



Department of Microbiology

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Dr. Kathleen M. Hallihan
Colleges of the Arts and Sciences
Director: Curriculum and Assessment Office
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Dear Dr. Hallihan,

The Department of Microbiology would like to request a change in the organization and total credit hours for Microbiology 581, Microbial Genetics. This course is a required course for the Microbiology major and in its current form consists of both lecture (3-48 minute contacts/week) and laboratory (2-168 minute contacts/week) components. We are proposing to create two separate, but related sections: Microbiology 581.01 (3 credit hr.) and Microbiology 581.02 (3 credit hr.) that will encompass the lecture and laboratory aspects of the course, respectively. Both M581.01 and M581.02 will be required for the major and this change will add one additional credit hour to the total hours amassed by majors as they complete the core course requirements in the program. We are not requesting a change in the total hours needed for the major; this will remain at 40 hours. Consequently, the students will be required to take one hour less in their electives courses.

A number of factors led us to this model. The most significant factor was related to the teaching outcomes for the class. In recent years the fast passed changes in Molecular Microbiology have forced us to update and revise the laboratory exercises numerous times. This has made it difficult to maintain the continuity or the coupling of the laboratory exercises with the topics covered in the lecture portion of the class. This disorder resulted in some topics being introduced in the laboratory before they had been covered in depth in the lecture decreasing the effectiveness of the laboratory experience. A second factor was the increased demand for the course. We continue to experience a high level of demand for the class and we foresee, with this change, the opportunity accommodate more students and increase their flexibility in scheduling. This latter aspect should also help students complete the program in a timely manner.

We also felt that an increase in the total credit hours for the course, now a total of 6 credit hours, was justified and beneficial to the students. Increasing the credit hours associated with the laboratory section will allow us to add needed out-of-class exercises to reinforce concepts and incorporate more analytical approaches. We are also requesting that students complete the lecture section, M581.01, prior to taking the laboratory section. Here again, we feel that this will greatly increase the effectiveness of the laboratory and provide a better learning experience for the students.

Don't hesitate to contact me if you need further information. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely yours,

Charles J. Daniels, Ph.D.
Professor
Chair: Microbiology Curriculum Committee