

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, DAVIS

BERKELEY • DAVIS • IRVINE • LOS ANGELES • MERCED • RIVERSIDE • SAN DIEGO • SAN FRANCISCO



SANTA BARBARA • SANTA CRUZ

DEPARTMENT OF MICROBIOLOGY
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
ONE SHIELDS AVE
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA 95616-8665

COLLEGE OF BIOLOGICAL SCIENCES

James Hildreth, M.D., Ph.D.
Dean
College of Biological Sciences

Davis, June 11, 2012

**re: Name change *Department of Microbiology* to
*Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics***

Dear James:

With this letter I request on behalf of the faculty of the Department of Microbiology that the name of our Department be changed from *Department of Microbiology* to *Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics*.

The Department of Microbiology was originally founded as the Department of Bacteriology in 1952 and renamed Section of Microbiology in the reorganization that formed the Division, later College, of Biological Sciences. The department faculty unanimously decided at a faculty meeting on April 9, 2012 to continue this academic evolution and rename the department to the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. We feel that this name better reflects the research activities of the department faculty and acknowledges the considerable breadth the faculty represents. Specifically, two of our 15 faculty members do not work with microbes but exclusively with mammalian systems (mouse, human). It is not uncommon for these faculty members to be asked why they are in a Department of Microbiology since their research and background is not in this field. Moreover, about one half of the remaining faculty use microbes primarily as models to study fundamental biological problems and often have a component in their research program that uses a mammalian system (mouse, human). Hence, the name Department of Microbiology has become restrictive and no longer truly reflects the activities of over one half of our faculty. We feel that the name Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetic is more inclusive and more accurately reflects the research of all faculty members. We also note that the University of California, Davis does presently not have a department, in whose name genetics appears, which avoids any conflict or confusion. The name change to Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics will not impact our commitment to the Microbiology major or the teaching mission of our department or the College of Biological Sciences. This is simply a name change of the department to better represent ourselves. Finally, the name Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics is commonly found at institutions with an academic and departmental portfolio similar to that of UC Davis.

The prominence and common use of the name Microbiology and Molecular Genetics derive from the historic connection of the two fields. As you are very aware, molecular genetics emanated

from work in microbial model systems (bacteria, viruses) and was further developed for eukaryotes with fungal model systems, most prominently yeast. Hence, the name Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics combines the historic roots of our Department with the present day and future scientific orientation.

A survey of Department names at peer institutions, including other University of California campuses, shows that Departments with a similarly broad scientific portfolios adopted the name Microbiology and Molecular Genetics or minor variations of it including also immunology and biochemistry. These institutions include UC Irvine, UCLA, University of Texas, Austin, Michigan State University, Stony Brook University, University of Massachusetts, University of New Mexico, University of Pittsburgh, University of Kansas, University of Kentucky, University of Texas, Houston, University of Florida, Duke University, Ohio State University, and the University of Vermont. Moreover, departments, who have retained the name Department of Microbiology, focus primarily on microbial biology and have only one or few faculty members using microbes as model for fundamental biology questions. Institutions with such departments include the University of Georgia, Montana State University, University of Washington - Seattle, University of Illinois - Urbana, University of Iowa, Oregon State University, and the University of Alabama. Thus, departments with a scientific portfolio similar to ours have broadened their names to better reflect the research activities of their faculty. At present, our Department stands out as a clear misnomer in the comparison with these institutions.

Department name changes are regulated by the Policy Procedure Manual (PPM) 200-20, stipulating that the request is made to the Dean of the affected college, who will communicate his recommendation to the College Executive Committee for their review. I presume that the Dean will forward both recommendations, his and the one of the Executive Committee, to the Academic Senate for final approval. For your convenience, I attach this section of the PPM.

In accordance with PPM 200-20, I broadly consulted with the other department chairs in the college throughout this process. After a first round of private discussions, I followed up by email, and finally made a presentation at the Chair and Director's meeting on May 14, 2012. The Chairs of the Department of Neurobiology, Physiology & Behavior, Professor Greg Recanzone, and Department Molecular & Cellular Biology, Professor Jodi Nunnari, provided a short note supporting our name change (see attached). I also consulted with Professor Ted Powers, Chair of the College Executive Committee, to learn of any potential concerns he might have that I could address in the process. He mentioned no concerns and was supportive of the name change. The Chair of the Department of Evolution and Ecology, Peter Wainwright, mentioned the following concern of his faculty: "this [Microbiology and Molecular Genetics] seems a somewhat odd combination of topics to have in a departmental name." After further clarification of the historical origin of this combined naming (see above) and realization how widespread this department name is at US academic institutions, Chair Peter Wainwright now supports our name change (see attached note).

