

Request by the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill for Authorization to Establish a Joint Degree Program in Biology (B.S.) with the National University of Singapore

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill requests authorization to establish a joint Bachelor of Science in Biology degree program (CIP code 26.0101) with the National University of Singapore (NUS) effective July 2013. Since UNC-CH currently has Board-approved degree programs at the baccalaureate level in Biology (Bachelor of Arts and Bachelor of Science) as well as five existing joint degree programs with NUS, this is just a request for approval of an additional joint degree program.

Program Description

This would be the sixth degree jointly offered with National University of Singapore, following Economics, English, Geography, History, and Political Science, all Bachelor of Arts programs that began in 2006, and the first Bachelor of Science. In all the degree programs, undergraduate students have access to the full academic resources of the two institutions. The faculties of the two schools have worked together on the curriculum and program requirements within the context of the Memorandum of Understanding on academic cooperation signed by the Chancellor of UNC-Chapel Hill and the President of the National University of Singapore. The joint degree is designed to be completed in four years, to be taught in Singapore and at UNC-Chapel Hill. It combines the strengths of the undergraduate curricula at both universities and integrates an overseas experience into the undergraduate studies. Students would spend a minimum of two semesters and a maximum of three at the other institution. The requirements for the joint degree map exactly to the existing Bachelor of Science in Biology at UNC-Chapel Hill and extend the general education requirement for NUS students.

Relevance to Institutional Mission and Strategic Plan

The 2011 Academic Plan: *Reach Carolina* lays out a 10 year vision plan around six interlocking themes for the UNC-Chapel Hill campus community. The sixth, to “Extend Carolina's global presence, teaching, research, and public service” extends the strategic planning intended to strengthen Carolina’s role in global education and engagement that were formulated into the Strategic Roadmap for Globalizing UNC-Chapel Hill which in turn led to the Global Research Institute and a strong UNC Global program (see <http://global.unc.edu>).

This particular joint degree provides an important opportunity for students majoring in the sciences (the rich plant diversity in Southeast Asia is expected to be especially interesting to students interested in plant biology) and is intended to:

- a. Mutually benefit the two universities based on their complimentary nature. This is in terms of geography, as well as the differences in the undergraduate program structure whereby UNC-Chapel Hill offers a more extensive and structured General Education program than NUS while NUS has a more intensive set of major requirements.
- b. Create an undergraduate program with an integral study abroad component; hence developing students with a global perspective.
- c. Offer undergraduates the opportunities of certification and training by both universities; hence providing them a competitive edge in the future.

- d. Explore the possibility of collaborative teaching between the two universities which may further lead to joint efforts in terms of research.

Diploma

As required by UNC Board Policy, the successful graduates of the program will be awarded a diploma carrying the names of both institutions.

Resource Implications

No new resources or facilities will be needed for this additional joint degree program.

Recommendation

It is recommended that the Board of Governors approve this request from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill to establish a joint Bachelor of Science in Biology degree program with the National University of Singapore (CIP code 26.0101) effective July 2013.