

October 30, 2014

Memorandum

TO: Executive Committee of the Academic Council  
FROM: Sally Kornbluth, Provost  
SUBJECT: MS in Biomedical Science

I am pleased to submit the accompanying resolution from APC and proposal regarding a new MS in Biomedical Science. The proposal was presented to the Academic Programs Committee on October 15, 2014 and was recommended for approval on October 29, 2014.

I submit this material to ECAC for discussion and consideration with my strong support.

SAK/bde  
Attachments



## MEMORANDUM

TO: Academic Programs Committee (APC)

FROM: Stefan Zauscher

DATE: October 17, 2014

RE: APC resolution on the Proposal for a Master of Biomedical Sciences

The Duke University School of Medicine (SOM) proposes a one-year professional master's degree (Master of Biomedical Sciences, MBS). The objective of the degree program is to enhance the scientific and professional preparation of students aspiring to a career in the health professions or in a related field requiring graduate level biomedical sciences.

Three documents were provided to the Academic Program Committee concerning the Proposal for a Master of Biomedical Sciences:

- Revised MBS Proposal October 2, 2014
- Master's Advisory Council report to Provost Kornbluth September 24, 2014
- Master's Advisory Council feedback on original MBS proposal April 22, 2014

APC (subcommittee B) met on October 15, 2014 with Dr. Kathryn Andolsek (Professor of Community and Family Medicine and Assistant Dean of Premedical Education), Dr. Linda Lee (Associate Professor of the Practice of Medical Education and Director, Master of Biomedical Sciences Program) and Dr. Edward Buckley (Vice Dean, Duke School of Medicine) to discuss the MBS proposal.

APC was impressed by the quality of the proposal, which it found to be innovative, highly polished and self-consistent. APC noted the enthusiastic endorsement of the proposed degree program by a broad range of constituents, and appreciated that the representatives of the School of Medicine (SOM) brought written answers to discussion questions provided to the SOM team prior to the meeting with APC.

The discussion in APC revolved in large part around the target audience of the MBS program. While the proposal is clearly targeted to a broader audience, its initial student population most likely will reflect prospective applicants and re-applicants to medical school programs. The MBS program would be the first of its kind in a top ten medical school in the country, and through the EMT experience it would provide a critical clinical and service exposure component that likely will increase the competitiveness of med school (re-)applicants. As such the program and associated degree would function as a "signaling device" indicating that an applicant has "what it takes" to begin medical school training. In the proposal it would have been nice to see this element more clearly articulated also for other areas of health care. Nevertheless, the SOM team made a convincing argument that the curricular activities (e.g., elective tracks) in combination with a robust and individualized career counseling component make the MBS program an attractive choice not only for candidates for medical and health professions schools,

but also for candidates in more broadly related biomedical sciences careers. In terms of program evaluation, the measures of success are not precisely spelled out in the proposal and could be more specific and clear, much like on Page 128 (Response to Clinical Sciences Faculty Council).

APC felt strongly that the financial implications for embarking on the MBS degree need to be made very clear to applicants, particularly as the student debt load in the US is increasing rapidly, and the MBS adds another year of debt for students pursuing medical school. APC appreciates the proposed individual counseling, which also includes financial advising.

The proposal could have been strengthened by presenting a stronger element of market research with associated metrics. The discussions with the SOM team, however, made it abundantly clear that there is sufficient interest in the MBS program.

APC commends the SOM team for its aggressive pursuit to recruit and retain URM for the MBS program (25%). Specifically the proposed scholarship options seem unique among competitive programs. APC was equally impressed by the enthusiasm of SOM faculty to participate in the MBS program as it clearly offers new teaching opportunities that encompass exciting, new teaching strategies.

APC looks forward to a report on the issues raised above upon review of the program.

In summary, APC does not perceive any major weaknesses in the proposal and endorses the MBS program enthusiastically.

**Duke University School of Medicine**  
**Proposal for a Master of Biomedical Sciences**

**October 2, 2014**

**Kathryn M. Andolsek, M.D., M.P.H.**  
Professor, Community & Family Medicine  
Assistant Dean for Premedical Education

**Edward G. Buckley, M.D.**  
Vice Dean for Education  
Professor and Interim Chair, Ophthalmology

**Joseph A. Jackson, M.D.**  
Assistant Professor, Pediatrics

**Linda S. Lee, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor of the Practice of Medical Education  
Director, Master of Biomedical Sciences Program

**Leonard E. White, Ph.D.**  
Associate Professor, Orthopaedic Surgery  
Director of Education, Duke Institute for Brain Sciences