

VCU LIFE SCIENCES

VCU entered a new era when it implemented, as one of its highest priorities, a new universitywide matrix academic organization called VCU Life Sciences, created in response to the need to prepare students for the anticipated growth in new life sciences jobs in the coming decades. The skills identified for these jobs require highly interdisciplinary or multidisciplinary approaches, often falling between the boundaries of traditional academic disciplines. The way that the life sciences are understood and taught is likely to be fundamentally different, with increasing emphasis on systems biosciences as an important complement to more traditional, purely reductive approaches. The objective of Phase II of VCU's strategic plan specifically outlines the need to bring VCU's major academic and administrative divisions together to work on mutual initiatives that will accomplish VCU's goal of national leadership. VCU Life Sciences is a response to that objective.

Faculty

VCU Life Sciences faculty members are drawn from departments across the university. Lists of participating faculty and academic affiliations are available on the VCU Life Sciences website (<http://www.vcu.edu/lifesci>) for each program.

Facilities

VCU Life Sciences comprises the resources and interests not only of the Monroe Park Campus and the VCU Medical Center, but also the Virginia BioTechnology Research Park (<http://www.vabiotech.com>) and the Inger and Walter Rice Center for Environmental Life Sciences (<http://www.vcu.edu/rice>), a property of 342 acres overlooking the James River in Charles City County. The \$27 million Eugene P. and Lois E. Trani Center for Life Sciences houses administrative offices, the Center for Environmental Studies, state-of-the-art laboratories and classrooms, and a climate-controlled greenhouse. The Center for the Study of Biological Complexity, including the Center for High Performance Computing at VCU, is housed in Grace E. Harris Hall.

VCU Life Sciences supports two university centers for its research and teaching efforts: the Center for Environmental Studies (<http://www.vcu.edu/cesweb>) and the Center for the Study of Biological Complexity (<http://www.vcu.edu/csbc>).