The Chair of the Department of Plant Biology voiced concern that molecular geneticists in his department are being deprived of representation in case our Department assumes this new name. It is not our intent nor belief that our name change would negatively impact our colleagues in Plant Biology in any way. In fact, a small-sample survey (see below) shows that comparable institutions with an equally broad portfolio of biological research as our College maintain a similar complement of Departments as our College that not only co-exist, but also flourish together with a Microbiology and Molecular Genetics Department (see list below). These institutions are UC Irvine, UCLA, UT Austin, Stony Brook, and Michigan State. While we understand the goal of our colleagues in the Department of Plant Biology to have their own teaching and research accurately

reflected in their department names, the experiences of other academic institutions indicate that the proposed name change for Microbiology will not limit this goal for any other department. To resolve any remaining concerns, we would be happy to consider secondary appointments to those colleagues, who would like to be associated with the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. I should point out that several members of my department including myself have secondary appointments in another department, and several members of another department have a secondary appointment in our department. In summary, this broad consultation process revealed no significant concerns regarding our name change.

In conclusion, we request a simple name change from *Department of Microbiology* to *Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics*. The new name more accurately reflects the identity of our department and is in line with department names at other academic institutions with similar portfolios of departments conducting biological research. We have broadly consulted in this process with the chairs of the other departments in the college and the Chair of the College Executive Committee to clarify the intent of this name change and to ascertain that there is will be no impact on the teaching mission of the department or college. Three of four department chairs in the College and the Chair of the Executive Committee support our name change. To address any remaining concern, we offer a well-established mechanism for our colleagues to associate with our Department. In accordance with PPM 200-20, we request your support and your guidance of this process to the Executive Committee of the College and the Divisional Academic Senate.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Wolf-Dietrich Heyer", is enclosed in a light gray rectangular box.

Wolf-Dietrich Heyer, Ph.D.
Professor and Chair, Department of Microbiology
Director T32 Training Grant in Oncogenic Signals and Chromosome Biology

Department names at other institutions:

UC Irvine

Biological Chemistry
Developmental and Cell Biology
Ecology and Evolution
Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
Molecular Biology and Biochemistry
Neurobiology and Behavior
Physiology and Biophysics

UCLA

Biological Chemistry
Ecology and Evolution
Human Genetics
Microbiology, Immunology, and Molecular Genetics
Molecular Biology
Molecular, Cellular, and Developmental Biology
Molecular, Cellular, and Integrative Physiology
Neurobiology

UT Austin

Integrative Biology
Molecular and Cellular Development
Molecular Genetics and Microbiology
Neurobiology

Stonybrook

Biochemistry and Cell Biology
Molecular Genetics and Microbiology
Neurobiology and Behavior
Physiology and Biophysics

Michigan State University

Biochemistry and Molecular Biology
Entomology
Microbiology and Molecular Genetics
Physiology
Plant Biology
Zoology

and Programs in Cell and Molecular Biology, Genetics, Human Biology, and Neuroscience

May 8, 2012

Dr. Wolf-Dietrich Heyer,
Professor and Chair
Department of Microbiology
College of Biological Sciences
University of California at Davis

Dear Chair Heyer,
As you requested, I have brought to the attention of the NPB senate faculty your proposal to change the name from the Department of Microbiology to the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. No faculty members were opposed, nor am I. Good luck with this transition.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gregg Recanzone". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Dr. Gregg H. Recanzone
Professor and Chair
Department of Neurobiology, Physiology and Behavior
College of Biological Sciences
University of California at Davis

Monday, May 14, 2012 1:03:33 PM PT

Subject: Microbiology proposed name change
Date: Monday, May 14, 2012 10:18:48 AM PT
From: Jodi M. Nunnari
To: Wolf-Dietrich Heyer
CC: Ted Powers, Joanne Engebrecht, Judy Callis, James Hildreth

Dear Wolf,

The faculty of MCB have both discussed and conducted a formal vote on your proposal to change the name of the Department of Microbiology to the Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. I am happy to report that an overwhelming majority of faculty does not oppose this proposed name change (25/27). Faculty feel strongly that we need to recruit the very best people to CBS. In order to accomplish this goal, CBS Departments need to work together in a supportive and non-competitive manner.

Much of the discussion, however, was focused on whether faculty members within CBS are organized accurately. Specifically, your name change highlights the fact that there is considerable overlap between disciplines represented in Microbiology and MCB, especially in the area of molecular genetics. We would like to initiate a discussion at the College level on whether reorganization would be beneficial. I am copying Dean Hildreth on the email as a formal request to begin to evaluate this possibility.

MCB looks forward to continuing to work with our colleagues in Microbiology in the future.

