


August 19, 2022

MEMORANDUM**TO:** M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President**FROM:** Timothy P. Scott, Ph.D. 
Working Group Chair**SUBJECT:** Implementation Memo – Working Group 13 – Life Sciences Meta-Major**Recommendation to be Implemented:** Move the undergraduate Biomedical Sciences Program (BIMS) to the new College of Arts and Sciences. Create a new life science meta-major**Strategic Considerations:** The working group identified five subgroups responsible for addressing the areas of need to implement this recommendation. These subgroups looked at the leadership/administrative structure, the academic advising structure, the First-Year Life Science (FYLS) curriculum, a group to examine the transition of BIMS to the College of Arts & Sciences, and a group aimed at identifying partner programs. The large group met bimonthly and served as an opportunity for subgroups to update everyone on progress and discuss larger issues. The subgroups met weekly to dive into the details and hard work of this transition.

The working group identified a peer program at North Carolina State University, *The Life Sciences First-Year*, to examine it as a potential benchmark. The Director for this program visited with the group during one of the meetings. Additionally, the subgroups engaged surveys and townhall meetings with stakeholders to gather feedback and perspective.

Logistical Issues Addressed: The working group developed a flexible first-year curriculum that is shared by life sciences degree programs and included on page 19 of their attached final report, *Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies*. BIMS will be the founding program for the FYLS experience. Other life sciences degree programs will be encouraged to opt-into the FYLS program. The working group received commitments or likely agreements from Departments of Biology, Biochemistry and Biophysics, Ecology and Conservation Biology, Entomology, Nutrition, Plant Pathology and Microbiology, and Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, as well as some programs offered at TAMU Galveston. Others, such as Animal Science, Poultry Science, and Pharmacy have indicated an interest and may opt-in later.**Major Challenges Encountered and Resolutions:** In accomplishing this priority, the working group identified 10 recommendations to support this effort and the university in its pursuit of academic excellence in First-Year Life Sciences education. The first recommendation involved formalizing the flexible first year curriculum developed in the preceding section. The remaining 9 recommendations are captured below.

1. Entry to major process

Following the effective practice established at NC State University in their first-year life science program, and mirrored in the College of Engineering at TAMU, students will select an “intended major” in their admissions and will be admitted into that intended major with assignment to the first-year life science program. During that year, students will have the opportunity to fully explore the options available at Texas A&M and complete a set of key foundational courses that support the multiple options in the life science programs. At the end of their first year, the students will be asked to affirm their choice of major (provided that they have completed successfully the required foundational courses) or will have an opportunity to work through a change of curriculum with the advisors of the FYLS program and/or the Transitional Academic Programs.

2. Build “experiential” career information into the FYLS curriculum

Consider using existing FYE Hullabaloo U (e.g., BIOL has FYE Hullabaloo U built into the BIOL 111 lab courses). Additionally, develop extracurricular activities (e.g., career fairs, opportunities mirroring the Engineering 1st-year experience) and other social events to expose students to diverse professional options in life sciences and help them build a sense of community.

3. Create an FYLS specific advising center

The FYLS program should have an advising center that is distinct and non-overlapping with degree-specific advisors. FYLS advisers should have a broad view of life science majors with no obligation to specific degrees (advisors should be cross trained for advising across all life science programs partnering in the FYLS program).

4. Increase advising support

Numbers will need to be examined closely to accommodate the ratio of 300:1. Advising relationships within the FYLS program and majors may need to be flexible as numbers are adjusted the first cycles and the program is established.

5. Entry to a major process should engage faculty and be proactive in reaching students

Select representative faculty from all programs should be actively involved in the first-year exploration course (or whatever the course is to explore majors) to help students learn about different majors. Additionally, there should be activities like major fairs (aka career fairs) during the first year so programs can provide information and answer student questions.

6. Partner programs shall require their first-year students to participate in FYLS

Students will be allowed to declare an intended major and have an option to change curriculum based on extracurricular experiences and exposure to other majors in life sciences.

7. Some flexibility in the curriculum is necessary

The flexibility will likely be found in the MATH sequences. To that end, the working group does not specify prescribed MATH courses for the programs that participate in the FYLS program. However, it recommends proactive advising for Math courses that serve as prerequisites for higher-level math courses to life sciences majors who are uncertain and think they may want to change to a different major. The working group recommends these students take MATH 147-MATH 148 or MATH 151-MATH 152 or MATH 171-MATH 172 for their two-course MATH

sequence because the highest MATH will serve as a prerequisite for MATH 221, 251, 253, 302, 304, etc.

8. BIMS curriculum review in Fall 2022

The working group recommends that the BIMS program should undergo a curriculum review in Fall 2022 for a transformation as an interdisciplinary program (IDP) to better align it with the interdisciplinary purpose and operations of all other academic programs in the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (IIS). The IIS will serve as an administrative hub to facilitate the FYLS and other IDPs housed within the College of Arts & Sciences. This institute is further introduced in detail through the recommendations made by working group #17.

The IIS will provide new opportunities that currently do not exist on campus to exploit the unique combination of a large undergraduate program with all the health professions that many students want to pursue for careers. This change will help expose undergraduate students preparing for health professions to ‘Professors of Practice’. The current link with health professionals in Texas A&M University’s College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (CVMBS) should be expanded to COM and other health professions so students have the same experience with ‘Professors of Practice’ that students in engineering and business have. This would provide an experience that is hard to match at other universities in the state and make TAMU a more attractive option for students if used as a recruiting tool. In addition, the IDP coding of the BIMS courses will expand the pool of faculty who have the proper credentials and can teach these courses.

9. College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences faculty impact should be considered
The teaching contributions of the CVMBS faculty impact several undergraduate programs beyond the BIMS and University Studies with a Veterinary Medicine Concentration majors. Other undergraduate majors such as Animal Science, Biomedical Engineering, Poultry Science, and Life-Science based IDPs such as Genetics and Neuroscience require courses taught by the CVMBS faculty. Undergraduate students from multiple majors also gain research experiences for credit by taking 285/485 courses with CVMBS faculty. The working group thus recommends that a decision is made early to allow the CVMBS faculty to continue teaching the courses that support undergraduate student success in other programs or to work on a process of curriculum review for all these programs (and potential program teach out) to end these teaching commitments. The CVMBS courses listed in Appendix B of the *Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies* reflect the broader impact of the college’s undergraduate teaching.

Key Logistical Issues to be Completed and Timeline: Many of the logistical issues are captured in the attached document. Here are the major timelines and implementation phases for consideration:

Phase 1 | June — August 2022

- Identify the advising staff and any other FTE needed to support the multiple programs.
- Create the entry to major process
- Define a timeline for any curricular changes that will need to be implemented
- Move the Bachelor of Science for BIMS to a college level IDP managed by the College of Arts & Sciences
- Initiate curricular review for BIMS

Phase 2 | August — November 2022

- Develop the coursework for the First-Year Life Science (FYLS) programs.
- Create and implement training workshops for advisors to implement the FYLS program and the entry to major process
- Plan to integrate advising and information sessions for New Student Conferences (NSC).

