

Curriculum Committee
Motion to delete the biology-chemistry interdepartmental major

May 19, 2004

MOTION:

The Curriculum Committee moves to delete the Biology-Chemistry Interdepartmental Major.

RATIONALE:

With the recently approved reconfiguration of biology major, students have the opportunity to major in concentrations of biology which include significant chemistry content. The concentrations available to students majoring in chemistry and biology are now more streamlined and focused compared to the "smorgasbord" of courses that students chose in the interdepartmental major. The two departments want to either drastically strengthen this interdepartmental major or eliminate it as it does not seem to meet our learning goals in the present form. The declining enrollments (See table below) in this major is definitely indicative of its lack of focus.

Strengthening the Biology-Chemistry interdepartmental major into a more focused interdisciplinary program would require more resources. The present revisions to biology major and the revision to biochemistry concentration of chemistry major allow ample opportunities for interdepartmental interaction such as cross counting of 300 level biology and chemistry courses as well as opportunities to engage in collaborative independent research that spans both disciplines. The Neuroscience major also enhances this interdisciplinary interaction. Thus, we feel that eliminating the current biology-chemistry major is the right choice at this time.

15 year data on the number of biology-chemistry interdepartmental majors:

Year	Majors	Remarks
1990	8	
1991	10	
1992	11	
1993	10	
1994	13	
1995	13	Molecular biology Concentration in biology approved
1996	12	Biochemistry concentration in chemistry approved
1997	3	
1998	2	
1999	1	
2000	4	
2001	3	Neuroscience major approved
2002	2	
2003	0	
2004	0	