

**Proposal for Discontinuation of the Undergraduate Program in  
Plant Health and Protection**

1. Name of administrator, department or group originating the proposal. Include the name of contact person(s).

This discontinuation proposal is being submitted by the faculty of the Department of Plant Pathology in the College of Agriculture at Iowa State University. The contact person is Dr. Edward Braun ([ebraun@iastate.edu](mailto:ebraun@iastate.edu)).

2. Name of the Program

Undergraduate Major in Plant Health and Protection

3. Name of the department(s) which administers the program.

The Department of Plant Pathology has responsibility for administering the program. The Departments of Agronomy, Horticulture, Forestry, and Entomology are also participants in the program.

4. Rationale for discontinuation.

Since its inception in 1992, the Plant Health and Protection program has struggled to recruit students. Our experience here at ISU has been the same as at every other land grant institution that has attempted to start a similar program (Plant Health, Crop Protection, Integrated Pest Management, etc.). A few years ago we reached 21 majors in the program. We currently have 13 majors, most of whom are also double majoring in Horticulture or Agronomy.

On February 18, 2004, the Provost's Task Force to Review Small and Interdisciplinary Degree Programs and Low Enrollment Courses released its report. The report called on the Deans of each College to initiate a review of the viability of small degree programs within their unit. The report caused our faculty to initiate a discussion of the future of our small Plant Health and Protection program. The Plant Pathology Dept. along with the Animal Science Dept. was recently given joint responsibility for the undergraduate program in Microbiology. After discussion, the consensus among the Plant Pathology faculty was to discontinue our small Plant Health and Protection program and put all of our efforts and energy into making the undergraduate Microbiology program successful. The Plant Pathology faculty voted unanimously to discontinue the Plant Health and Protection Program.

5. Availability of similar programs at other Regent's institutions.

There are no similar programs at either the University of Iowa or the University of Northern Iowa. The College of Agriculture at Iowa State University offers a secondary major in Pest Management. This secondary major will still be available to serve future students with an interest in Plant Health and Protection. Most students with a secondary major in Pest Management would have a primary major in Agronomy or Horticulture. All of the undergraduate courses in Plant Pathology (PI P 391, 407, 416, 452, 477) would continue to be taught as service courses for students majoring in Agronomy, Horticulture, Forestry, Microbiology, Pest Management, Seed Science, etc.

6. Enrollment data for current and previous four years.

<u>Academic Year</u>	<u>Average Number of Students*</u>
2003-2004	14
2002-2003	16
2001-2002	14
2000-2001	20
1999-2000	16

\* Average of Fall and Spring enrollments for each academic year.

7. Information required by the Board of Regents

- a. A survey of students currently enrolled in the program to determine the impact of the discontinuance on their academic plans. The survey should attempt to identify students who wish (i) to complete the program; (ii) to transfer to other programs at the same institution; and (iii) to leave the institution.

A letter is being sent by campus mail and e-mail to all students currently enrolled in the program telling them that, although the Plant Health and Protection program will be discontinued, they will be able to finish their degree requirements and graduate with a major in Plant Health and Protection. A copy of the letter is included below. The letter requests that they inform us of their plans as described above. As of 3/15/2004, we have heard from six of our current majors and all are planning to remain in the program and graduate with a degree in Plant Health and Protection.

- b. On the basis of the data collected, a projection of faculty and staff needed to accommodate student needs in order to maintain program quality, and both a time frame for, and the costs of, program phase-out.

We intend to teach all courses needed for the program through the end of the 2003-2005 catalog. This should allow all students currently in the program to complete all the course requirements. We do not intend to take any new students into the program during this final year of the 2003-2005 catalog. Plant Pathology faculty will continue to advise the current Plant Health and Protection majors until they complete the program and graduate from ISU. We

do not anticipate any costs associated with the phase-out of the Plant Health and Protection program.

- c. A description of the amount of money, if any, that would become available for redirection under the institution's strategic plan as a result of discontinuance of the program.

We do not anticipate any redirection of funding resulting from discontinuation of the Plant Health and Protection program. Only a few hundred dollars for direct mail recruiting are currently allocated specifically to the program. Faculty activities in advising, recruiting, curriculum, outcomes assessment, and course development will shift emphasis to the undergraduate program in Microbiology.

- d. A description of the impact of the discontinuance will have on other programs offered by and the overall mission of the institution.

The discontinuation of the Plant Health and Protection program should not negatively impact the teaching mission of the College of Agriculture. As mentioned above, all undergraduate courses in plant pathology will continue to be taught as service courses for students majoring in the agricultural and biological sciences.

- e. A description of the impact on minorities and women.

