

Division of Physiology Transition Plan

PURPOSE:

This document provides a merger-transition plan as the Division of Comparative Endocrinology and the Division of Comparative Physiology and Biochemistry are retired to form a broader Division of Physiology (DPHYS). The transition plan covers the first four years after DPHYS formation.

FEEDBACK and PROCESS:

The merger process and the transition plan were created by the DCE and DCPB committees after extensive feedback from the broader membership. Both divisions discussed the merger at their respective business meetings during the 2025 and 2026 SICB conferences, in addition to two special-session meetings with the combined membership in those same years, an online poll soliciting feedback in spring 2025 and an online Zoom meeting held in spring 2025. The impending vote in spring 2026 to merge the divisions and this transition plan were created based on community feedback and the overwhelmingly positive support of the SICB community.

GOVERNANCE and ELECTIONS:

All current and elected members will remain in their roles as originally stated after the merger for the chair and secretary positions. This, in addition to the fact that DPHYS will utilize both current, elect- and past-officers in its future governance structure, will lead to an oversized committee for the first four years. The DCE and DCPB representatives for chair and secretary positions will discuss position duties and determine who will take the lead for each duty. Representatives from both divisions will, however, be involved in decision making processes and/or the production of materials. The program officer position will transition differently because the DCE program officer has recently been elected to the SICB-wide program officer position. Thus, the DCPB program officer will immediately become the DPHYS program officer and the DCE program officer elect will become the DPHYS elect. The election of new DPHYS committee members will occur based on the attached schedule. Note that if DCPB is required to hold an election in spring 2026, concurrent with the vote on the formation of DPHYS, we will nullify those results and ask the candidates to run for the DPHYS positions in the subsequent election.

STUDENT AWARDS:

As per discussion during the merger meeting of DPHYS, student awards will merge to include a single best student talk and a single best student poster competition. These awards will not be formally named in DPHYS bylaws, but each year the DPHYS committee will select a scientist who has made important contributions to the field of physiology to honor by naming a student award after them. For the poster competition, we will honor Dr. Lynn Riddiford at the 2027 meeting and officially recognize her legacy as we retire her named award. For the 2027 talk award and all subsequent poster and talk awards, the honored scientists will be highlighted briefly when student awards are announced at the social and at the best student talk session to educate our students about important figures in our field. Scientists to be honored for each award should be determined by September by the DPHYS committee so that the session can be named appropriately in the schedule. A running list of previously honored scientists will be kept in the DPHYS archives (currently on Google Drive).

The selection process for participants in the best student competitions is different in DCE versus DCPB, in that DCPB requires an extended abstract for their competitions and DCE does not. Extended abstracts can be a barrier to participation, which can be viewed positively if you have many applicants or negatively if you have few. DPHYS will conduct its first year of student competitions (2027) without an extended abstract requirement but will evaluate how many applicants DPHYS receives and will revisit and revise the application process for subsequent years as needed.

HONORARY LECTURES:

The Howard Bern and George Bartholomew Awards will remain similar in nature as they were prior to the merger. Care and attention should be given by the co-chairs of DPHYS to utilize a committee selection process for the two lectures that is feasible for and compatible with a single future chair of DPHYS.