

2013-2014 LONG SIGNATURE SHEET



UNC CHARLOTTE

Proposal Number: UCOL 12-16-2013

Proposal Title: New undergraduate 'holding' major for "Health Professions Exploration"

Originating Department: UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

TYPE OF PROPOSAL: UNDERGRADUATE X GRADUATE _____ UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE _____
 (Separate proposals sent to UCCC and Grad. Council)

DATE RECEIVED	DATE CONSIDERED	DATE FORWARDED	ACTION	SIGNATURES
			Approved	<u>DEPARTMENT CHAIR</u> [print name here:]
			Approved	<u>COLLEGE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR</u> [print name here:] <i>Lisa Walker</i>
		17 Dec 13	Approved	<u>COLLEGE FACULTY CHAIR (if applicable)</u> [print name here:]
		17 Dec 13	Approved	<u>COLLEGE DEAN</u> [print name here:] <i>John Small</i>
			Approved	<u>GENERAL EDUCATION</u> (if applicable; for General Education courses)
		13 Jan 14	Approved	<u>UNDERGRADUATE COURSE & CURRICULUM COMMITTEE CHAIR</u> (for undergraduate courses only) <i>Richard A. Leyle</i>
			Approved	<u>GRADUATE COUNCIL CHAIR</u> (for graduate courses only)
1/13/2014				<u>FACULTY GOVERNANCE ASSISTANT</u> (Faculty Council approval on Consent Calendar) <i>Matthew J. ...</i>
				<u>FACULTY EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE</u> (if decision is appealed)



UNC CHARLOTTE

LONG FORM COURSE AND CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

*To: Dr. Rick Lejk, Chair, UCCC

From: Dr. John Smail, Dean University College

Date: 16 December 2013

Re: Proposal to create a new undergraduate 'holding' major within University College for "Health Professions Exploration"

University of North Carolina at Charlotte

New Undergraduate Holding Major for Health Professions Exploration

Proposed by University College

Proposal to create a new undergraduate holding major for Health Professions Exploration (HPEX)

II. CONTENT

A. Summary

University College requests permission to create a holding major for health professions exploration. This holding major, like the UCOL major, is not a degree program. Rather it is a major in which new freshmen will be enrolled at the time of admissions until such time as they choose the major in which they intend to graduate. Students admitted to the HPEX holding major will be offered a freshman curriculum and coordinated advising support designed to meet their needs and position them for success. As is true for all students in University College, the primary goal in recommending courses and in advising is to assist students in making realistic decisions about a course of study that will lead to timely graduation.

B. Justification

1. The creation of the HPEX holding major is a response to the Department of Biology's demonstrated need to implement a more selective admissions policy in order to foster student success. For the past several years, the department has restricted the eligibility of new freshmen to enroll in the first course in the Biology major curriculum, BIOL 2120. Using data on past performance, the department determined that students who did not meet benchmark scores on the math portion of the SAT (SATM) or the university's math placement test were at a high risk of failing the course. As a result, a significant number of students (approximately 150 to 200 of the ~300 new freshmen who enroll as Biology each year) are admitted into a major but are not eligible to take the required freshman courses in the major. A very small percentage of these students end up pursuing a major in Biology, but many persist in the major for several semesters creating problems for advising and student progress.¹ The proposal received from the Department requests permission to establish a competitive admissions criteria for freshman admissions into Biology so that any student with an SATM score less than 550 (or equivalent ACTM

¹ For example, of an entering cohort of 276 students in Fall 2010, 34% were still in Biology during their 4th semester of enrollment, Spring 2012 – 3% in Biology and 31% in the PBIO holding major. By their 5th semester, Fall 2012, only 24% of the original cohort was still in Biology – 7% in Biology and 17% in PBIO.

score) would be denied admission to the major. As with other programs with competitive admissions standards, the denied students become the responsibility of University College. University College makes sense, since data indicate that these students choose a very broad array of majors, and the UAC advisors have expertise in placing students across campus.²

Two groups of freshmen will be impacted by the changes in admissions requirements that the Department of Biology has proposed.