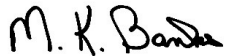
Phase 3 | Spring to Summer 2023

- Integrate the first cohort of students into the FYLS program
- Contribute information sessions and advising into New Student Conferences (FYLS).

Phase 4 | Fall 2023

- Run reviewed curricula through a shared governance process
- Incorporate approved curricular changes into 2023-2024 catalog
- Contribute information sessions and advising into NSCs (new and/or revised programs).

Approved:



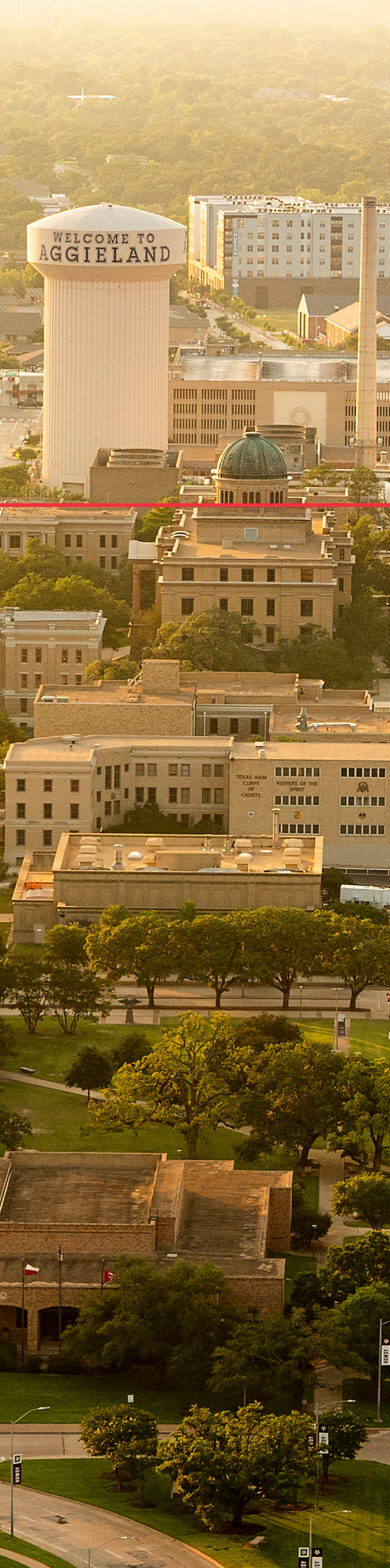
M. Katherine Banks, Ph.D.
President

September 10, 2022

Date

* Approved with the following exceptions:

- Create a uniform life science first-year program and establish an entry-to-a-major process for biology and biomedical science students.
- An Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies will not be created. Dr. Banks will work with the Interim Dean of Arts and Sciences to create the appropriate administrative structure.



INSTITUTE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES



TEXAS A&M
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Introduction

Whether from a purely academic or a workforce perspective, integration of multiple approaches and collaboration across multiple fields has been increasingly considered as a way to solve the complex problems our 21st Century society faces^{1,2}. At the same time, interdisciplinary education has also been presented as a reframed approach to liberal education seeking to prepare students, beyond their professional training, to better achieve their civic responsibility by enhancing their capacity to make connections, understand others, develop leadership skills, and engage in strategic thinking³. In light of these recognized institutional and educational benefits, academic institutions have for a few decades engaged in a form of “arms race” in interdisciplinary teaching, research, and practice with the hope it would lead to innovation and a competitive advantage in achieving their mission^{1,4}. That said, too often the realities of interdisciplinary practice in higher education institutions, including funding, enrollment, and staffing suggest that interdisciplinary work is “routinely impeded and discounted”⁵ with clear evidence coming from the low funding and status of interdisciplinary programs, and the relegation of their leadership to contingent, adjunct faculty who have little influence on raising the recognition of these programs at the institutional level⁴.

Texas A&M University has an opportunity to lead in this space through the formalization of an institutional structure that is both recognized and funded as an avenue to meet the mission of innovation and education of the university. The formation of the proposed Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies will first elevate “learning across the curriculum” as a valued approach for undergraduates to prepare for their future and to contribute fully as engaged citizens. Secondly, a clearly identified and funded structure will facilitate the execution of interdisciplinary education and will become a seeding ground for innovative educational formats (e.g., master classes, plenaries, panel discussions and workshops, conferences). And finally, while located within a large multidisciplinary college, it will serve the entire university and students across all its academic units. The Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies stands to lead the conversation nationally on integrated education across the curriculum, at scale.

¹ Rhoten, D., and Pfirman, S. (2007). Women in interdisciplinary science: Exploring preferences and consequences. *Research Policy*, 36(1), 56-75.

² Edmondson, A.C., Jang, S., and Casciaro T. (2019). Cross-Silo Leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, May–June 2019 issue. 130–139

³ Repko, A.F., Szostak, R., and Phillips Buchberger, M. (2019) *Introduction to Interdisciplinary Studies* 3rd Ed. SAGE Publications, Inc

⁴ Holley, K.A. (2019). Learning from Klein: Examining Current Interdisciplinary Practices within U.S. Higher Education. *Issues in Interdisciplinary Studies*, 37(2), 17-32.

⁵ Klein, J. T. (2010). *Creating interdisciplinary campus cultures: A model for strength and sustainability*. San Francisco: John Wiley & Sons

Vision

- Texas A&M University **leads the nation in integrating learning and scholarship** across multiple fields.
- The Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (IIS) **actively and intentionally supports the success of students** who seek to learn and develop expertise at the intersection of multiple fields.
- The IIS is **a national model** for the conceptual development and operations of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs.
- The IIS serves as an **“intellectual community” for faculty** who create and innovate across multiple fields.



Methodology

Each of the working groups were subdivided into five subcommittees responsible for addressing the following questions:

Interdisciplinary Unit

- a. Leadership/Administrative Structure Subcommittee (*Lead: Lucas Macri*)
- b. Advising Structure Subcommittee (*Lead: Ashley Corn*)
- c. University Studies Redesign Subcommittee (*Lead: Patrick Williams*)
- d. IDP Programs Subcommittee (*Lead: Adam Seipp*)
- e. Faculty Affiliation Subcommittee (*Lead: Maria Escobar-Lemmon*)

Life-Science First-Year Program (and incorporation of BIMS into the Interdisciplinary unit)

- a. Leadership/Administrative Structure Subcommittee (*Lead: Mark Zoran*)
- b. Advising Structure Subcommittee (*Lead: Tom McKnight*)
- c. First-Year Life Science Subcommittee (*Lead: Mary Bryk*)
- d. Transition of BIMS Subcommittee (*Lead: Ramesh Vemulapalli*)
- e. Partner Programs Subcommittee (*Lead: David Threadgill*)

The overall working groups met biweekly, whereas the subcommittees met weekly and provided reports to the overall working groups during the general meetings.