Sincerely,

Jodi

--

Jodi Nunnari
Professor and Chair
Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
University of California, Davis
One Shields Ave.
Davis, CA 95616
530-754-9774

Tuesday, June 5, 2012 11:30:18 AM PT

Subject: proposed Microbiology dept name change

Date: Tuesday, June 5, 2012 11:28:01 AM PT

From: Peter Wainwright

To: Wolf-Dietrich Heyer

Wolf,

I wanted to let you know that I support your proposed departmental name change - to Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. While there are many departments around the country with this name, it does seem to be unusual for a department that is not in a medical school, especially for schools that have a medical school. Nevertheless, if your department feels that this name best reflects the central theme of your department, I believe that it is synergistic with the other department names in the college.

These are my personal feelings about the proposal. EVE has not discussed the proposal in a faculty meeting, but I requested feedback by email. Some faculty were concerned about the implications of putting the name 'genetics' in one of the CBS departments because this area is fundamental to most of the CBS departments. Others have expressed the belief that any proposed departmental name change in the college should be considered carefully with respect to the entire college.

Best Wishes,

Peter Wainwright
Professor and Chair
Department of Evolution & Ecology
University of California
Davis, CA 95616
Phone: 530-752-6782
Website: <http://fishlab.ucdavis.edu/>

July 31, 2012

Ted Powers, PhD
Chair, Executive Committee
College of Biological Sciences

RE: Name Change of the Department of Microbiology

Dear Ted:

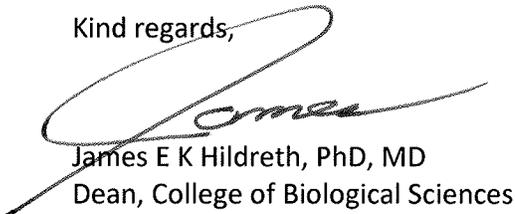
I am writing to communicate a formal request from Professor Wolf-Dietrich Heyer as chair of the Department of Microbiology that the department be re-named the *Department of Microbiology and Molecular Genetics*. After careful consideration of the arguments presented by Dr. Heyer, and review of similar departments at peer institutions, I too am in agreement and offer my full support of the proposed name change.

In accordance with university policies, Dr. Heyer has consulted faculty broadly across the college and as evidenced by letters from department chairs, the name change has substantial support from the faculty. As pointed out in his letter, faculty members in the Plant Biology department have some concerns, but I believe these can be addressed in several ways including offering interested faculty appointments in the newly re-named department.

I am satisfied that faculty members in the Department of Microbiology will maintain their commitments to the college missions of teaching and research. This modified name will more accurately reflect the department's portfolio of research interests and in doing so will better reflect to outsiders the depth and breadth of science in our college.

I urge the CBS Executive Committee to approve this request.

Kind regards,



James E K Hildreth, PhD, MD
Dean, College of Biological Sciences

Attachments

Gina Anderson

From: Bruno Nachtergaele <bxn@math.ucdavis.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, September 05, 2012 9:00 PM
To: Gina Anderson
Subject: Fwd: Request for Department Name Change in CBS
Attachments: Department-Name-Change-Request Wolf Heyer.pdf; PPM 200-20.pdf; Ted Powers LOS Micro Name Change.pdf; Letter_Nachtergaele.pdf

Gina,
here are the attachments.
Bruno

Begin forwarded message:

> From: Ted Powers <tpowers@ucdavis.edu>
> Subject: Request for Department Name Change in CBS
> Date: September 5, 2012 12:13:08 PM PDT
> To: Bruno Nachtergaele <bxn@math.ucdavis.edu>
> Cc: Charles Gasser <csgasser@ucdavis.edu>, Wolf Heyer <wdheyer@ucdavis.edu>, "James E.K. Hildreth" <jekhildreth@ucdavis.edu>, "Donna W. Olsson" <dwolsson@ucdavis.edu>
>
> Bruno Nachtergaele, Chair
> Davis Division of the Academic Senate
>
>
> Dear Bruno,
>
> The last item of business for the 2011-12 CBS FEC was the consideration of a request by the Department of Microbiology to change the name of their department to Microbiology and Molecular Genetics. According to PPM 200-20, this request must be approved by both the Dean of the College as well as by the FEC. After broad consultation with our colleagues in the College, the FEC has agreed to support this request. The request now requires action by the Academic Senate. Please find attached the relevant documentation, including a letter of support from Dean Hildreth. Any requests for further information from the FEC should be directed to Chuck Gasser (csgasser@ucdavis.edu), FEC Chair for 2012-13.
>
> Note that a signed copy of this email message in document form is also attached for your records.
>
> Best regards,
>
> -Ted
>
> --
> Ted Powers, PhD
> Chair, CBS Executive Committee 2011-2012
> Department of Molecular and Cellular Biology
> College of Biological Sciences
> One Shields Ave
> UC Davis
> Davis, CA 95616
>
> Office: (530) 754-5052
> Lab: (530) 754-5048
>