A. Freshmen who indicate, on their application, an interest in pursuing a major in Biology:

In a typical year, this group makes up about half of the students who will not be eligible for the Biology major because of their SATM / ACTM scores are below the cut off – about 75-100 students. The proposed HPEX holding major *is not* primarily directed at this category of students. Rather those students will be admitted as undeclared students in to the UCOL. However, since it is reasonable to assume that many of the students who declare Biology are potentially interested in a career in the health professions, University College will contact them to determine if the HPEX option would better serve their needs.

B. Freshmen who indicate, on their application, an interest in pursuing a program of study that prepares them for a career in medicine or dentistry.

In a typical year, this group makes up the other half of the students who will not be eligible for the Biology major because of their SATM / ACTM scores are below the cut off – again about 75-100 students.

The proposed holding major for health professions exploration is specifically targeted at this latter group – students who apply to the university with the intention of pursuing a program of study that prepares them for a career in medicine or dentistry whose SATM / ACTM scores do not meet the threshold for admission to Biology. These students need to have a designation that recognizes their declared interests and provides them with an appropriate first year experience and associated advising support that will help them determine which, if any, of the health professions is appropriate for them and how best to prepare for that goal. As is always the case for students admitted in University College, advisors in the University Advising Center make every effort to ensure that the curriculum recommended to students meets their needs. Students wishing to change majors – including a change to the more generic UCOL designation – are free to do so.

² Data from the Fall 2010 entering cohort indicates that students initially admitted into Biology pursue a diverse range of degree programs. As noted 24% were still in Biology in Fall 2012, 13% were in CHHS, 11% were in humanities and social science majors, 6% in math or science majors, 7% in Business, 3% in Education, 3% undeclared, and 34% not retained.

It is important to stress that the proposed HPEX holding major is primarily intended as a mechanism that allows advisors in the University Advising Center to easily identify new freshmen with these expressed career interests so that they can provide appropriate advising and curriculum recommendations. The curriculum recommended for these students, while facilitating their exploration of possible careers in the health professions, is typical of the curriculum recommended for all freshmen. Its primary goal is to help students begin the process of identifying the major they wish to pursue.

2. There are no pre-requisites for this major. It is primarily intended as a major in which students will be placed at the time of admissions. (We do not anticipate that enrolled students will declare this major after being at UNC Charlotte.) It is expected that students will be in this major for 2-3 semesters until such time as they declare the major in which they plan to graduate. As is the case with the UCOL major there is no hard and fast rule on when a student must leave the HPEX holding major.³ However, the advisors in the University Advising Center, who will work with HPEX students in this holding major, are very conscious of the need to have students declare a major in a timely fashion and all of the advising processes in the unit are geared to that end.

It is important to note that while students will be assigned to this major during the admissions process, that assignment is not irrevocable. Communication with these students from both Admissions and University College will explain the nature of the program to which students have been admitted and the proposed curriculum. If students do not believe that the curriculum recommended for health professions exploration meets their interests or needs they are able – indeed encouraged – to explore other options and can change their majors. (Provided, of course that they meet the admissions requirements to that program and make the request in a timely fashion.)

3. Course Numbering: NA

4. The proposed holding major will improve the first year academic programming available for freshmen who have a declared interest in the health professions. This is true both in regards curriculum and advising.

³ This policy has generated several questions and deserves explanation. The reason that University College does not *force* students to declare a major by a certain number of earned hours is that such a policy encourages students to ‘park’ themselves in a major they have no intention of pursuing while still trying to take classes to become eligible for the competitive major they want to get into. Since advisors in those units are not familiar with admissions rules for the University’s various competitive programs, and may not have sufficient staffing, it is preferable to keep those students in UCOL. UAC advisors are very successful at getting students into a declared major by the time they are juniors. About 90% of the UCOL students are freshmen and sophomores and a large proportion of the juniors are transfer students.

