

MEMORANDUM

To: Provost Jennifer Troyer

From: Department of Chemistry

Date: 10/20/2023

RE: Rename Chemistry PhD Program from "Nanoscale Science" to "Chemistry and Nanoscale Science"

Dear Provost Troyer,

The Department of Chemistry has proposed to change the name of our PhD program from "**Nanoscale Science**" to "**Chemistry and Nanoscale Science**." This proposal is motivated by several key factors that we believe will enhance the program's clarity, appeal, and alignment with current research and education goals of the Department of Chemistry which administers this program.

There are several important rationales for this program name change:

- **Clarity and Alignment:** The existing program name, "Nanoscale Science," while accurately reflecting the program's focus on nanoscale research, does not sufficiently convey the central role of chemistry in nanoscale research and its significance in shaping the program's curriculum. The new name would also more accurately align with pursuits that would fit under the broader chemistry definition, but not necessarily nanoscale science. Several current research foci that stretch the definition of nanoscale science (molecular synthesis, chemical education, and organic electronics) would align better with the more inclusive program name. The name change will help prospective students, faculty members, and funding agencies better understand the program's primary academic domain. In addition, we wish to emphasize that our program equips students with a strong foundation in chemistry, preparing them for cutting-edge research in nanoscale science and its broader applications in the chemical sciences.
- **Improved Program Appeal and Student Recruiting:** The inclusion of "Chemistry" in the program name will enhance the appeal of our PhD program to prospective students. This change will attract a broader pool of applicants interested in chemistry and its applications at the nanoscale. Few students are looking for graduate programs in nanoscale science compared to the large number seeking graduate programs in chemistry every year. With the more inclusive name, we hope to recruit more effectively from both pools of students.
- **Reflecting Faculty Expertise:** The vast majority of faculty members in the Nanoscale Science Ph.D. program have degrees and significant expertise in chemistry, and they play a crucial role in our program's administration, curriculum, and research activities. The revised program name acknowledges their contributions and aligns more accurately with their research interests.

We have consulted with faculty members and current students and there is strong support for this proposed change. A motion to change the program name to "Chemistry and Nanoscale Science" was approved unanimously at a faculty meeting of the Chemistry Department on 10/19/2023. We believe that "Chemistry and Nanoscale Science" is a more descriptive, inclusive, and forward-looking name for our program. We kindly request your support for this program name change. We are confident that this change will strengthen our program's position, attract more students and faculty, and foster collaboration within and beyond UNC Charlotte.

Thank you for your attention to this Department of Chemistry initiative.

Sincerely,

Thomas A. Schmedake, Chair of the Department of Chemistry

Michael G. Walter, Graduate Program Directory for the Ph.D. Program in Nanoscale Science