

**STATE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM OF FLORIDA**  
**BOARD OF GOVERNORS**  
**Academic and Student Affairs Committee**  
October 30, 2024

**SUBJECT:** Ph.D. in Microbiology and Cell Science, CIP 26.0503, University of Florida

**PROPOSED COMMITTEE ACTION**

Consider approval of the online track of the Ph.D. in Microbiology and Cell Science, CIP 26.0503, at the University of Florida as a self-supporting program.

**AUTHORITY FOR BOARD OF GOVERNORS ACTION**

Article IX, Section 7, Florida Constitution; Board of Governors Regulations 8.011 and 8.002

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

The University of Florida proposed establishing a Ph.D. in Microbiology and Cell Science in 1992 as an on-campus degree program supported by Education and General (E&G) funds. The program was approved by the Board of Regents in 1992, with an effective term of spring 1993. The University of Florida proposes establishing an online track of the existing approved program with a concentration in Microbial and Cellular Data Science. The proposed Ph.D. program and concentration would be offered with a self-supporting tuition rate. Per Board of Governors Regulation 8.002, Self-Supporting and Market Tuition Rate Program and Course Offerings, universities may request to offer graduate-level degree programs that address clearly identified post-professional workforce demand and meet specific criteria, including admission and graduation criteria, tuition and fee information, and must not supplant the existing E&G program. This request meets the required criteria outlined in the regulation and requires consideration of approval by the Board of Governors as this is a Ph.D. program. The University of Florida is the only institution in the System offering the Ph.D. in this CIP. The proposed online track will provide access to the program for students working full-time throughout their degree.

There are 64 students enrolled in the on-campus degree program, and 17 degrees were conferred in the 2022-2023 Academic Year. The projected enrollment for the online track is five students in Year 1, with a total enrollment of 25 students in Year 5. The university has indicated there are adequate resources to initiate and sustain the proposed online track, and there is no anticipated negative impact on the existing E&G Ph.D. program.

Graduates of the program will be well-prepared for jobs such as epidemiologists, medical scientists, and faculty. According to the Florida Department of Commerce, all areas are projected to grow in Florida. The demand in Florida for medical scientists and epidemiologists is projected to grow by more than 16 percent over the next eight years,

and the demand for biological specialty faculty is projected to increase by more than 11 percent.

The University of Florida plans to charge \$448.73 per credit hour for resident students, which is the currently approved graduate tuition rate for E&G programs for resident students. The proposed tuition rate is \$600.00 per credit hour for non-resident students and is less than the currently approved graduate tuition rate of \$1,138.94 for E&G programs.

The University of Florida's Board of Trustees approved the online program on June 13, 2024. If approved by the Academic and Student Affairs Committee, the proposal will be forwarded to the full Board for consideration. If approved by the Board of Governors, the University of Florida will implement the program effective spring 2025.

Dr. Lynn Nelson, Associate Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs and Innovation, will provide an overview of the proposal.

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**Supporting Documentation Included:**

Proposal

**Facilitators/Presenters:**

Dr. Lynn Nelson