First year experience: Students who are admitted into this major will be advised into a first year experience – a recommendation not a requirement – that addresses their needs and equips them for success. The core elements of this recommended curriculum are:

- UCOL 1200 – Freshman Seminar. This three-credit course will provide students with their Prospect for Success experience. The course is first and foremost a freshman seminar designed to position students for success at the University. The seminar's activities are geared towards learning about the health professions and understanding the commitment needed to pursue these professions.
- Science courses as per student-specific criteria. Students will enroll in an appropriate science course (or courses) depending upon their previous experience, level of preparation, and the recommended curriculum for any major in which they have expressed interest.
- Math Courses as per student-specific criteria. This is a normal expectation of the first year curriculum for UNC Charlotte students but is particularly important for students who may want to pursue a STEM major.
- An LBST course appropriate for students' interests. In the near term we proposed to use LBST 2214 (Health and Quality of Life) because the course content addresses issues in which these students have an interest. University College will explore options that may exist for linking material covered in this course to the students' health professions exploration freshman seminar. Other LBST offerings may be substituted as they become available and as they meet student interest.

In the second semester, students will take courses appropriate for the particular goals they have identified during the first semester course work. Students will work closely with a UAC advisor to ensure appropriate course selection.

Advising: All advising for students in the proposed holding major will take place in the University Advising Center. Established in 2007, the UAC is staffed with professional advisors who specialize in guiding students into the right major given their interests and abilities. UCOL students currently advised in the UAC cannot graduate in that major and so advisors have developed a number of processes to support, encourage, and ultimately compel students to declare a major in which they can graduate. For students in the proposed HPEX holding major the advising sequence will be as follows:

- A UAC advisor meets at Orientation with students who have been placed in the HPEX holding major by admissions. Students also attend a presentation at Orientation by Dr. Liz Hanie, the pre-health professions advisor, which clarifies requirements for entry into post-graduate health profession programs. Advisors will discuss with students whether this curriculum meets their needs and help the students explore other appropriate options.
- Throughout the semester, and particularly at midterm, the academic progress of this group of students is monitored. The UAC advisor maintains a list of students who have continued interest in a STEM major, and he/she pays particular attention to their performance in key progression courses.
- Toward the end of the semester, information on students who need permission to enroll in courses that will allow them to pursue a STEM major (specifically Biology) is forwarded to the relevant department for the correct permits.

- Students whose interests or performance does not suggest that health professions would be an appropriate goal are advised on how to identify a major that does meet their needs.
5. The proposed first year experience and advising structures for the health professions exploration holding major was offered on an ad hoc basis in Fall 2013 to approximately 150 students. Because of upcoming Admissions deadlines, it is not possible to include an evaluation of the success of this de facto effort with this proposal. Once the semester is complete, UCOL will conduct an analysis of student performance and course evaluations and review written reflections students submitted concerning their academic plans. That analysis will be used to guide the development of the first year experience for the proposed holding major.

C. IMPACT

1. On Students and Curricula

Students served by the new major will be those who have expressed an interest in a health profession, who are not eligible for admissions into Biology.

2. On Courses

- a. The only course specific to the students in this holding major is a freshman seminar with a health professions exploration focus that will be offered each fall semester. New freshmen in UCOL already take a specifically designated first year experience course, and as a result of the new Prospect for Success first year curriculum, University College has the resources needed to offer these sections.
- b. Other courses in the proposed curriculum for this holding major will not have enrollments affected. All of the courses in question – science courses, math courses, LBST – are ones that new freshmen, and particularly students with these interests, already take in large numbers.
- c. Freshman seminar sections typically enrolled 25 students per section. In Fall 2013 we offered 6 sections.
- d. Enrollment in other courses will not be affected. For a number of years, these students have been advised to take a similar range of courses – Chemistry, Math, LBST 2214 etc.
- e. This major will not require changes to the catalog copy for other programs of study.

III. RESOURCES REQUIRED TO SUPPORT PROPOSAL.

- A. **PERSONNEL.** Specify requirements for new faculty, part-time teaching, student assistants and/or increased load on present faculty. List by name qualified faculty members interested in teaching the course(s).

