

**TOPIC: PROPOSAL TO OFFER A DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY DEGREE
IN BIOCHEMISTRY**

PREPARED BY: HEATHER DELANGE, JULIE CARNAHAN

I. SUMMARY

The University of Colorado System has submitted a proposal for a Ph.D. in Biochemistry to be offered at the University of Colorado at Boulder. CU Boulder is one of the rare Level 1 Research Universities in the United States that does not have a formal program represented in the Association of Medical and Graduate Departments of Biochemistry.

Department of Higher Education staff supports the proposed Ph.D. in Biochemistry at the University of Colorado at Boulder.

II. BACKGROUND

The following is summarized from the University of Colorado at Boulder's proposal for the doctoral degree in Biochemistry.

CU ROLE AND MISSION:

The Boulder campus of the University of Colorado shall be a comprehensive graduate research university with selective admissions standards. The Boulder campus of the University of Colorado shall offer a comprehensive array of undergraduate, masters, and doctoral degree programs.

EVIDENCE OF NEED FOR THE PROGRAM:

The degree is designed to recognize that graduate training in biochemistry differs significantly from that in chemistry. At present, students pursuing the biochemistry track receive a Ph.D. degree in Chemistry, not Biochemistry, even through there is little programmatic overlap between these tracks. There has been significant growth in the undergraduate Biochemistry major since its creation in 1991 – indicative of a trend in the United States, and of increased interest in Biochemistry Ph.D. programs.

EVIDENCE OF STUDENT DEMAND

In the last 10 years there has been increasing demand for CU's undergraduate biochemistry program, and currently many of these students are intending to apply to graduate schools. The number of students graduating with a B.A. in Biochemistry has almost doubled in the same time frame.

III. STAFF ANALYSIS

The Department staff has reviewed this proposed program to ensure that it meets the State's performance measures outlined in C.R.S. 23-1-121. The program meets all performance measures.

IV. STAFF RECOMMENDATION

This is an information item only; no formal action by the Commission is required.

STATUTORY AUTHORITY

C.R.S. 23-1-121