

Interdisciplinary Programs in FoS – Organizational Structure and Approach

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The intent of this document is to develop a clear understanding of the operation of Interdisciplinary Programs (IPS) at the Faculty of Science. We consider this a working document that will evolve over time. We group such programs under one of two categories, Type A or Type B. Belonging to either IPS type can change over the years, from Type A to Type B, when the program is established, or move from Type B to Type A, when there is a need to substantially revamp that program. Some programs may always remain in their category. We list below the existing and work-in-progress programs, and define the elements and inclusion criteria of each program type.

All Directors/Chairs of programs administered through the Faculty of Science should have their home departments within the Faculty of Science, except in exceptional circumstances with approval from the Dean of Science.

At the Undergraduate level existing or programs to-appear include:

- Genetics (Type B)
- Biochem (Type B)
- Data Science (Type A)
- Integrated Science (Type A)
- Actuarial Science (cross Faculties, Type B)
- BS Psychology (cross Faculties, Type B)

At the Graduate level:

- Medical Physics (Type A)

Type A

- **Director:** appointed by the Dean. Offered one course buyout.
- **Course accessible funds:** the committee can make a request to obtain funds for course delivery through the undergraduate FoS Endowment funds.
- **Inclusion criteria:** have unique courses and are just getting started (requiring nurturing and experimentation with what works). Additionally, programs with significant independent Funding (e.g. Medical Physics) will be included as Type A.
- **Additional Resources:** recognizing the intensity involved in launching some programs, the chair/director will be offered an additional course buyout for an agreed upon period (1-3 years) needed to get the program established. Dean's approval will be based on justification provided when making such a case (e.g. Integrated Science).

Type B

- **Chair/Director:** appointed by committee or self-appointed, with approval from Dean. No course buyout.
- **Course accessible funds:** available through the department offering the course.
- **Inclusion criteria:** the IPS uses existing courses from Departments, that are well established, and that require only minor tweaks for a successful program.

Common across Type A and Type B

- **Program committee:** all IPS (Type A and Type B) will have a program committee. The structure and terms of reference of the Program Committee is defined by the needs of each program and will need final approval from the Dean.
- **Admin Support:** generally handled through department of the Chair or for special needs, support can be prearranged with the Dean's office (in rare cases).
- **Student Advising:** Dean's office will offer student advising. Will assign a liaison with each program.

Program Evolution

Programs evolve with changing needs. There may be more than the initial two we foresee:

- **Move from Type A to Type B**, when the program is established and running for a few years.
- **Move from Type B to Type A**, if substantial resources are needed to keep current with competing programs or when needing a revamp.

Outstanding questions to be considered over time.

- 1) Will there be an issue with teaching assignments for Type A program courses that do not fall within a department? If yes, do we need a mechanism or incentive for departments to staff these (e.g., credit for those courses goes to whichever department staffs them).
- 2) Are there additional things needing consideration for cross-Faculty joint programs (Actuarial Sciences, BS Psychology).