To teach the HPEX Freshman seminar for the ~100 students we anticipate will enroll in this program University College will rely, in the short term, on Graduate

Assistants. The college has an active program of providing assistantships to doctoral students in Educational Leadership, Counseling, and Psychology that allow them to gain experience teaching a course on their own and to work with students. Since the course is first and foremost a freshman seminar, these students have the appropriate educational background. These GTAs get training prior to the beginning of the semester and participate in an ongoing development / evaluation program during the semester to ensure that they are equipped to provide a quality education to students.

As noted, the resources needed to teach the health professions exploration freshman seminar in Fall 2013 were already available in University College because of the expansion of freshman seminar offerings associated with the implementation of Prospect for Success.

As the program matures it may be necessary to explore some more permanent staffing options.

B. PHYSICAL FACILITY. Is adequate space available for this course?

None. All new freshmen admitted to this major are already enrolling in the standard array of introductory classes and are occupying seats and classrooms already.

C. EQUIPMENT AND SUPPLIES: Has funding been allocated for any special equipment or supplies needed?

None. The proposed freshman seminar course requires no additional equipment or supplies.

D. COMPUTER. Specify any computer usage (beyond Moodle) required by students and/or faculty, and include an assessment of the adequacy of software/computing resources by available for the course(s).

None. The proposed freshman seminar course requires no computer resources.

E. AUDIO-VISUAL. If there are requirements for audio-visual facilities beyond the standard classroom podiums, please list those here.

None. The proposed freshman seminar course requires no AV resources.

F. OTHER RESOURCES. Specify and estimate cost of other new/added resources required, e.g., travel, communication, printing and binding.

None. The proposed freshman seminar course requires no other new resources.

G. SOURCE OF FUNDING. Indicate source(s) of funding for new/additional resources required to support this proposal.

Necessary funding is already available in the University College Budget.

IV. CONSULTATION WITH THE LIBRARY AND OTHER DEPARTMENTS OR UNITS

- A. LIBRARY CONSULTATION.** Indicate written consultation with the Library Reference Staff at the departmental level to ensure that library holdings are adequate to support the proposal prior to its leaving the department. (Attach copy of *Consultation on Library Holdings*).
- B. CONSULTATION WITH OTHER DEPARTMENTS OR UNITS.** List departments/units consulted in writing regarding all elements outlined in IIC: Impact Statement, including dates consulted. Summarize results of consultation and attach correspondence. Provide information on voting and dissenting opinions (if applicable).

1. College of Health and Human Services, Dr. Nan Fey-Yensan, Dean: Initiated 27 November 2013
2. College of Liberal Arts and Sciences, Dr. Nancy Gutierrez, Dean: Initiated 27 November 2013
3. Department of Biology, Dr. Martin Klotz, Chair: Initiated 27 November 2013
4. Department of Chemistry, Dr. Bernadette Donovan-Merkert, Chair: Initiated 27 November 2013
5. Pre-Health Advising, Honors College, Ms Liz Hanie: Initiated 27 Nov. 2013

NOTE: The Biology and Chemistry majors are included in this consultation because these majors are ones typically chosen by students interested in a health professions career. We expect, however, that only a minority of these students will wind up in one of these programs since most will be declaring a major based on new interests they identify much as is the case with current UCOL students. For this reason it was deemed impractical and unnecessary to initiate consultation with all possible majors to which these students might go.

See the separate memo attached to this proposal discussing the consultations received.

V. INITIATION, ATTACHMENTS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE PROPOSAL

- A. ORIGINATING UNIT.** Briefly summarize action on the proposal in the originating unit including information on voting and dissenting opinions.
- B. CREDIT HOUR. (Mandatory if new and/or revised course in proposal)**
Review statement and check box once completed:
 The appropriate faculty committee has reviewed the course outline/syllabus and has determined that the assignments are sufficient to meet the University definition of a credit hour.
- C. ATTACHMENTS.**
1. CONSULTATION: Attach relevant documentation of consultations with other units.
 2. COURSE OUTLINE/SYLLABUS: For undergraduate courses attach course outline(s) including basic topics to be covered and suggested textbooks and reference materials with dates of

publication. For Graduate Courses attach a course syllabus. Please see Boiler Plate for Syllabi for New/Revised Graduate Courses.

