

ACADEMIC COUNCIL REPORT

ACTION REQUESTED:

Recommendation
Decision
Discussion/Direction
Information

DATE:

FROM: Undergraduate Studies Committee

SUBJECT: Major Program Modification – Bachelor of Science in Biological Science – Marine Biology Specialization

COMMITTEE MANDATE:

In accordance with the Undergraduate Studies Committee (USC) Terms of Reference, USC has the responsibility “to examine proposals for new undergraduate degree programs and major changes to existing programs and to recommend their approval, as appropriate, to the Academic Council”.

MOTION FOR CONSIDERATION:

That, pursuant to the recommendation of the Undergraduate Studies Committee, Academic Council hereby approves the Major Program Modification to the Bachelor of Science in Biological Science programs, as presented.

BACKGROUND/CONTEXT & RATIONALE:

The Faculty is proposing the addition of a specialization in Marine Biology to the BSc (Hon) Biological Science program, including the creation of four new specialized BIOL courses. The new courses associated with the specialization will be provided by a partner organization during a semester abroad, the Bermuda Institute of Ocean Sciences (BIOS). Students will learn about marine ecosystems and organisms, as well have experiential learning opportunities in the marine environment. This specialization will be available for the Bachelor of Science, Bachelor of Science and Management, and Bachelor of Science Co-op Major in Biological Science.

BIOS is a world-renowned institute with financial support from government, corporate, and private investors. Located in Bermuda, BIOS is near to the Sargasso Sea, one of the world's most diverse open-ocean ecosystems, and also home to some of the world's most northern coral reefs, allowing researchers from around the globe an opportunity to study corals. Their facilities and equipment include the research vessel (R/V) “Atlantic Explorer”, a U.S. flagged UNOLS ocean class vessel, operated by BIOS, that provides faculty and staff - as well as visiting scientists and students - with well-equipped floating labs to support numerous scientific endeavors in the ocean environment.

RESOURCES REQUIRED:

No new faculty resources will be necessary – there are no gaps in expertise. Administrative support coordination for travel arrangements, insurance, student visas, and additional documentation required will be provided between the Faculty of Science and the Office of the Registrar. This would require modest modifications to staff duties but no additional resources. Coordination has already begun with other Ontario Tech offices to provide legal, insurance, and risk management support. Staff will also be required to assess students' progression requirements, and requirements (e.g. swimming certification) for semester abroad. There is no anticipated need for additional physical resources.

TRANSITION PLAN:

- Fall 2022 for initial program calendar inclusion and student intake
- Will have coordinator duties in place by Fall 2023 (at the latest) to prepare first cohort for their semester abroad at BIOS
- Winter 2025 for first semester abroad at BIOS for first set of students
- We intend to develop a transition plan for any students that want to transfer into the Marine Biology Specialization
- Yearly continuation thereafter

CONSULTATION AND APPROVAL:

USC: 15 June 2021

Faculty Council: June 1st, 2021

Curriculum Committee: May 28th, 2021

The development of the program has been done in consultation with the Office of the Registrar, the Office of the University Secretary and General Council, and CIQE. Fees (e.g., tuition, accommodation, meals) for the semester at BIOS will be negotiated between the Registrar's Office and Bermuda Institute for Ocean Sciences. Dean Crawford met with Jacquelyn Dupuis, Manager, Risk Management, November 13, 2020 to discuss risk management issues. A risk register has been established to identify and manage any perceived risks and their associated mitigation.

NEXT STEPS:

- Pending the approval of Academic Council, this change will be included in the 2022-2023 Academic Calendar

SUPPORTING REFERENCE MATERIALS:

- [Major Program Modification Proposal – Marine Biology Specialization](#)
- New Courses
 - [BIOL 3810U](#), [BIOL 3820U](#), [BIOL 3830U](#), [BIOL 3840U](#)