

**University of Wisconsin—Madison**  
**Biology Major Program Committee Bylaws**  
*(Approved June 20, 2013, Updated October 12, 2020)*

## **Purpose**

The Biology Major provides students with a broad, multidisciplinary understanding of biology and with integrated knowledge across biological science disciplines. The major is available to students in both CALS (administered by the Department of Bacteriology under the B.S. degree) and L&S (administered by the Department of Integrative Biology under the B.S. and B.A. degrees) with a common curriculum for major requirements, but separate college requirements specific to each degree. The Biology Major Program Committee (BMPC) consists of faculty and academic staff drawn from across many biological science departments within multiple colleges and is charged with setting the curriculum of the Biology Major to ensure that students in the major receive a world-class education in biology.

## **Membership and Eligibility Criteria**

The BMPC shall consist of from 10 to 13 voting members given the current total of two named options in the major (Plant Biology and Evolutionary Biology). The size of the BMPC will change if the number of named options in the major changes.

### **1. Committee Composition**

- A. The two co-chairs of the Biology Major, one from CALS and one from L&S;
- B. The chairs of the Bacteriology and Integrative Biology curriculum committees, or their designees (ex officio);
- C. One representative from each Named Option within the Biology Major;
- D. The program manager of the Biology Major (ex officio);
- E. Three to six at-large members, as determined by the BMPC.
- F. Two Biology Major student members (non-voting), one from CALS and one from L&S
- G. All members of the Biology Major Advising staff (non-voting)

### **2. Eligibility**

- A. The CALS co-chair shall be a faculty member with at least a 50% appointment in a CALS department and who has a formalized relationship with Bacteriology.
- B. The L&S co-chair is a faculty member with at least a 50% appointment in an L&S department and who has a formalized relationship with Integrative Biology;
- C. The named option representatives shall be faculty members who have agreed to serve as advisors for students in their respective named options.
- D. The at-large members may be faculty or academic staff members who satisfy one or more of the following criteria:
  1. faculty advisor or faculty mentor in the biology major;
  2. within the past three years, have been an instructor of record within the student information system (faculty or academic staff) for a biology course

(introductory biology/intermediate or advanced biology) that satisfies a biology requirement for the Biology major.

- E. Among the three to six at-large BMPC committee members, at least one shall be a faculty member from a CALS department, at least one shall be a faculty member from an L&S department, and at least one shall be a faculty member from a non-CALS or non-L&S department.
- F. The student members must be declared Biology Majors in good standing with the university. They will serve as the representative for the college they are declared in (CALS or L&S) at the start of their term.

### **3. Appointment and Election Procedures**

- A. During the spring semester prior to the beginning of the new term of a co-chair, the BMPC shall nominate one or two individuals for the position. The corresponding department chair may either select and appoint the next co-chair from those nominated or work with the BMPC to create a new slate of nominees.
- B. Prior to the beginning of each fall semester, the chairs of the Curriculum Committees in the departments of Bacteriology and Integrative Biology shall designate a member from their respective committees, who could be the chair, to serve on the BMPC.
- C. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, for each named option, the faculty members who advise in that named option shall select a representative to serve on the BMPC for the following year. If more than one individual expresses interest in serving, the faculty advisors in the named option will select their representative by majority vote.
- D. During the spring semester, the BMPC co-chairs and program manager shall compile the list of faculty and academic staff eligible for the at-large positions. The BMPC shall determine how many open positions will be up for election and the minimal number of positions that must be filled by individuals from the specified colleges to ensure the broad representation outlined in section 2.E. Individuals on this list will be asked to nominate to the BMPC individuals to stand for election to the BMPC. The BMPC shall serve as the nominating committee with the aim of selecting from two to four candidates more than the number of open positions. Prior to the beginning of the fall semester, members on the list will be given the slate of nominees and may vote for as many candidates as there are open positions. The top vote getters join the BMPC subject to satisfying the minimal representation criteria in 2.E. The elections are held in fall so that candidates who are selected to serve on the BMPC via another mechanism (co-chair, option representative, or curriculum committee designee) may be replaced on the ballot before the election.
- E. During the spring semester, there will be a call for nominations (including self-nominations) for student members of the BMPC. The BMPC will select the student members.