3. PROPOSED CATALOG COPY:

NOT APPLICABLE (The current catalog copy contains no specific description of the UCOL holding major.)

4. ACADEMIC PLAN OF STUDY (UNDERGRADUATE ONLY): Does the proposed change impact an existing Academic Plan of Study?

Yes. If yes, please provide updated Academic Plan of Study in template format.

No.

5. STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES (UNDERGRADUATE & GRADUATE): Does this course or curricular change require a change in Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) or assessment for the degree program?

Yes. If yes, please provide updated SLOs in template format.

No.

6. TEXTBOOK COSTS: It is the policy of the Board of Governors to reduce textbook costs for students whenever possible. Have electronic textbooks, textbook rentals, or the buyback program been considered and adopted?

Yes. Briefly explain below.

No. Explanation: No text is assigned for the UCOL 1200 sections for health professions exploration. The students have assigned readings in Moodle from online sources.

IMPORTANT NOTE: A Microsoft Word version of the final course and curriculum proposal should be sent to facultygovernance@uncc.edu upon approval by the Undergraduate Course and Curriculum Committee and/or Graduate Council chair.

Date: 16 December 2013

To: Rick Lejk, Chair, University Course and Curriculum Committee

From: John Smail, Dean, University College

Re: Discussions of Consultations re the proposal to create the Health Professions Exploration holding major

Requests for consultation were made to five units. The Colleges of Health and Human Services and Liberal Arts and Sciences; the departments of Biology and Chemistry; and the Pre-Health Professions advising program located in the Honors College.

These units were asked to consult on an earlier draft of the proposal and revisions have been made to the proposal to address some of the questions they raised. The following is a summary of those consultations and changes made.

1. College of Health and Human Services:

No formal response was received from the CHHS. However, in email communication, the Dean of the College, Nan Fey-Yensan, and the Associate Dean, Jane Neese, expressed concerns about the use of the word 'health' in the proposed title. Their concern is that CHHS is attempting to brand itself as the college for programs and research in the health field and that the use of 'health' in the name of the proposed holding major will cause confusion. They point to the fact that there is already some confusion when students interested in careers in professions like medicine, pharmacy, etc. come to their advisors instead of seeing the pre-health professions advisor in the Honors College.

In response to this request, several alternatives were considered, the two most viable being "Medical Professions Exploration" and "Professional School Exploration." However, after discussion of these two options it became clear that the 'Medical' option was too narrow in that in that it does not reflect the variety of possible professions – pharmacy, physical therapy, physician's assistant – that students with these interests might pursue. In contrast, the 'Professional' option is too broad since there are other possible professional schools – principally Law School – which are clearly not included under this heading.

After discussion with the Provost, the College of Health and Human Services has withdrawn its concerns to calling the proposed program "Health Professions Exploration." However, University College is aware of the potential for confusion and will make every effort to communicate clearly with affected students about the intent and purpose of this holding major, and UAC advisors will work closely with advisors in CHHS to ensure that communication is clear. We believe that the targeted curriculum and advising for these

students is likely to ensure that they are aware of the programs of study available in CHHS and how those might serve their needs

2. Biology:

The Department of Biology provided a memo in response to the request for consultation. This response raises a number of questions about the proposal and recommends against it, suggesting instead that all students denied admission to Biology because of their SATM / ACTM score be admitted as generic undecided students into UCOL. While some modifications have been made to the proposal to address concerns raised by this consultation, there are other issues raised in the report on which differences remain. A summary of the concerns raised and the changes made and alternative perspectives follow:

1. Admissions numbers: the last paragraph on the first page raises questions about whether the decision to admit students denied into Biology as UCOL students instead of in the proposed HPEX holding major would in fact result in a drop in admissions numbers.

The curriculum proposal makes no mention of the impact on admissions numbers of admitting denied Biology students to UCOL as undecided majors. While it should be stated that the professional opinion of the Office of Admissions is that this option *would* result in a decline in admissions numbers, the rationale for the proposed new holding major is made entirely in terms of the program that will best serve student needs.