We do not expect any negative impacts on minorities or women resulting from discontinuation of the program. Although the Plant Health and Protection major has typically had more female than male students, the numbers involved in the program are so small that we do not see any significant impact on female enrollments at ISU from discontinuation of the program. Of the 15 majors in F03, 7 were male and 8 were female. To reiterate, the Pest Management secondary major will still be available for students with an interest in Plant Health and Protection. The fact that it is available only as a secondary major should not entail too great a loss of opportunity for students because most current Plant Health and Protection majors are double majors.

- f. A description of the potential faculty and staff reductions or reassignments that would result from the discontinuance.

Plant Pathology faculty and staff involved in undergraduate teaching and advising will focus their efforts on the undergraduate program in Microbiology.

- g. A description of how existing facilities and equipment freed by the discontinuance would be utilized.

No facilities or equipment were specifically allocated to the Plant Health and Protection program.

# Iowa State University

OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

## **INTEROFFICE COMMUNICATION**

Date: March 1, 2004

To: Dr. Eric Hoiberg  
Assoc. Dean for Academic Programs  
College of Agriculture  
134 Curtiss

Dr. Brad Skaar, Chair  
College of Agriculture Curriculum Committee  
119 Kildee Hall

From: Dr. Charlotte Bronson, Chair  
Dept. of Plant Pathology

Dr. Edward Braun  
Dept. of Plant Pathology Curriculum Committee

RE: Proposal for Discontinuation of the Undergraduate Program in Plant Health and Protection

The Plant Health and Protection program (PL HP) was established as an interdepartmental undergraduate program in the fall of 1992. The Plant Pathology Dept. was designated as the administering department, but the departments of Agronomy, Horticulture, Forestry, and Entomology were also involved in the program. As a practical matter, Plant Pathology was the only department with a vested interest in the program and essentially ran the program independently

We have struggled to gain visibility and recruit students to the program. A few years ago, we reached 21 majors in the program. We are currently at 13 majors, most of whom are also double majoring in either Horticulture or Agronomy. Our experience is similar to the situation at every other land grant institution that has attempted to start a similar program (Plant Health, IPM, Plant Protection, etc.). At most other institutions the programs are either very small, or they have disappeared due to low enrollments. A few departments have invested significant resources and energy in recruiting students to these programs with little or no success.

Due to the current budget situation, the Provost's Office appointed a task force to

review small degree programs and low enrollment courses. That committee has now finished its work and submitted its report on February 18, 2004. The task force has recommended that the Deans in each College initiate a review of the viability of these small programs. As a response to the task force report, the Plant Pathology faculty initiated a discussion of the future of the Plant Health and Protection program.

As you are aware, our department along with the Animal Science Dept. was recently given joint responsibility for the undergraduate Microbiology program. This program currently has 70 majors and we hope to get the numbers up to 100-125 majors in the next few years. After discussion, the consensus among the Plant Pathology faculty was to discontinue our small PL HP program and put all of our efforts into making the undergraduate Microbiology program successful. The faculty voted unanimously to discontinue the PL HP program.

March 8, 2004

Dear Plant Health and Protection Students,

Last year, in response to the budget pressures facing Iowa State University, the Provost's Office created a task force to examine small degree programs and low enrollment courses. That committee recently finished its work and released its final report on February 18<sup>th</sup>. As you might expect, our small Plant Health and Protection program was one of the degree programs cited in the task force report. The task force recommended that the Deans in each College undertake a review of the viability of the small degree programs within their respective units.

In response to the task force report and as part of an ongoing planning process, the faculty in the Plant Pathology Dept. has been considering the future of the Plant Health and Protection program. After much discussion, the Plant Pathology faculty has decided that it would be best to discontinue the Plant Health and Protection program.

All courses required for the Plant Health and Protection major will continue to be taught through the end of the current catalog period and all students currently in the program will be able to finish their course requirements and graduate with a major in Plant Health and Protection. Only three courses, PI HP 206, 392, and 498, will be dropped in the 2005-07 catalog. You will be able to work with your advisor to create a schedule that will allow you complete these courses next year. I want to emphasize again, that all current majors will be able to graduate in the program.

In spite of its small size, the Plant Health and Protection program has attracted top-notch students over the years. Many of those students have made and continue to make important contributions to our research and extension programs in the Department of Plant Pathology. Program graduates have gone on to establish successful plant health-related careers or to pursue graduate degrees in a range of plant science disciplines. We are proud of your accomplishments and thank you for your participation in the program.

We are interested in getting feedback from you concerning how these changes will affect your academic plans. Please let us know whether you intend to finish your degree in Plant Health and Protection. Also, the administration would like to know if you plan to switch to another major at ISU or leave ISU to pursue a degree at another institution. Please let me know your plans in the near future.

We regret that the Plant Health and Protection program has to be dropped. In spite of our efforts, we have not been able to recruit enough students to make the program viable. Please see me or your advisor if you have any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Edward Braun  
Professor