program(s):	Veterinary Clinical Sciences (VCS), Veterinary Microbiology and Pathology (VMP), Paul G. Allen School for Global Animal Health (SGAH) and Integrative Physiology and Neuroscience (IPN)
College(s):	College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM)
Campus(es)	Pullman

Contact Name:	Tom Kawula	Email Address:	Tom.Kawula@wsu.edu
Contact Phone:	509 335-1301	*Proposed start date:	Fall 2022

Rationale for proposed name change:

The rationale for the name change is four-fold. First the name change will more accurately reflect the current breadth and depth of faculty research and coursework available. Our research programs use molecular, cellular and systems levels approaches to biomedical issues applicable to both animal and human medicine. The current degree title (Veterinary Sciences) and program name (Veterinary Sciences) contains the term 'veterinary' which implies a research focus only on animals, and thus is more narrow than the current focus and interest of many faculty in the program. This implied narrow focus makes the program/plans unattractive to some of the most highly competitive graduate applicants, who are specifically interested in the broad biomedical applications and not a specific veterinary application. This consideration is especially important for the plans in Immunology and Infectious Diseases and Integrative Physiology and Neuroscience. As a result of this name change we expect to recruit many higher quality applicants into these plans than we currently do. Note that this does not prevent students attracted to the purely veterinary focus of some faculty, because this focus is also encompassed by the term 'biomedical'.

Second, the proposed name of Biomedical Sciences fosters the continued development of faculty research relationships between the Pullman and Spokane campus (between CVM and EFCOM). By replacing the term veterinary with biomedical, faculty in the EFCOM would be invited to become members of plans appropriate to their research because the new program name would encompass the broader context of their non-veterinary biomedical research. They would then be in a position to recruit students through these plans. When a student is interested in working with a Spokane-based faculty their research work will occur on the Spokane campus, but the degree remains a Pullman-based degree (with faculty from both Pullman and Spokane as members). Thus, there are no changes in degree requirements nor is the program in Spokane a new program, rather it is just an extension of the Pullman-based program. We have already pioneered this type of relationship with faculty in the EFCOM through the Neuroscience Graduate Program, so we know it can be successful. Thus this

name change will foster a closer working relationship between faculty in Pullman and Spokane, especially in topics beyond neuroscience.

Third, as the EFCOM builds out, it will eventually become a significant location for graduate education. If EFCOM builds graduate programs independent of CVM, it will set-up a situation in which similar programs in Spokane and Pullman are in competition for students. Further, it will make the application process confusing because the similar focused programs will be at WSU, and yet they would be separate programs. To avoid this potential future competition between similar programs at the same institution located at two different campuses, we will work through a common program adapted to both campuses. Thus we will build research enterprises that are cooperative and supportive, not competitive and duplicative.

Fourth, current faculty in EFCOM have limited opportunities to recruit graduate students because of the newness of their college. By broadening the appeal of the current programs, it will help establish a route to recruit graduate students to work with research intensive faculty as they are recruited to the EFCOM much more quickly than if EFCOM had to generate both the critical mass of faculty and a new curriculum before they can recruit students.

Finally, as the faculty at EFCOM expand and develop new foci, they will still be free to develop independent plans or programs. However, by establishing a culture of cooperation rather than competition, these future developments can be done in a manner that is productive and supportive for all biomedical programs at WSU regardless of location.

Implications for currently enrolled students:

Currently enrolled students will have the choice of keeping the degree name Veterinary Sciences or changing it to Biomedical Sciences. Because there are no changes in curricular requirements, there is no need to propose teaching out an expired curriculum for existing students. Any new students would be required to accept a degree in Biomedical Sciences.

This change would not be detriment to the students already enrolled. They would still be getting a degree with biomedical sciences in the title, which is a term that encompasses medical research in both a veterinary and human context. Current and future students could still compete for jobs that are primarily veterinary in focus, but they would also be competitive for jobs in which a specific veterinary focus is not paramount. This will expand their opportunities and the new degree title will be a more accurate reflection of the nature of their expertise. In fact, the one question we received from current students when the topic of the name change was raised was whether they would be allowed to use the new name because it was also their preferred name.

Describe the process by which current faculty and staff were consulted about this change and summarize the response:

The idea of developing more cooperative biomedical graduate programs has been underway for over four years. When needed, underlying plans have adjusted their curriculum to align with many of the common elements of the combined program structure. Those that require Faculty Senate Approval (e.g., specific curricular changes) have been processed through the normal channels. However, many additional elements that do not require faculty senate approval, such as common professional development opportunities, common orientation, and a coordinated recruitment process have already been implemented. Thus current faculty and students have been well aware of these changes.

Leadership of the individual plans sponsored by Veterinary Sciences are fully supportive (we have an Executive Committee that includes the leaders from all the underlying plans), and these leaders have been in communication with their faculty and students. The program name from Veterinary Sciences to Biomedical Sciences will not change program operation nor discourage current or future students, and thus is relatively non-controversial.

Finally, in anticipation of the official submission for the name change all units that participate have discussed this change at recent faculty meetings and have given approval to move forward.

Describe the process by which other degree programs, departments, colleges or campuses were consulted about this change and summarize the response:

The primary unit that would be interested in this name change is the EFCOM. This name change has been vetted in many meetings with leadership at the EFCOM, and they are fully supportive of the concept of an integrated biomedical graduate program (see attached support from Dean Tomkowiak). Faculty in their unit will be invited to become graduate faculty the appropriate plans.

We have also been in contact with the Dean Pollack in the College of Pharmacy who has expressed no opposition to this change.

A final unit consulted in this process has been the biomedical oriented faculty on the Vancouver campus. As most of these individuals are already associated with CVM graduate programs (Neuroscience and Molecular Biosciences) they have been aware of the development of a more cooperative program. They have not raised any concerns regarding any of these name changes.

Describe the process by which other stake holders (e.g., advisory or alumni groups) were consulted about this change and summarize the response:

Unlike professional programs, the graduate programs in the CVM do not have external advisory groups or alumni associations. We have not been aggressive at seeking such input as the name change to the broader term Biomedical Sciences from the more restrictive Veterinary Sciences would not be seen as impactful on their current or future use of their degrees. Many of these individuals see their degree defined more by the individual plan names (such as Immunology and Infectious Diseases) than the program name.

SIGNATURES: The names typed below certify that the relevant academic and campus officials have reviewed and approved this proposal:

Chair Signature:	Tom Kawula	Date:	July 10, 2021
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Dean Signature:	Dori Borjesson	Date:	August 10, 2021
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VP Global Campus		Date:	
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→ Submit to the Provost's Office at provost.deg.changes@wsu.edu

Everett Chancellor		Date:	
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Spokane Chancellor		Date:	
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Tri-Cities VCAA		Date:	
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Vancouver VCAA		Date:	
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Provost Office:		Date:	
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Comments:

For Registrar's Office Use Only:			
Current CIP Code:		New CIP Code:	
		Date:	

Send completed form in Word version to: provost.deg.changes@wsu.edu