

# New Molecular Life Sciences Program: Student Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Transition from BSc in Biochemistry and BSc in Microbiology to the BSc in Molecular Life Sciences (MLSC)

## General Questions about the Program Change

### Why is the Department making this change?

The Biochemistry and Microbiology programs have long shared overlapping curricula and research strengths. Combining them into a single, modern BSc in Molecular Life Sciences (MLSC) reduces administrative duplication and expands student flexibility while maintaining strong disciplinary options through concentrations in Biochemistry or Microbiology.

### Is this a name change or a completely new program?

Both. The department has changed its name to the School of Molecular Life Sciences (MLSC), and all course codes are changed from BCMB to MLSC. The new BSc in Molecular Life Sciences will then formally replace the existing Biochemistry and Microbiology BSc degrees beginning Fall 2026.

### Will the new program affect the department's graduate programs?

No. Graduate programs remain unchanged. The MSc and PhD degrees in Biochemistry or Microbiology will continue as they are.

## Impact on Current Students

### I'm currently declared in a Biochemistry or Microbiology program. What happens to me?

You will not lose any progress toward your degree. You can either stay in your current Biochemistry or Microbiology program or transition into the new Molecular Life Sciences program. All completed BIOC/MICR courses will count toward the new MLSC degree either as core requirements or electives.

### Will I have to take any new courses if I switch?

If you switch to the MLSC degree:

- Students entering Year 2 (as of Fall 2026) must take MLSC 103.
- Students entering Year 2 and 3 (as of Fall 2026) must take MLSC 302.

- Students entering Year 4 (as of Fall 2026) will be waived from these new course requirements.

### **What if I stay in my current program?**

You can complete your Biochemistry or Microbiology degree as planned. BCMB course codes will now appear as MLSC (e.g., MLSC 301A = BCMB 301A).

These courses are equivalent, but you will need to contact Academic Advising ([advising@uvic.ca](mailto:advising@uvic.ca)) to update your Degree Evaluation. There are revisions to the fourth-year teaching lab courses as well. See page 3 and Table 1 on page 4 for more information.

### **Will my degree parchment say 'Molecular Life Sciences'?**

If you stay in your current program, your parchment will say Bachelor of Science – Biochemistry or Bachelor of Science – Microbiology.

If you transition to the new program, it will say Bachelor of Science – Molecular Life Sciences.

## **Options and Specialization**

### **What is an 'option' in the MLSC program?**

An option allows you to specialize in Biochemistry or Microbiology while earning the unified MLSC degree. The MLSC major requires 15 units at the 300–400 level. The option requires 18 units at the 300–400 level, with additional advanced courses in the chosen area. If you choose to complete an option then a notation of “Option in Biochemistry” or “Option in Microbiology” is placed on your transcript, and degree completion letter.

### **Can I still do Honours or a Combined Major or Combined Honours?**

Yes. Students may pursue Honours within the MLSC program, with or without an option, or complete combined Majors or Honours within the Faculty of Science (e.g., MLSC + Chemistry).

## **New Students (Starting Fall 2026)**

### **I plan to apply for Fall 2026. Which program will I follow?**

You will apply directly to the BSc in Molecular Life Sciences. The Biochemistry and Microbiology BSc programs are discontinued after the 2025–26 academic year.

### What courses will new students take?

All first-year MLSC students will take *MLSC 103: Foundations in Molecular Life Sciences*, along with shared core courses in Chemistry, Biology, and Mathematics.

### Advising and Support

#### Who can I talk to about how this change affects me?

Information sessions (in-person and virtual) will be held throughout 2026. Departmental advisors will provide one-on-one support. Email for an appointment ([bcmbadm@uvic.ca](mailto:bcmbadm@uvic.ca)).

#### How will I know which version of the program I'm in?

Once you have declared your program your Degree Evaluation (available through UVic Online Tools) will show your program version and requirements. If you wish to follow a different version or need any updates to your Degree Evaluation for new or retired courses, please contact Academic Advising ([advising@uvic.ca](mailto:advising@uvic.ca)).

### Courses, Codes and Credits

All BCMB coded courses will be renamed MLSC while keeping the same course numbers and credit values. Example: BCMB 301A → MLSC 301A; BCMB 406B → MLSC 406 (integrated lab). BCMB 406A has been retired. Your transcript will show the new codes, which will be recognized as equivalent for graduation purposes.

### Fourth-Year Lab Course Equivalencies During the Transition (see Table 1 on the next page)

### Reassurance and Key Takeaways

- No student will lose credit or be delayed in graduation.
- All Biochemistry and Microbiology courses remain valid and countable.
- The change enhances program coherence, flexibility, and career readiness.
- Faculty and advising staff are committed to a smooth, transparent transition.



**Table 1: Fourth-Year Lab Course Equivalencies During the Transition**

Student Pathway	Course Completion status (406A and 406B)	Requirement Under Discontinued Programs	Equivalent Requirement Under New Molecular Life Sciences (MLSC) Program	Notes / Credit Recognition
<b>Students remaining in Biochemistry or Microbiology programs</b>	BCMB 406A and BCMB 406B	Satisfies required 400-level laboratory sequence	400-level lab requirement deemed <b>satisfied</b>	<b>Will not register for MLSC 406.</b> Full credit retained.
	BCMB 406A only	Partial completion of 400-level lab sequence	Must complete MLSC 406 to satisfy current program 400-level lab requirement.	<b>Will register for MLSC 406.</b> Full credit for BCMB 406A retained.
	BCMB 406B only	Partial completion of 400-level lab sequence	400-level lab requirement deemed <b>satisfied</b>	<b>Will not register for MLSC 406.</b> Must register for one 400-level course in MICR or BIOC- credit applied toward original program completion.
	Have not completed either BCMB 406A or BCMB 406B	Must complete both 400-level lab course equivalents	Must complete MLSC 406 to satisfy current program 400-level lab requirement.	<b>Will register for MLSC 406</b> Must register for one 400-level course in MICR or BIOC- credit applied toward original program completion.
<b>Students transitioning to the new MLSC program</b>	BCMB 406A and BCMB 406B	Former lab sequence	MLSC 406 requirement deemed <b>satisfied</b> . Full credit retained.	<b>Will not register for MLSC 406.</b> Avoids duplication and preserves full credit value.
	BCMB 406A only	Partial completion of lab sequence	<i>MLSC 406</i> requirement deemed <b>satisfied</b>	<b>Will not register for MLSC 406</b>
	BCMB 406B only	Partial completion of lab sequence	<i>MLSC 406</i> requirement deemed <b>satisfied</b>	<b>Will not register for MLSC 406</b>
	Have not completed either BCMB 406A or BCMB 406B	Required to complete both lab courses	Must complete MLSC 406 to satisfy new program lab requirement.	<b>Will register for MLSC 406.</b>