Both working groups identified a “peer-program” at a national university that would provide some benchmarks of effective practices and organizational structure. The working groups invited the leaders of these programs for a one-hour conversation to share their experience of what works and what doesn’t in leading similar programs. The selected peer-programs are:

- Interdisciplinary unit: *School of Interdisciplinary Arts & Sciences* at the University of Washington-Bothell; Dr. Brinda Sarathy, Dean.
- Life Science First Year experience: *Life Sciences First-Year (LSFY)* program at North Carolina State University; Dr. Erica Kosal, Director.

In addition, the subcommittees used surveys and town halls with multiple stakeholders to incorporate the perspective and operational needs of these different groups in the organization of the proposed Institute for Interdisciplinary Institute.

The recommendations were built on a continuous basis during the general working group meetings with the overall document updated on a Google Drive shared with all members of each working group. Coordination across the two working groups was achieved through sharing of the document and conversations across the two groups.

Operating Principles

General Operations

1. The original charge to the Working Group #17 was to incorporate all interdisciplinary undergraduate degree programs, as well as appropriate interdisciplinary graduate degree programs. However, due to the complexity of organizing both undergraduate and graduate programs around a common structure, the decision was made by the university leadership to leave a review of the administrative structure for graduate interdisciplinary programs to a later date. All recommendations below are thus focused exclusively on undergraduate programs and undergraduate student success.
2. The guiding principle for funding the IIS needs to hold curricular homes financially harmless. The ISS should seek to develop agreements that incentivize departments to offer classes and allow faculty to teach in these programs (e.g. through the increase in that department's SCHs). The financial model for the unit will need to be developed in multiple steps: a) develop an operational budget based on #FTE and other parameters the Financial Office and HROE recommend; and b) down the line, develop a revenue model based on some proportion of WSCHs and/or designated tuition. Having a clear funding model will be critical to elevate the Institute in meeting its mission at the university level (*see introduction*) and give strength to the next guiding principle (act as a "broker").
3. The Institute will act as a "broker" of curriculum delivery by signing memoranda of agreement (MOAs) with departments on a two-year basis to ensure accessibility to seats and/or course sections for the students in the First Year Life Science (FYLS), Biomedical Sciences (BIMS), and University Studies (US) and Interdisciplinary (IDP) programs.
4. During the implementation phase and subsequent operation phase, there should be official channels (e.g. standing advisory structure) for faculty and staff involvement in future decision making. This includes involving all faculty directors of the interdisciplinary programs from the first phase of the implementation phase.
5. If appropriate, or financially possible, the Institute could contribute funds to departments to hire additional faculty whose teaching will be dedicated (in whole or in part) to support interdisciplinary programs offered in the Institute. The "joint appointments" would need to be memorialized in an MOA, identifying the percent effort in teaching for each unit. The Assistant Dean for Academics would then provide input to the Head of the academic home department for annual and promotional reviews.

Academic Division

1. All academic programs managed by the Institute will have a curricular committee in one or several academic departments that provide the intellectual (and teaching) “home” for the program. That curricular committee and departmental relationship should be identified for each program and published on the Institute’s website.
2. The Academic Division should have faculty Directors/Coordinators for groups of programs serving as a subject-expert to coordinate with advisors and build relationships with the “home department” of the programs. The unit will keep every one of these programs connected to the departments as they serve as bridges across different fields.
3. The Assistant Dean for Academic Division will advise on how to develop programs, create common interdisciplinary experiences for students, coordinate across multiple programs, and plan resource allocations for course offerings by a leadership group composed of program Directors/Coordinators and lead advisors. The Assistant Dean will be responsible for appointing, and reviewing, the program directors in consultation with department heads.
4. Additional programs that exist at the college level need to be considered for integration into the management structure that the Institute will offer. If any of these programs are integrated into the Institute, a similar review of their curricula should be considered to turn them into IDPs. Future programs could also be included following the same structure. These include:
 - a. Women’s and Gender Studies (Liberal Arts)
 - b. Renewable Natural Resources (Agricultural & Life Sciences)
5. As potential curricular changes happen or programs are terminated (or change classification), all students already in, or recently admitted to, an existing program will be offered the opportunity to finish their degree according to the catalog under which they were admitted.
6. For programs that form the FYLS, students will be admitted into their degree of choice upon admission (not after the completion of a common first-year experience). The FYLS program will provide co-curricular and extracurricular activities that will support the formation of a learning community exposed to the multiple learning options in life science, including a path to professional health science programs.

Advising Division

1. The FYLS program should have an advising center that is distinct and non-overlapping with degree-specific advisors. They should have a broad view of life science majors with no obligation to specific degrees.
2. Degree-specific advisors may need to be cross-trained for a number of programs (e.g. University Studies and IDPs) to ensure a 300:1 ratio of student:advisor and a continuous support of all students across the different curricula (and in preparation for change of curriculum within or outside of the IIS unit).

Working Group #17

FORMATION OF AN INTERDISCIPLINARY UNIT

CHARGE

Develop an administrative unit to house all university studies, undergraduate IDPs, BIMS, and a first-year life science “meta-major” program. Consolidate all degree advising structures in support of interdisciplinary undergraduate programs along with transitional and professional advising.

To ensure that our University Studies students are advised and mentored appropriately, develop an administrative unit, Interdisciplinary Programs, under which all university studies degrees will be consolidated. The new unit will be located administratively within the College of Arts and Sciences.

In addition to the University Studies programs, the new Interdisciplinary Programs academic unit will also administer the Transition Academic Studies Program, Biomedical Sciences Undergraduate Program, all interdisciplinary undergraduate degree programs, (and appropriate interdisciplinary graduate degree programs). The University Studies students will be able to continue in a program track within a College or School, only the administrative oversight for the program will be changed. Also, review and evaluate if a potential relocation of the Office of Professional School Advising to the interdisciplinary unit would benefit students across campus.



Composition

Composition of the working group (#17) dedicated to developing an interdisciplinary unit that will administer undergraduate interdisciplinary studies, university studies, BIMS, the Life Science First-Year program, build-your-own-major, and the Transition Academic Program.