2. Curricular Fit: The first paragraph on the second page raises the question about how the curriculum students are in prepares them for possible majors.

The students who will be admitted to the HPEX holding major are students who apply to UNC Charlotte to pursue a major that will prepare them for a post graduate professional program in the health professions. Without question, many of these students are not prepared for the rigor of post graduate programs in these fields nor do they understand what it will take to be a successful applicant in one of those programs. However, in order to be successful in some other major/career, these students need to understand that their aspirations are unrealistic, and they need know enough to make a active choice to pursue other options. Moreover, there is no way in which the proposed HPEX holding major will force students with a genuine interest in the non-health facets of the Biology major to abandon their aspirations.

It is possible that there was some confusion on the department's part about how admissions for students applying to Biology but not meeting the SATM / ACTM benchmark would be handled. An earlier version of the proposal recommended that all students not meeting the SATM benchmark be admitted to HPEX regardless of the major to which they had applied. The Office of Admissions recommended against that option, preferring to treat Biology and pre-med applicants differently as outlined in the proposal.

Biology was informed of the proposed change – i.e. the intent to use the HPEX designation **only** for those students applying as pre med/pre dent—but based on their response that may not have been clear.

3. Remedial Education: The second and third paragraphs on the second page raise concerns that the proposed HPEX holding major unrealistically promises underprepared students success in pursuing health profession training.

It was in part in response to this concern that the name for the proposed holding major was changed from ‘pre-health professions’ to ‘health professions exploration.’ The former could be construed to imply that students are on track for what are very competitive post-graduate programs. The latter more realistically promises students the opportunity to explore careers in the health professions but does not make any promises that they will attain their aspirations. University College recognizes that this group of students (SATM below 550) is not as well placed for success as others. However, we believe that all of those students have the potential to be successful and that some of them, perhaps a small number, will develop their skills in order to be successful in the natural science coursework needed to prepare for post graduate training in the health professions.

Fundamentally, UNC Charlotte is a University committed to access; we are more likely to enable students to be successful if we meet students where they are at the time of admissions and help them develop better foundational skills and academic realities.

In sum, while UCOL appreciates the concerns raised by Biology, it remains convinced that the proposed health professions exploration holding major is the best option given students’ needs. It is worth nothing that the Department of Biology’s request for a competitive admission standard (and their existing practice of managing access to the foundational first course in the major) denies some students the opportunity to pursue the Biology major. The students denied admission into Biology need to be housed somewhere, and UCOL is a natural choice given the diverse group of majors they ultimately pursue. However, extensive experience working with students who have been denied admission to competitive program has lead University College to recommend the creation of this designation. We believe that admitting these students in to the generic UCOL major – the Biology department’s recommendation -- will make it much more difficult to provide advising support and appropriate curriculum recommendations which students need.

There is a fundamental point to be made. Biology no longer wants these students in their major (and they have very good reasons for doing so). That being the case, the department is not really in a position to make recommendations on the curricular and advising structures that will serve these students best.

Remarks on Creation of a Pre-Health Professions Holding Major

As the Pre-Health Professions Advisor for the University, I fully support the concept of formalizing current practices to create a new undergraduate pre-health professions holding major. Several features of the proposed holding major are especially noteworthy:

- the major provides the potential to improve science and math skills of incoming students through course selections tailored to individual ability
- students have the opportunity to learn about a variety of healthcare careers, including the realities, both positive and negative, of being a healthcare provider
- the major affords an orientation to the academic and extracurricular requirements for a competitive application to healthcare-related professional schools, facilitating academic advising, timeline planning, and self-assessment of career goals

Having acquired these knowledge bases and skill sets, students should be better able to make decisions regarding selection of majors and career options. They may also find an increased level of success in science and math coursework, with resultant benefits for degree progression, student retention, and, ultimately, admission to professional schools.