### **4. Terms of Office**

- A. The co-chairs shall serve three-year terms, except that the first appointed L&S co-chair shall serve an initial two-year term so that thereafter, the terms of the co-chairs are staggered. If a co-chair leaves the position early, the BMPC shall nominate

a replacement for approval by the corresponding department chair to serve the remainder of the term. A co-chair shall be eligible to serve multiple consecutive terms.

- B.** The departmental curriculum committee representatives shall serve for a one-year term and shall be eligible to serve multiple consecutive terms.
- C.** The named option representatives shall be elected to serve one-year terms and shall be eligible to serve multiple consecutive terms.
- D.** At-large members shall serve three-year terms except that the BMPC may set some shorter terms at the time of election to foster staggered terms. For the initial election, the CALS candidate and L&S candidate who receive the most votes shall serve three-year terms, the candidate from a non-CALS and non-L&S department who receives the most votes shall serve a two-year term, the next highest vote getter shall serve a two-year term and the next two highest vote getters shall serve one-year terms.
- E.** The student members shall be appointed to serve one-year terms and shall be eligible to serve multiple consecutive terms.
- F.** Any BMPC member who misses more than half the scheduled meetings in an academic year may be asked by the co-chairs to forfeit their position.

## **Responsibilities and Procedures**

### **1. Curriculum**

- A.** The BMPC is responsible for setting the curriculum for the Biology major.

### **2. Student Grievances**

- A.** The BMPC co-chairs are responsible for responding to student grievances and appeals for exceptions to the curriculum requirements.

### **3. Overseeing Advising**

- A.** The BMPC co-chairs are responsible for day-to-day supervision of the program manager and for conducting the program manager's annual performance evaluation, although the chair of Bacteriology is the supervisor of record.
- B.** The BMPC is responsible for ensuring that there is sufficient advising service for students in the major delivered through a combination of staff and faculty advisors.

### **4. Assessment**

- A.** The BMPC is responsible for assessing student learning and student attainment of the major's learning objectives.

### **5. Agendas**

- A.** The BMPC co-chairs are responsible for calling and setting the agendas for BMPC meetings and for providing leadership for the Biology Major. The co-chairs shall call a meeting at the request of two BMPC members.

### **6. Meetings**

- A. The BMPC will meet at least twice per semester and more often as needed.
- B. Meetings are open. In particular, staff advisors for the major are invited to participate in BMPC meetings.
- C. Robert's Rules of Order Newly Revised, 12<sup>th</sup> edition, shall serve as the BMPC's default parliamentary manual for all meetings, but in the case of conflict between Robert's and any rules adopted by the BMPC, the latter shall take precedence.

#### **7. Minutes**

- A. The program manager or designee will take and distribute minutes of BMPC meetings.

#### **8. Reports**

- A. The BMPC will provide annual reports to the chairs of Bacteriology and Integrative Biology that summarize the activities of the committee.

#### **9. Student and Alumni Communication**

- A. The BMPC is responsible for communications with current students in the Biology Major, including maintenance of a website.
- B. The BMPC is responsible for maintaining connections with graduates of the Biology major.

#### **10. Voting**

- A. All members of the BMPC may vote.
- B. A quorum is a voting majority of the committee and no business of the committee may take place without a quorum present.
- C. Tie votes do not pass.

#### **11. Subcommittees**

- A. There are no standing subcommittees.
- B. The BMPC may form ad hoc subcommittees when needed.

#### **12. Substantial changes to the biology major program**

- A. Changes to the biology major curriculum and program that require review by college curriculum committees shall be forwarded to joint meetings of the CALS and L&S Curriculum committees.

#### **13. Changes to Bylaws**

- A. Changes to the bylaws may be made with a vote in favor by two-thirds of the full BMPC.