Name	Title	Constituent Group	Department/Unit
Patrick Louchouart	Regents Professor – Co-Convener	Interim Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs and Interdisciplinary Initiatives	Provost Office
Arthur Watson	Staff – Co-Convener	Executive Director Transition Academic Programs	Undergraduate Studies
Maria Escobar-Lemmon	Professor	Associate Dean for Research and Graduate Education	College of Liberal Arts
Hart Blanton	Professor	Dept. Head Communication	College of Liberal Arts
Ashley Corn	Staff	Advisor of UNST	Mays Business School
Dalvin Dunn	Student	Ph.D. student in Higher Ed Administration	College of Education and Human Development
Leslie Feigenbaum	Professor	Lead of UNST in Architecture	College of Architecture
Patrick Williams	Staff	Assistant Director, Undergraduate Advising	Mays Business School
Ximena Paéz-Colasate	Staff	Associate Dir. Genetics	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Joan Wolf	Associate Professor	Women and Gender Studies - Interdisciplinary	College of Liberal Arts
David Stelly	Professor	Chair CPI; Chair MEPS, GENE (EC) and MBIOT	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Helena MacCrossan	Student	Undergraduate	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Lucas Macri	Professor	Associate Dean UG Programs	College of Science
Nancy Plankey Videla	Associate Professor	Latino/a and Mexican American Studies	College of Liberal Arts
Brendan Roark	Associate Professor	Dir. Environmental Programs	College of Geosciences
Sara Thigpin	Staff	Dir. of Undergraduate Programs	College of Science
Liz Nyman	Assistant Professor	Represent branch campus with several UNST programs	Texas A&M at Galveston
Adam Seipp	Professor	Associate Dean, Graduate and Professional School	College of Liberal Arts
Carisa Armstrong	Clinical Professor	Coordinator of UNST: Dance	College of Education and Human Development

Recommendations

RECOMMENDATION #1

The Interdisciplinary unit will be designed as an administrative unit to support the coordination of all UG multidisciplinary programs, including the First-Year Life Science and BIMS programs, as well as the advising of all their students. The institute will also incorporate the Transition Academic Program group.

This administrative unit will be embedded in the newly created College of Arts and Sciences (see graphical representation of the organizational chart in Appendix A).

RECOMMENDATION #2

The proposed name for the interdisciplinary unit is: *Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies (IIS)*. The name “Institute” is consistent with the functions of institutes recognized in TAMU System Policy 11.02, Creation of Centers and Institutes:

Institute: A large integrative unit, housing intercollegiate or interagency activities. It is administered by a director reporting to a dean or agency director or someone with a title above dean or agency director. It is focused largely on externally supported research or educational activities that are much broader than those interests of a given college or administrative unit.

RECOMMENDATION #3

If recommendation #2, to create a new Institute, is approved, then an implementation committee should, in short order and according to TAMU SAP 11.02.99.M0.01 *Centers and Institutes*, submit the paperwork for review and potential approval by the Chancellor and Board of Regents. The request, routing through the President’s Office, should disclose the rationale for creating the entity, its potential impact on the education and training of students, the current and projected sources of financial support, the governance and advisory structure, and the mechanisms for periodic review.



Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #4

The administrative structure proposed for the IIS seeks to avoid being too top-heavy and will be organized in the following manner:

- a. It will report to an Associate Dean of the College of Arts and Science (e.g. Associate Dean of Undergraduate Studies and/or Interdisciplinary Studies; probably 40-50% time commitment). The Associate Dean will also have a dotted reporting line to the Office of the Provost to ensure university-wide delivery of programs and services.
- b. It will include two major Divisions (Academic and Advising), each directed by an Assistant Dean:
 - i. **Academic Division:** The Assistant Dean of the Interdisciplinary Academics Division will be a tenured or APT senior faculty (Associate or Full Professor) with substantial knowledge and experience in academic administration and program coordination (including curriculum review). The Assistant Dean will oversee the operations of all academic programs and coordinate with “home” curricular departments for faculty engagement (including affiliation), course delivery, and student seat availability. Each academic program (or set of programs around common themes) will be directed by a subject-expert faculty: Director/Coordinator. All Directors/Coordinators will report in those functions to the Assistant Dean of the Academic Division.
 - ii. **Advising Division:** The Assistant Dean of the Interdisciplinary Advising Division will be either a senior faculty (Associate or Full Professor) or staff with substantial knowledge and experience of advising across the curriculum and university levels. The Assistant Dean will coordinate advising for academic programs, as well as change of major and other transitional programs. All advisors will report to the lead in their respective sub-unit, who will report to the Assistant Dean of the Advising Division.

RECOMMENDATION #5

The operations of the IIS will need business administration support appropriate for the FTEs and functionality of the different divisions. This business administrator will coordinate the business needs of the IIS with the business office of the College of Arts and Science. As such the business administrator will report to the assistant dean for finance with a solid line and could have a dotted line to the Associate Dean.

Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #6

If programs are to flourish in IIS, they must be provided with the resources to ensure student success. Each must be able to develop and deliver a strong curriculum, offer extra-curricular activities, grow by recruiting new majors, and pursue additional potentially enriching opportunities. Startup funding should thus be considered to launch the interdisciplinary unit for its first 3-4 years and until it can enact a revenue model based on student success measures (it will need at least 3 years to track student success measures that are relevant to such programs: retention within major, retention within life science partner major, 4-year graduation rate, etc.). Five categories of funds will need to be identified:

- a. Salary funds for all FTE moving to this unit (e.g., all advisors and administrators).
- b. Fund the identified new FTEs (advisors) to support BIMS and FYLS
- c. To support the Academic Division, and in particular the directors of the programs and programming within the Division, we recommend setting up a funding line to cover summer salary and an administrative stipend for each of these directors/coordinators and proportional to the size of the program and required summer engagement (e.g., scheduling events at NSCs).
- d. Operational funds will need to be calculated based on the formula for new units designed by the university financial office.
- e. Recurring funds based on some SCHs (or WSCHs) volume to help the unit plan the teaching schedule for each of these programs on a 2-4 year timeline.

RECOMMENDATION #7

An incentive program should be developed to engage faculty and programs in innovation and participation in the IIS. A model could mirror the Global Engagement Grants program (\$50K to a multi-college team) that ran for 4 years out of the Vice Provost Office (total of \$600K). A similar approach would engage multiple faculty and focus on student success in a number of these programs.



Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #8

The Academic Division will manage the following programs:

- First-Year Life Science program
- BIMS (BS)
- All University Studies programs (BS and BA)
- All UG Interdisciplinary Programs (BS)
- Design Your Own Major

The following programs will be administered by the interdisciplinary unit:

University Studies Concentrations	College	Program Code
Preserved US Degrees		
BS, Global Arts Planning, Design, and Construction	School of Architecture	BS-USAR-GPD
BS, Business	Mays Business School	BS-USBU-BUS
BS, Child Professional Services (non-certificate program)	Education and Human Dev.	BS-USEH-CPS
BA, Race, Gender, Ethnicity	College of Liberal Arts	BA-USLA-RGE
BA, Society, Ethics and Law	College of Liberal Arts	BA-USLA-SEL
BS, Race, Gender, Ethnicity	College of Liberal Arts	BS-USLA-RGE
BS, Arts and Sciences	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-ASC
BS, BioInformatics	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-BIN
BS, Mathematics for Business	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-MBU
BS, Mathematics for Pre-Professionals	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-MPP
BS, Mathematics for Teaching	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-MFT
BS, Science for Secondary Teaching	College of Sciences	BS-USSC-SST
BS, Biomedical Sciences	College of Vet Medicine	BS-USVM-BIM
Preserved IDP Degrees		
Env. Studies	College of Ag. & Life Sciences	ENST
Env. Studies	College of Geosciences	ENST
Env. Geosciences	College of Geosciences	ENGS
Neuroscience	College of Liberal Arts	NRSC
Neuroscience	College of Sciences	NRSC
Neuroscience	BIMS	NRSC
Preserved US Degrees - Galveston		
BS, Oceans and One Health	Texas A&M at Galveston	BS-USGA-OOH

Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #8 (continued)

The following degrees will be discontinued as US programs and either terminated or changed into majors (all terminated programs will follow a teach out schedule in accord with the THECB).