Elizabeth A. Hanie, DVM, MS
Pre-Health Professions Advisor
Honors College
12.10.2013



UNC CHARLOTTE
J. Murrey Atkins Library

Consultation on Library Holdings

To: Stephanie Otis

From: Liz Fitzgerald

Date: 11/22/13

Subject: Pre-Health Professions curriculum

Summary of Librarian's Evaluation of Holdings:

Evaluator: _____ **Date:** _____

Please Check One:

- Holdings are superior _____
- Holdings are adequate _____
- Holdings are adequate only if Dept. purchases additional items. _____
- Holdings are inadequate _____

Comments:

Evaluator's Signature

Date

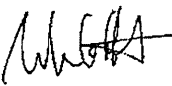


UNC CHARLOTTE

Department of Biology
9201 University City Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
Ph. (704) 687-8686 ~ Fax. (704) 687-1488

Memorandum

TO: John Smail, Ph.D.
Dean of University College, and
Associate Provost for Undergraduate Studies

FROM: Martin G. Klotz, Ph.D. 
Professor and Chair of Biology

RE: Response (2 pages) to proposal UCOL 11-27-2013 (Long signature sheet)

DATE: December 9, 2013

Dear John,

We had extensive discussions in the Biology Department about this proposal, which took place in advisory committee and faculty meetings. Therefore, the conveyed opinion below is not a personal one.

Some of the concerns were addressed by making edits to the proposal. A major issue was that "Pre-Health Professions" is referred to both as a "holding major" (basically an admissions cohort of students without a declared academic major) and as a "major" (a term restricted to an academic course of study that culminates in an academic degree). Since there is another "holding major" in UCOL, namely students that are undeclared, it is important to refer to the "Pre-Health Professions" as a holding major throughout the document. We also made several editorial comments to the text.

A major concern we have is that this proposal rushes to create precedence without sufficient evidence. The Fall 2013 experience is a singular event without comparable statistics or sufficient input from target groups of students. Also, it is highly likely anecdotal that students who are not admitted as "pre-med, pre-dent, pre-vet" or cumulatively labeled "Pre-Health Professions", would not come to UNC Charlotte. In all the meetings, we had the feeling that this was a statement turned into fact from Admissions without any supporting data. This makes the justification for the proposal circular, as it is based on an assumption presented as a fact, which is then used to justify the assumption.

The single, most commonly stated concern we have is that the proposal is based on the assumption that all students who want to or need to take Biology courses to pursue their career aspirations - and who are not prepared to do so - intend to attend professional schools with the goal to practice human, dental or veterinary medicine. We believe that this is not correct as the course of study in the Biological Sciences prepares students for many other career options (the students going to professional schools from even the most successful programs nationally are likely less than 20% of the graduates in pertinent majors such as Biology). We are concerned that, as written, the proposal makes an incorrect assumption about student motivation, presents a narrow and inaccurate view of undergraduate training in biology, and could discourage underprepared students with interests in ecology, environmental biology and evolutionary biology from pursuing their interests because their remediation will send the message that a career in the health professions is the only outcome for a biology (or science) major.

There is a considerable amount of data from Institutional Research showing that the main challenge to success (read: admissions to the upper division program) for students in an *Allied Health Professions* track (programs in CHHS such as Nursing) is the mastery of *required non-major science and math courses*. Likewise, there is a large national level Institutional Research database showing that the main challenge to success (read: admissions to a pertinent major, usually in in the Natural Sciences) for students on an *aspired Pre-Health Professions* track (i.e., pre-med, pre-dent, pre-vet) is the mastery of *required major science and math courses*. The title "Pre-Health Professions" and the way the proposal is written implies that students are being trained specifically for a health professions-related career (which is ambiguous as it does not specify the level of training), such as in a pre-medical school preparatory program, which is misleading. We feel *the proposal for a "Pre-Health Professions" holding major de facto targets unprepared or uninformed students for remedial education and "feel-good" experience* out of fear that they might otherwise enroll in different post-secondary educational institutions. At entry, these students are the *least likely* to succeed in education and training in the Health Professions. No matter how they start, students eligible for admissions to post-graduate professional programs for Health Professions need to have 1) a record of defined natural science course work, 2) a strong foundation of applicable knowledge in the natural sciences to achieve competitive national admissions test scores (i.e., MCAT, DAT, etc.) and 3) a bachelor's degree, which because of 1) and 2) is usually in the natural sciences (with a majority majoring in Biology because it fulfills all admissions requirements).

