



Department of Biological Sciences

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To: Council on Graduate Studies

From Gary Bulla, Chair, Biological Sciences

Request:

The Department of Biological Sciences requests approval to offer a fully online option for the MS in Biological Sciences degree.

Rationale:

The Department of Biological Sciences currently offers both research-based and non-research based MS programs. Students in the research option typically are planning to continue into a PhD program or research-active career such as biomedical research. Students preferring the non-research based option typically are increasing their credentials as they seek admission to health profession schools or prior to entering the workforce.

A fully online delivery option has the potential to impact a large number of students who are unable to participate in our on-campus MS programs, including high school instructors looking to improve their credentials. We intend to offer a variety of courses that include both synchronous and asynchronous courses. The department has recently submitted a list of non-laboratory based courses in Biological Sciences which are amenable to online course delivery and could be taken to complete an MS degree while off-campus.