



# University of Toronto

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

TO: Committee on Academic Policy and Programs

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DATE: August 21, 2007

AGENDA ITEM: 6

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:** School of Graduate Studies / Faculty of Arts and Science:  
Proposal for a Master of Science (M.Sc.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) program in Cell and Systems Biology

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The Committee has authority to recommend to Academic Board for approval changes which establish a new degree program.

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

The Department of Cell and Systems Biology (CSB) was approved by Governing Council on February 9, 2006 effective as of July 1, 2006<sup>1</sup>.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

The proposed programs in CSB arise from the recent re-organization of biological sciences in the Faculty of Arts and Science that resulted in the formation of the Department of Cell and Systems Biology (CSB) and the Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology (EEB). At the time of the reorganization, it was indicated that the new graduate departments would work towards the development of new programs.

With the founding of the new graduate department of CSB, faculty and students in the graduate department initiated a process to develop a proposal for the new CSB graduate programs. The proposed graduate programs have been tailored to align with the research interests of CSB faculty members and current graduate students.

There has been extensive consultation within the Department as well as with cognate units in the faculty and with other divisions in the University. Consultation included town hall meetings with CSB graduate students, an online survey of graduate students, and discussions with the CSB Graduate Studies Committee. Cognate units consulted included Ecology and Evolutionary Biology, Molecular & Medical Genetics, Medical Biophysics, Biochemistry, and Computer Science. There were also discussions with the Dean of Forestry, and the Chair of Chemical Engineering, as well as the program directors for the collaborative graduate programs in Proteomics and Bioinformatics, and Developmental Biology.

The MSc and PhD proposals were accepted following unanimous department faculty approval and majority graduate student approval. The proposals were approved by the Tri-Campus Graduate Curriculum Committee of the Faculty of Arts and Science (April 30, 2007) and by the Graduate Education Council (May 22, 2007).

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<sup>1</sup> Item 5f: <http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Boards+and+Committees/Governing+Council/2005-2006+Academic+Year/a0209.pdf>

The two existing graduate programs (Plant & Microbial Biology, and Zoology) will continue to be jointly administered by the CSB and EEB departments; and the programs will continue until there are no more students registered in each program.

**FINANCIAL AND/OR PLANNING IMPLICATIONS:**

Establishment of the new graduate programs for CSB should have no new resource demands beyond those of the previous departments, and the CSB graduate program will have no new staffing beyond that agreed in the human resources plan for CSB, which was instituted on July 1, 2006. This proposal will be presented to the Planning and Budget Committee on September 18, 2007.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs recommends to the Academic Board:

THAT the proposal to establish the Master of Science (M.Sc.) and Doctoral (Ph.D.) programs in Cell and Systems Biology within the Faculty of Arts and Science be approved, effective September, 2008.