Discontinued US Degrees (either termination or switch to major)		
BS, Environmental Business	College of Ag. & Life Sciences	BS-USAL-ENB
BS, Leadership Studies	College of Ag. & Life Sciences	BS-USAL-LED
BS, Dance	Education and Human Dev.	BS-USEH-DAN
BS, Geogr. Information Science and Technology	College of Geosciences	BS-USGE-GIS
BS, Geography	College of Geosciences	BS-USGE-GEG
BA, Journalism Studies	College of Liberal Arts	BA-USLA-JNS
BA, Religious Thought, Practices and Cultures	College of Liberal Arts	BA-USLA-JNS
BS, Health Humanities	College of Liberal Arts	BS-USLA-HHM
BS, Liberal Arts	College of Liberal Arts	BS-USLA-LIB
BS, Marine Env Law & Policy	Texas A&M at Galveston	BS-USGA-MLP
BS, Tourism & Coastal Comm Dev	Texas A&M at Galveston	BS-USGA-TCC

RECOMMENDATION #9

The Advising Division will manage the following programs:

- a. Transition Academic Programs (TAP)
 - i. General Studies
 - ii. Aggie Gateway/Aggies Thrive
 - iii. Blinn TEAM/Explore
- b. Advising for academic programs (FYLS, BIMS, USs, IDPs, BYOMs)

RECOMMENDATION #10

During the implementation phase, a task force should review the TAMU SAP 03.02.99.M0.01 *Creation and Review of Interdisciplinary Degree Programs* to clarify the process for the creation, review, and shared governance of undergraduate interdisciplinary programs. The present SAP is written with a predominant focus on the creation, review, and shared governance of graduate IDP degrees. Clarification for undergraduate programs should be defined either as a separate SAP or as an expansion of the section for undergraduate program in the present SAP. The task force should coordinate with the Office of the Provost (Associate Vice President for Academic Effectiveness & Planning) for consistency with SAP review processes.

Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #11

The Office of Professional School Advising (OPSA) should remain embedded within the Career Center and maintain the same supervisory chain. This will allow for continued and increased collaborations and partnerships with colleges and departments across campus. This will help keep the Texas A&M University Career Center as one of the largest and most effective centralized Career Centers in the country, earning both regional and national recognition for best practices, programs, and services over the past two decades. However, there is strong value in creating a coordination between the advising efforts of OPSA and those of the First-Year Life Science program. We recommend that the Director of OPSA coordinate actively with the Assistant Dean of the Advising Division of the IIS.

RECOMMENDATION #12

During Fall 2022, run a 1-2 day retreat for all advisors, program directors, and leadership of the new unit to:

- a. Develop and articulate the vision and mission of the IIS.
- b. Identify effective practices in interdisciplinary advising that can be shared with all faculty and staff leading programs in the IIS
- c. Appoint a working group to advise on the creation of draft MOUs intended to secure lower and upper-level courses and seats for the multiple programs the IIS will administer.
- d. Develop an FAQ on important information regarding program curriculum, maps, and other directions.



Working Group #13

LIFE SCIENCES FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE (BIMS)

CHARGE

Move the undergraduate Biomedical Sciences Program to the new College of Arts and Sciences. The co-location of the BIMS program with the Biology program will provide a foundation for a life science meta-major (“first-year life science” program). The meta-major approach will allow students to generally select life science as their major, complete a common first year while learning about the different majors available in life science across campus, and then move into upper-level courses seamlessly in year two after a major is identified.



Composition

Composition of the working group (#13) dedicated to developing Life Science First-Year program and the transition of BIMS to the interdisciplinary unit.

Name	Title	Constituent Group	Department/Unit
Tom McKnight	Professor	Faculty and prior Dept. Head of Biology	College of Science
Ramesh Vemulapalli	Professor	Dept. Head – Veterinary Pathobiology	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
Mark Zoran	Professor	Executive Associate Dean	College of Science
Mary Bryk	Associate Professor	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs	College of Ag. and Life Sciences
Elizabeth Crouch	Professor	Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
Richard Gomer	Distinguished Professor	Biology	College of Science
James Grau	Professor	Neuroscience	College of Science
Charles Criscione	Professor	Biology (Dir. Acad. Affairs)	College of Science
Andrew Tag	Instructional Associate Professor	Biology (Dir. of Lower Division Instruction)	College of Science – Senate EC Nominee
Kevin Curley	Instructional Assistant Professor	Faculty	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
Tamy Frank Cannon	Clinical Assistant Professor	Faculty	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
James Herman	Clinical Professor	Faculty	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
David Threadgill	Distinguished Professor	Faculty	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
Jean-Philippe Pellois	Professor	Associate Head for Graduate Program	College of Agricultural and Life Sciences
James Samuel	Regents Professor	Faculty	College of Medicine
Mohammad Nutan	Associate Professor	Faculty	College of Pharmacy
Amon Cox	Student – Graduate	Student	Interdisciplinary Grad Program – Toxicology
Lynae Baskin	Student – Undergraduate	Student	College of Vet Med & Biomed Sciences
Will Bailey	Assistant Department Head	Staff - Business Services	College of Science
Leora Hodes	Career Counselor	Staff	College of Science
Dan Roelke	Professor	Dept. Head - Marine Biology	Texas A&M at Galveston

Recommendations

“Advise students to take courses based upon their entry credentials and career interests and to create a community of life science students that can explore degree options which help guide them into a major that matches their interests and career goals”

RECOMMENDATION #1

Formalize a flexible first-year curriculum that is shared by life science degree programs (*see table on next page*). In the process, develop advising resources to accommodate the differences that our life sciences programs have for math courses and the timing of chemistry and biology courses. BIMS will be the founding program of the First-Year Life Sciences (FYLS) experience. Other life sciences degree programs will be encouraged to opt-in to the FYLS program. In fact, many of the degree programs listed in the table on the next page have indicated they will or are likely to opt-in, including those offered by the Departments of Biology, Biochemistry and Biophysics, Ecology and Conservation Biology, Entomology, Nutrition, Plant Pathology and Microbiology, and Rangeland, Wildlife and Fisheries Management, as well as those offered at TAMU at Galveston. Some programs, such as those offered by the Department of Animal Science, Department of Poultry Science, and the School of Pharmacy (in red font at the bottom of the table), may opt-in later. These programs may do so through a request to the Assistant Dean of the Academic Division. Likewise, a program may discontinue its participation in the Life Sciences First-Year Experience by notifying the Assistant Dean of the Academic Division.



Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #1 (continued)

Degree		Fall			Spring		
College	Course	BIOL 111	CHEM 119	MATH (140, 147, 151 or equiv.)	BIOL 112	CHEM 120	MATH (142,148, 152 or equiv.)
CAS	Biology	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAS	Microbiology	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAS	Mol Cell Biol	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAS	Zoology	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAS	Neuroscience	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
CAS	Biomedical Science (CS and McAllen)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Entomology	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Forensics & Investigative Sciences Science track	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Nutrition General	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Nutrition Molecular and Experimental	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Nutrition Dietetics	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Bioenvironmental Science	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Biochemistry	Spring yr 1	Yes	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes
COALS	Genetics	Spring yr 1	Yes	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes
COALS	Ecology Conservation Biology-Ecology Conservation	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	Ecology Conservation Biology-Ecoinformatics	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	Ecology Conservation Biology-Forest Resources	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	Ecology Conservation Biology-Vertebrate Zoology	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	Forensics & Investigative Sciences Law track	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	Horticulture	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	No	No	Yes
COALS	Environmental Studies	Elective	Spring yr 1	Take in yr 3	No	No	Take in yr 3
COALS	RWFM-Rangeland Management	Elective yr 2	Take in yr 2	Yes	Elective yr 2	No	Yes
COALS	RWFM-Wildlife Management	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	RWFM-Aquaculture & Fisheries Mgmt	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	No	Yes
COALS	RWFM-Natural Resources Mgmt and Policy	Elective yr 2	Yes	Yes	Elective yr 2	No	Yes
TAMUG	Marine Biology (MARB)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TAMUG	Marine Fisheries (MARF)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
TAMUG	Coastal Environmental Science & Society (CEES)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Elective	Yes	Yes
TAMUG	Oceans One Health (OOH)	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes
PHSC	Pharmacy DV track - to be developed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
PHSC	Pharmacy HPR track - to be developed	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
COALS	Animal Sci-Production Track	Elective spring	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes
COALS	Animal Sci-Science Track	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes	Take in yr 2	Yes	Yes
COALS	Poultry Science-Industry Track	Elective	Spring yr 1	Spring yr 1	No	No	Take in yr 2
COALS	Poultry Science-Technical Track	Elective spring	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes

Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #2

Following the effective practice established at NC State University in their first-year life science program, students will select an “intended major” in their admissions and will be admitted into that intended major with assignment to the first-year life science program. During that year, students will have the opportunity to fully explore the options available at Texas A&M and complete a set of key foundational courses that support the multiple options in the life science programs. At the end of their first year, the students will be asked to affirm their choice of major (provided that they have completed successfully the required foundational courses) or will have an opportunity to work through a change of curriculum with the advisors of the FYLS program and/or the Transitional Academic Programs.

RECOMMENDATION #3

Develop a common “experiential” first-year curriculum about careers in the life sciences. Consider using existing FYE Hullabaloo U (e.g., BIOL has FYE Hullabaloo U built into the BIOL 111 lab courses). Additionally, develop extracurricular activities (e.g., career fairs, Engineering 1st-year experience) and other social events to expose students to diverse professional options in life sciences and help them build a sense of community.

RECOMMENDATION #4

The FYLS program should have an advising center that is distinct and non-overlapping with degree-specific advisors. FYLS advisers should have a broad view of life science majors with no obligation to specific degrees (advisors should be cross trained for advising across all life science programs partnering in the FYLS program).

RECOMMENDATION #5

Biology and BIMS need to hire a total of at least 5 more advisors to reach a ratio of 300:1. This number of new advisors may be adjusted depending on the number of advisors in other departments that join the FYLS program.

RECOMMENDATION #6

Select representative faculty from all programs should be actively involved in the first-year exploration course (or whatever the course is to explore majors) to help students learn about different majors. Additionally, there should be activities like major fairs (aka career fairs) during the first year so programs can provide information and answer student questions.

RECOMMENDATION #7

All partner life science degrees who decide to participate should require their students to participate in the FYLS. Students will be allowed to declare an intended major and have an option to change curriculum based on extracurricular experiences and exposure to other majors in life sciences.

Recommendations (continued)

RECOMMENDATION #8

The first-year curriculum will need to show some flexibility (vs fixed courses in first two semesters) to allow students some options to differentiate in their second year from their initial intended major. The flexibility will likely be found in the MATH sequences. To that end, the working group does not specify prescribed MATH courses for the programs that participate in the First-Year Life Sciences program. However, it recommends proactive advising for Math courses that serve as prerequisites for higher-level math courses to life sciences majors who are uncertain and think they may want to change to a different major. The working group recommends these students take MATH 147-MATH 148 or MATH 151-MATH 152 or MATH 171-MATH 172 for their two-course MATH sequence because the highest MATH will serve as a prerequisite for MATH 221, 251, 253, 302, 304, etc.

RECOMMENDATION #9

The working group recommends that the BIMS program should undergo a curriculum review in Fall 2022 for a transformation as an IDP program to better align it with the interdisciplinary purpose and operations of all other academic programs in the Institute. This will provide new opportunities that currently do not exist on campus to exploit the unique combination of a large undergraduate program with all the health professions that many students want to pursue for careers. This change will help expose undergraduate students preparing for health professions to ‘Professors of Practice’. The current link with health professionals in CVMBS should be expanded to COM and other health professions so students have the same experience with ‘Professors of Practice’ that students in engineering and business have. This would provide an experience that is hard to match at other universities in the state and make TAMU a more attractive option for students if used as a recruiting tool. In addition, the IDP coding of the BIMS courses will expand the pool of faculty who have the proper credentials and can teach these courses.

RECOMMENDATION #10

The teaching contributions of the CVMBS faculty impact several undergraduate programs beyond the BIMS and USVM majors. Other undergraduate majors such as ANSC, BMEN, POSC, and IDPs such as Genetics and Neuroscience require courses taught by the CVMBS faculty. Undergraduate students from multiple majors also gain research experiences for credit by taking 285/485 courses with CVMBS faculty. The working group thus recommends that a decision is made early to allow the CVMBS faculty to continue teaching the courses that support undergraduate student success in other programs or to work on a process of curriculum review for all these programs (and potential program teach out) to end these teaching commitments. The CVMBS courses listed in Appendix B reflect the broader impact of the college’s undergraduate teaching.

Implementation Phases

Phase 1 | June — August 2022

- Identify the advising staff and any other FTE needed to support the multiple programs.
- Finalize the operational structure and budget operation, including recruiting/appointment of the leadership team (Associate Dean, Assistant Deans, Sr. Business Administrator, Program Directors, etc.).
- Submit paperwork to Board of Regents for review and potential approval of the Institute.
- Define a timeline for any curricular changes that will need to be implemented (e.g., change of the BIMS major into an IDP). This includes revising the IDP SAP.