If established, the "Pre-Health Professions" holding major will send the message that the least prepared students are the ones destined to enter the health professions, whereas those who meet eligibility requirements for the BS or BA in Biology are simply Biology majors. While we understand that the purpose is to help these students realize what is required to achieve their stated goals, the name will lead them to believe they are already moving toward their goal when, in fact, the opposite is true. The problem with the target audience is not that they don't have the background to pursue an (advanced) health professions career; the problem is they don't have the background to pursue an undergraduate degree in a health profession-relevant major. Therefore, the Biology Department cannot support this proposal for a "Pre-Health Professions" holding major as we see that the presently existing "undeclared" UCOL holding major already provides the framework for "holding" uninformed and unprepared students.



UNC CHARLOTTE

Office of Academic Affairs

9201 University City Boulevard, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
t/ 704.687.5717 www.uncc.edu

November 18, 2013

To: Dean Nancy Gutierrez
Dr. Martin Klotz
Dean John Smail
Tina McEntire
Claire Kirby

From: Joan F. Lorden 

Re: Fall 2014 Admissions to Biology

Dear Colleagues,

Good progress is being made on developing the appropriate paths and majors for those students who previously have been lumped into the PBIO designation on admission to the university. I want to thank all of you who have been actively engaged in this process. We still have work to do but I am prepared to endorse the following transition plan to help those students who are interested in the health professions get the appropriate undergraduate courses and for those who wish to major in biology, regardless of their ultimate career paths, to be admitted to biology, recognizing that not all students are well-prepared to begin this major upon arrival. The following points describe the transition plan:

1. New freshmen will be admitted to PBIO and allowed to enroll in BIOL 2120 if they present an SATM score of ≥ 550 (or the equivalent ACTM).
2. All new freshmen with a high overall SAT score and high HS GPA who need an admissions decision in the next few weeks should be admitted to PBIO even if their SATM/ACTM score does not meet the 550 threshold. Claire Kirby is responsible for establishing the criteria for highly qualified students and will discuss this with Biology.
3. All new freshmen applying to **Biology** whose SATM score is < 550 will be admitted to a new holding major called "Pre Health Professions."
4. The Department of Biology will allow students whose SATM/ACTM score does not meet the 550 threshold upon admission to become eligible to enroll in BIOL 2120 through a new option by taking a psychometrically valid placement test, although some students may wish to qualify by taking BIOL 1110. The Department of Biology is responsible for offering the placement test and for publishing the necessary threshold and dates of offering.

The proposed "Pre-health Professions major" is subject to a formal process of curriculum review that must be completed before the admissions notification deadline in January. Dean Smail will undertake consultation with key stakeholders including: Pre-health Advising, CHHS, and other STEM majors in CLAS (particularly Chemistry). We have not analyzed the curriculum and resource implications of offering a Pre-health Professions major on this scale. Dean Smail will convene the appropriate members of the Department of Biology, as well as other key stakeholders to design this curriculum.

For the future, important actions remain to be addressed. These include:

- Elimination of the PBIO major and admission of all qualified students directly to the Biology major.
- Development of a workable process to determine which new freshman applicants are qualified for admission directly to Biology.
- Development of a workable process to determine which new transfer applicants are qualified for admission directly to Biology.
- Adjustment of the admissions application for 2015 to allow prospective students to designate Pre-health Professions as a major choice.

These actions will continue to require close communication and cooperation between UCOL, CLAS, CHHS, Pre-health Advising, and Admissions. I appreciate all the time and energy that has gone into getting us this far. We will need to assess the outcomes of the changes made this year to ensure that we are making choices that serve the needs of our students in getting into the right courses at the right time so that we maximize their opportunities to succeed.