

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents
From: Board Office
Subject: Discontinue Undergraduate Major in Plant Health and Protection,
Iowa State University
Date: June 7, 2004

Recommended Action:

Approve Iowa State University's request to discontinue the Undergraduate Major in Plant Health and Protection.

Executive Summary:

The University is requesting approval to discontinue the Bachelors degree program in Plant Health and Protection within the Department of Plant Pathology in the College of Agriculture.

Difficult to
Recruit Students

Since its inception in 1992, the Plant Health and Protection program has struggled to recruit students. (A post audit report of the program was due several years ago, and has to date not been submitted; this discontinuation will negate the need for that report.) Most of the 13 students currently majoring in Plant Health and Protection are also double majoring in Horticulture or Agronomy.

Refocus of
Efforts

The decision to discontinue follows the report of the University's Task Force to Review Low Enrollment Programs. The report called on Deans of each College to initiate a review of the viability of small degree programs within their unit. At this time, the Plant Pathology faculty have recognized the limited success of this degree program and have agreed to focus efforts and energy in the undergraduate Microbiology program.

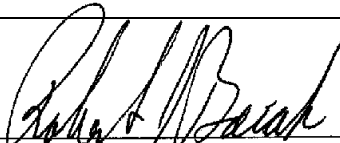
Currently Enrolled
Students Allowed to
Complete Program

Currently enrolled students will be able to complete their degrees in Plant Health and Protection; a survey of those students indicated that they would not transfer to other programs or leave Iowa State as a result of the discontinuation.

Alternative Majors Available

There are no similar programs at either the University of Iowa or Northern Iowa. As stated, ISU students will continue to pursue majors in Agronomy or Horticulture, and additionally, a second major in Pest Management at Iowa State is still an option.

Additional information on the proposed discontinuance is attached.



Robert J. Barak

Approved: 
Gregory S. Nichols

**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).

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.