Phase 2 | August — November 2022

- Hire the staff needed to support the multiple programs.
- Develop the coursework for the First-Year Life Science (FYLS) programs.
- Create and implement training workshops for advisors across the entire interdisciplinary unit to develop the most effective practice in cross-curricular advising.
- Plan to integrate advising and information sessions for NSCs.
- Consolidate leadership and support structure into office suite.

Phase 3 | Spring to Summer 2023

- Integrate the first cohort of students into the IIS.
- Finalize curricular reviews to all programs as needed.
- Contribute information sessions and advising into NSCs (FYLS).

Phase 4 | Fall 2023

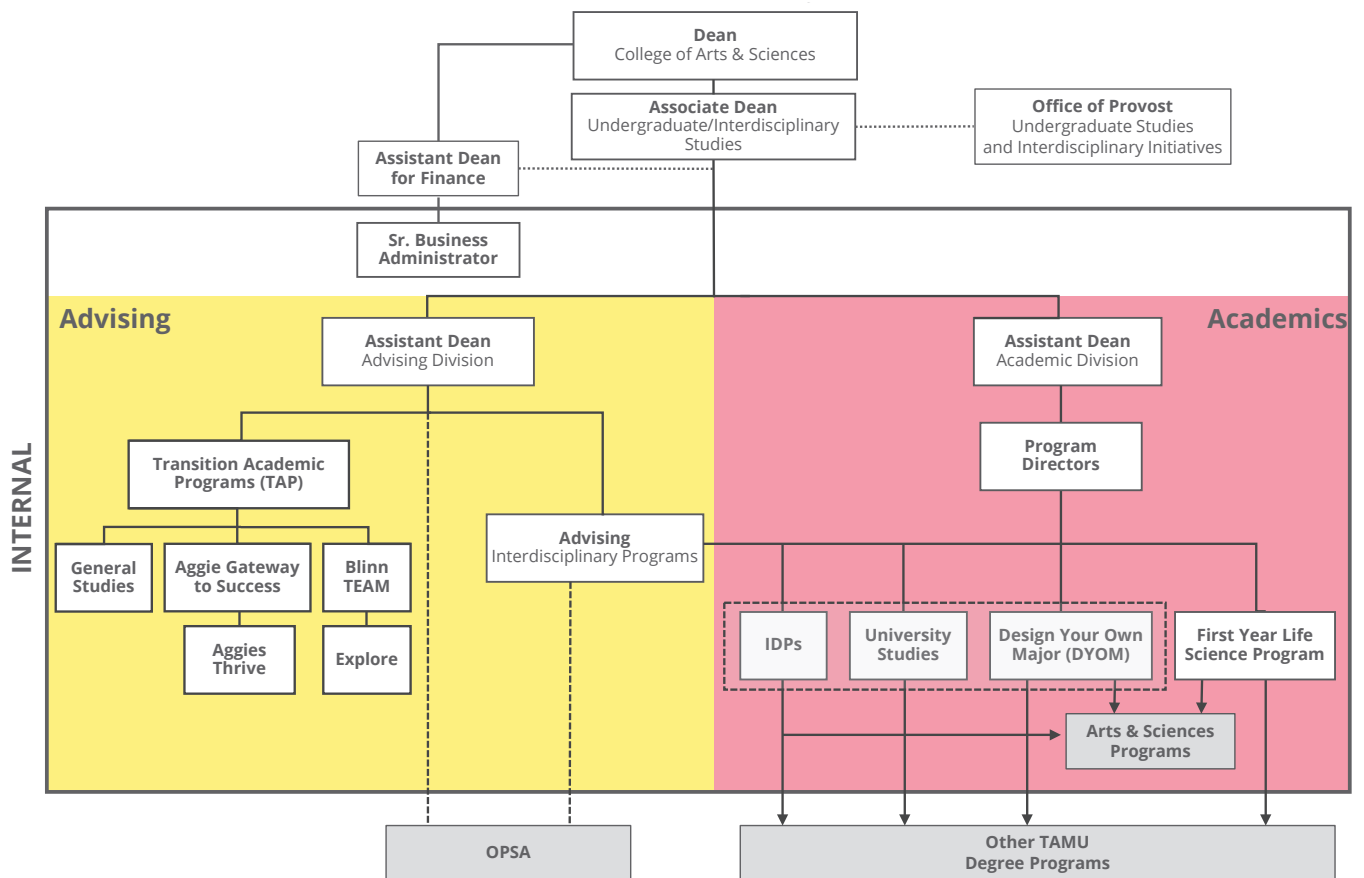
- Run reviewed curricula through a shared governance process (UCC, Senate, Provost and President Office).
- Incorporate approved curricular changes into 2023-2024 catalog
- Contribute information sessions and advising into NSCs (new and/or revised programs).

Appendix A

INSTITUTE FOR INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDIES

COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES

Texas A&M University



Appendix B

Service Undergraduate Courses in Veterinary Medicine

The faculty of the College of Veterinary Medicine and Biomedical Sciences (CVMBs) make significant teaching contributions to multiple undergraduate programs in addition to the BIMS and USVM majors. Some courses taught by the CVMBs faculty are required for students majoring in ANSC, BMEN, POSC GENE, or IDPs such as Neuroscience. Undergraduate students from multiple majors also gain research experiences for credit by taking 285/485 courses with CVMBs faculty.

UNDERGRADUATE SERVICE COURSES TAUGHT BY CVMBs FACULTY:

- VTPP 323 Physiology of Domestic Animals – 3 CH (3 Lec Hours) – ANSC Majors
- VLCS 422 Equine Disease and Epidemiology – 3 CH (3 Lec) – ANSC Majors
- VTPP 434 Physiology for Bioengineers I – 4 CH (3 Lec + 2 Lab) – BMEN Majors
- VTPP 435 Physiology for Bioengineers II – 4 CH (3 Lec + 2 Lab) – BMEN Majors
- VTPB 334 Poultry Diseases – 4 CH (3 Lec + 2 Lab) – POSC Majors

UNDERGRADUATE IDP COURSES TAUGHT BY CVMBs FACULTY:

NEUROSCIENCE IDP:

- NRSC 101/VIBS 101 Neuroscience Overview 1 CH (1 Lec)
- NRSC 201/VIBS 201 History of Neuroscience 1 CH (1 Lec)
- NRSC 277/VIBS 277 Introduction to Neuroscience 3 CH (3 Lec)
- NRSC 401/VIBS 401 Developmental Neurotoxicology 2 CH (2 Lec)
- NRSC 407/VIBS 407 Core Ideas in Neuroscience 2 CH (2 Lec)
- NRSC 450/VIBS 450 Mammalian Functional Neuroanatomy 4 CH (3 Lec + 2 Lab)

OTHER CROSS-LISTED UNDERGRADUATE COURSES TAUGHT BY CVMBs FACULTY:

- VTPB 301/WFSC 327 Wildlife Diseases 3 CH (3 Lec)
- VTPB 487/BIOL 487 Biomedical Parasitology 4 CH (3 Lec + 2 Lab) VTPP 401/BMEN 400 History of Human and Veterinary Medicine in Europe 4 CH (4 Lec)
- VIBS 426/ENTO 426 Methods in Vector-Borne Disease Ecology 3 CH (1 Lec + 5 Lab)
- GENE 320/BIMS 320 Biomedical Genetics 3 CH (3 Lec)
- GENE 405/BIMS 405 Mammalian Genetics 3 CH (3 Lec)
- GENE 421/BIMS 421 Advanced Human Genetics 3 CH (3 Lec)

TOP CVMBs UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH COURSES REGULARLY TAKEN BY OTHER MAJORS:

- VTPP 285
- VTPP 485
- VLCS 485

Appendix C

The working groups #13 and #17 considered different options, including their advantages and disadvantages, regarding a) a potential alternate structure for the Institute for Interdisciplinary Studies, and b) the incorporation of the Office of Professional School Advising into the IIS structure. Below are the transcribed advantages and disadvantages provided by working group members and gathered from university stakeholders.

