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Steven W. Cheung  
Chair, Assembly of the  
Academic Senate  
Faculty Representative,  
UC Board of Regents

Academic Senate

Office of the President  
1111 Franklin Street  
Oakland, CA 94607

[senate.universityofcalifornia.edu](https://senate.universityofcalifornia.edu)

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July 7, 2025

Yvette Gullatt  
Vice President & Vice Provost  
Graduate, Undergraduate and Equity Affairs

Re: Announcement of UC Transfer Pathway focused on Biological Sciences

Dear Vice President Gullatt,

At its June 25, 2025 meeting, the Academic Council approved the consolidation of four existing UC Transfer Pathways (UCTPs) into a single Biological Sciences UC Transfer Pathway as proposed by the Academic Council Special Committee on Transfer Issues (ACSCOTI).

The first change combines the majority of preparatory courses for four separate UCTPs—biology, biochemistry, cell biology, and molecular biology—as they share identical course expectations. The unified list of applicable UC majors will simplify communication to prospective transfer students.

The second revision reflects the differing requirements of these majors by campus emphasis within the discipline. Accordingly, the consolidated UCTP introduces flexibility by allowing students to complete either a one-year sequence of organic chemistry with lab or calculus-based physics with lab, depending on their intended major and the specific UC campus. While organic chemistry has been required for all four previous UCTPs, some UC majors in this category do not require it for graduation. At the same time, most biology-related majors do require physics with a lab component. Under the revised UCTP, organic chemistry with lab remains the default expectation, but students may substitute physics with a lab if their intended UC major does not require organic chemistry for graduation. The new guidance should draw student attention to campus-specific major requirements to ensure proper preparation without taking unnecessary coursework, thereby supporting timely degree completion.

We request your assistance in publicizing the Biological Sciences UCTP as one that students can begin following as of fall 2025 to allow for their consideration in UC undergraduate admissions decisions beginning in fall 2027.

We look forward to continued collaboration with you and our intersegmental colleagues on improvements to UCTPs that will promote student preparation, access, and success across the three segments of California public higher education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Steven W. Cheung". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Steven" being more prominent.

Steven W. Cheung  
Chair, Academic Council

Encl.

cc: Academic Council  
ACSCOTI Chair Volz  
Provost & Executive Vice President Newman  
Associate Vice Provost for Undergraduate Admissions Yoon-Wu  
Senate Division Executive Directors  
Senate Executive Director Lin



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ACADEMIC COUNCIL SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON TRANSFER ISSUES

David Volz, Chair

May 19, 2025

Steven Cheung  
Chair, Academic Council

RE: Proposed Revisions to UC Transfer Pathways focused on Biological Sciences

Dear Chair Cheung,

During AY24/25, we explored the possibility of two minor revisions to four biological sciences-related [UC Transfer Pathways](#). In January 2025, we emailed Deans and/or Department Chairs from all nine undergraduate UC campuses that are involved in curricular development and/or advising of students for biological sciences-related majors in order to solicit input from life sciences faculty for both proposals outlined below. Although replies were not received from UC Merced nor UC San Diego, we identified representatives from the remaining 7 campuses. On 4/9/25, Ken Feer (ACSCOTI analyst) and I met with these representatives via Zoom to receive input and feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of both proposals from a curricular perspective; on 4/21/25, Ken Feer and I met with UCOP staff via Zoom to receive their input and feedback about potential challenges (if any) of both proposals from an implementation perspective.

Based on these two meetings, we have now landed on the following minor revisions to be considered by the Academic Council:

**Revision 1:** Consolidating all existing biological sciences-related UC Transfer Pathways (biology, biochemistry, cell biology, and molecular biology) into a single “Biological Sciences UC Transfer Pathway” to simplify UCOP’s communications and expectations for transfer-intending students, as all four pathways currently have identical major preparation (course) expectations –

general biology with lab (full introductory sequence), general chemistry with lab (one-year sequence), calculus for STEM majors (one-year sequence), and organic chemistry with lab (one-year sequence) – that provide the foundation for pursuing an undergraduate degree within a biological sciences program. All applicable majors from each of the four pathways would also be consolidated within a single "Applicable Majors" section, and this list of "Applicable Majors" would be updated to reflect sunsetted majors and the addition of new majors since these four pathways were established.

**Revision 2:** Providing flexibility for transfer-intending life science students to complete a one-year sequence of either organic chemistry w/ lab or calculus-based physics w/ lab prior to transfer depending on whether they intend to transfer into an Applicable Major that requires organic chemistry w/ lab or not. Currently, UC expects that transfer-intending students complete a one-year sequence of organic chemistry w/ lab in preparation for all four biological sciences-related UC Transfer Pathways. However, there are a handful of Applicable Majors that do not require organic chemistry w/ lab for their programs. Therefore, since a one-year sequence of calculus-based physics w/ lab is also required for the vast majority of biology-related majors across the UC System, this minor adjustment will provide transfer-intending students the flexibility to choose whichever sequence is for appropriate for their Applicable Major while, at the same time, ensuring that their time to degree following transfer to UC is not significantly impacted. Therefore, we are proposing to maintain the same four course expectations within a single “Biological Sciences UC Transfer Pathway” but revising the text within the “Looking Ahead” paragraph (under Course Expectations) on the UC Transfer Pathway website to indicate that organic chemistry w/ lab is the default expectation (since the vast majority of applicable majors will require organic chemistry w/ lab) with the exception of a small subset of Applicable Majors across the UC system that do not require organic chemistry w/ lab. Within this revised text, we would encourage students to refer to the curriculum for their preferred, campus-specific Applicable Major to confirm whether organic chemistry w/ lab is a requirement or not for graduation.

Thank you for your assistance in conveying this to the Academic Assembly. We look forward to your input and feedback.

Sincerely,

David Volz  
ACSCOTI Chair

Cc: Ahmet Palazoglu, Academic Council Vice Chair

