

Contact: Rachel Boon

**REQUEST FOR DEPARTMENT CHANGE AT IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY: MERGE  
DEPARTMENTS OF ENTOMOLOGY AND PLANT PATHOLOGY AND MICROBIOLOGY**

**Action Requested:** Consider approval of the request by Iowa State University to merge the Department of Entomology and the Department of Plant Pathology and Microbiology in the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences.

The Council of Provosts and Board office support approval of this request.

**Reason for proposed change:** Discussions between the departments of *Entomology (ENT)* and *Plant Pathology and Microbiology (PLPM)* in the spring and summer of 2019 highlighted the following opportunities from a merger:

- Increased potential to create new curricula to attract undergraduates due to synergisms in expertise and flexibility from larger faculty numbers.
- Increased potential to create new research ventures. Although several PLPM and ENT faculty already work together, this merger would increase opportunities for cross-talk for productive collaborations.
- Opportunities to increase efficiencies by merging or streamlining courses to reduce redundancy and bolster student enrollment.
- Ensure continued support for joint ventures, including the Plant & Insect Diagnostic Clinic, which offers a critical and unique service within the state of Iowa.
- Greater opportunities for new faculty positions as strategic hires within a challenging funding climate.
- Cost savings for the College of Agriculture and Life Sciences due to leadership under a single Department Chair.

**Effect on program configuration:** The new department will be called the Department of Plant Pathology, Entomology and Microbiology. There are no immediately anticipated changes to the program configuration of either department as a result of the merger. Because current graduate and undergraduate programs will remain in their current form, the credit hours required will remain the same. Faculty appointments will also remain the same.

**Effect on students:** The proposed merger is unlikely to decrease the number of current students, as a joint department would continue its role in co-administration of the Microbiology Undergraduate Program and administration of separate graduate programs in Entomology and in Plant Pathology. The merger has the potential to increase undergraduate student enrollment through the development of new and expanded curricula.

**Effect on resources:** Merging the two departments under a single chair will reduce those administrative costs initially. The proposed merger will require additional resources to streamline the transition and help build synergistic activities. The future addition of two tenure-track faculty lines has already been discussed and agreed upon by the departments in the hope that these faculty hires will fill strategic teaching/research needs in the newly-merged department.

**Date of implementation:** September 2022.