Pros and Cons of OPSA and IIS Reporting Lines

WHAT ARE THE PROS OF OPSA BEING PART OF IIS?

- I imagine that it would reduce administrative costs.
- I don't see any.
- Life science majors would have direct access to OPSA advisors, but I think this could be achieved by using the current model of career center advisors embedded within each college.
- Unclear—especially if IIS is located within Arts & Science then fewer. There may be benefit if IIS goes to a Provost Level unit although OPSA needs to remain adjacent with other student service units.

WHAT ARE THE CONS OF OPSA BEING PART OF IIS?

- If this institute is to be *truly* a place dedicated to interdisciplinary research and teaching, then we that's what we should be building. I cannot see how OPSA contributes to that mission.
- Disruption to the current advising process.
- Students outside of IIS would need access to OPSA advisors. I think this could create confusion for students who were not part of IIS.
- The mission/focus of IIS is shifting to student services generally versus interdisciplinary academic programs. The more non-academic program functions placed in that unit the less bandwidth those in charge will have to focus on interdisciplinary academic work. It is not clear that this is a natural fit and that it will contribute to IIS being a collection of vaguely related entities rather than a thoughtful, purposeful and focused one. Especially if IIS stays in Arts & Science, this unit will lose connectivity with other adjacent entities (like the Career Center) which should NOT be housed in a single college. This will further fuel the belief that Arts & Sciences exists just to serve the rest of the university.
- Such reporting organization would disrupt the structure and integrity of the career center & the reporting lines within it.

Pros and Cons of OPSA and IIS Reporting Lines (continued)

WHAT ARE THE PROS OF IIS REPORTING THROUGH THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES?

- As a College, CAS would be much more familiar with how academic units function and how they are administered.
- IIS is too broad a term to use for this simple pros & cons. BIMS/First-Year Life Sciences students must be part of the new College of Arts and Sciences—they take >90% of their first- and second-year courses there and the advisors from Biology have a lot of experience with these students.
- In the normal fashion of a University, departments report to a Dean.
- Arts and Science does have life science majors within the college (i.e., BIOL), so it could make sense, in some respects, to have the life science meta major, BIMS, etc. within A&S. Beyond, this one area of the current IIS organizational chart, I am not sure of additional benefits to this newly formed institute.
- Clearly establishes the academic credentials of this unit—although there are other ways that could be achieved (e.g., a School of ISS).

WHAT ARE THE CONS OF IIS REPORTING THROUGH THE COLLEGE OF ARTS & SCIENCES?

- It makes it appear as though only CAS programs are involved. That might seem of marginal concern, but I can imagine the neuroscience program, and any IDP we might create in the future, worrying that it will make their program less comprehensible to those both inside and outside the university.
- IIS is too broad a term to use for this simple pros & cons. TAP/General Studies and overall management of Univ Studies don't make much sense as part of Arts & Sciences and the Office of the Provost is a better location for them.
- None
- Because IIS is a complex institute that would serve more than just A&S students, I believe it is best to house IIS through the Office of the Provost. This would allow for more transparency to students. I believe IIS reporting the College of Arts and Science could muddle where students believe they have access to programs such as TAP and University Studies degrees.
- Planning for the administration of these programs will be complicated and convoluted as not all courses, faculty, and resources are in Arts & Sciences. This will weaken the branding of these programs and will make them less attractive to students. It is hard to see students having the same sense of "I'm a Mays student" if they are in a University Studies Business degree administered by Arts & Science than if they are in one that is broader. It might be hard to find appropriate faculty leaders who capture the full breadth of these programs if the associate deans for this unit must come only from one college.

Pros and Cons of OPSA and IIS Reporting Lines (continued)

WHAT ARE THE PROS OF IIS REPORTING THROUGH THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST?

- The independence would send a message that IIS is a *university* initiative and not some.
- IIS is too broad a term to use for this simple pros & cons. TAP/General Studies and overall management of Univ Studies don't make much sense as part of Arts & Sciences and the Office of the Provost is a better location for them.
- None.
- Because IIS is a complex institute that would serve more than just A&S students, I believe it is best to for IIS to report through the Office of the Provost. This would allow for more transparency to students. I believe IIS reporting to the College of Arts and Science could muddle where students believe they have access to programs such as TAP and University Studies degrees.
- Greater ability to broker MOUs and agreements needed to guarantee classes and faculty time to ensure the success of programs. Greater ability to avoid significant overlap and duplication with extant programs in colleges/departments of which Arts & Science may be unaware. This will become more salient as other entities create new programs and the leadership of this unit might only become aware when that proposal gets to faculty senate, for instance. Elevates Interdisciplinary Studies in a highly visible way—more so than just an office within a single college. Important symbol that these are university wide programs which belong to and draw on the expertise of the university as a whole and not only those of a single college.

WHAT ARE THE CONS OF IIS REPORTING THROUGH THE OFFICE OF THE PROVOST?

- Although the Provost is the chief academic officer, the Office of the Provost is not a place for research and teaching. This is a problem for IDPs, which are already seen as “research light.”
- IIS is too broad a term to use for this simple pros & cons. It makes little sense to have the Office of the Provost manage BIMS or the First-Year Life Science Programs. Those students take >90% of their first- and second-year courses in the College of Arts & Sciences and the advisors from Biology have a lot of experience with these students. Thus, they should remain in this College.
- You effectively have some departments in a College that do not answer to, and can bypass, the Dean of the College, so things can run amok easily. Having IIS report to the Provost and not to the Dean of A&S is a terrible idea. Think of how much trouble the Deans of Ag and of Engineering being able to report directly to the Chancellor, and being able to bypass the President, caused. Given that someone, somehow, got the original MGT report to contain flat-out false statements about Biology, I strongly suggest that a conventional structure be imposed rather than allowing a situation where someone could take advantage of a disparity in the reporting structure and cause further trouble.
- I am not sure there is a con, but as discussed in previous meetings, since University Studies and BIMS are currently degree granting programs, what college would be on the diploma?
- Could not (or should not) serve as a tenure (academic home).