

## **Bioengineering elevated to department at the UCSD School of Engineering**

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BIOENGINEERING ELEVATED

TO DEPARTMENT AT THE UCSD SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

Bioengineering has been designated a separate department in UCSD's School of Engineering, joining the existing departments of Electrical Engineering, Computer Science and Engineering, and Applied Mechanics and Engineering Sciences (AMES).

Previously part of AMES, creation of the new department was approved by UC President Jack Peltason following endorsements by UCSD's Academic Senate, campus administration, the School of Engineering, and AMES.

Shu Chien, professor of bioengineering and director of the Institute for Biomedical Engineering, has been appointed department chairman by Chancellor Richard C. Atkinson.

"As a department with a focused approach, we're better able to serve the educational needs of our students," said Chien.

A core faculty of eight professors is expected to increase by seven through a recruitment effort. The first four are being recruited through an effort supported by the Whitaker Foundation- -a private, nonprofit foundation that funds biomedical engineering. About 80 graduate students are enrolled in the program.

Through the Whitaker Foundation Biomedical Engineering Development Award, UCSD received \$3 million over a four-year period for bioengineering faculty recruitment; graduate student and postdoctoral fellowships; and for core facilities including confocal imaging and computing, adhesion receptor structure/function, and flow cytometry.

"This is a tremendously exciting time," Chien said.

The UCSD program in bioengineering, created in 1966, was ranked as the fifth best in the nation this year, according to a survey of engineering school deans conducted by U.S. News and World Report.

The new Bioengineering Department offers undergraduates and graduate degrees in two major areas of study--bioengineering and premed biomedical engineering.

Graduates of the bioengineering sequence are prepared for advanced study or for entry into the technical/medical workforce. The premed biomedical engineering track links engineering with medicine to prepare students for new challenges in the way medicine is practiced. Increasingly, engineering is becoming an integral part of specialties such as surgery, anesthesiology, orthopedics, and even pediatrics.

"Medicine has become a very instrument-intensive calling for more analytical and quantitative training," said Chien. "our premed engineering track has been very successful, with a high percentage of our graduates receiving admission to medical school."

Research cooperation in biomedical engineering extends beyond UCSD to neighboring institutions such as The Scripps Research Institute, La Jolla Cancer Research Foundation, The Salk Institute, and a number of local area biotechnology companies who comprise an industrial advisory group.

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