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March 29, 2011

To: Mary E. Lidstrom, Interim Provost and Executive Vice President
Douglas J. Wadden, Executive Vice Provost for Academic Affairs and Planning

From: Gerald J. Baldasty, Vice Provost and Dean
James S. Antony, Associate Vice Provost and Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

RE: Review of the Department of Comparative Medicine

This memo outlines the recommendations from the review of the Department of Comparative Medicine. The central goal of the department is to provide quality husbandry and veterinary medical care for research animals, and to facilitate and advance animal-based medical research for the benefit of humans and animals. The focus includes three educational and training missions: 1) a graduate and residency instruction and research training program that offers the MS degree, as well as qualification for specialty boards; 2) the Animal Use Training Program offered in conjunction with the Office of Animal Welfare to provide training in the use of animals in research; 3) a pre-doctoral (pre-DVM) program that offers veterinary students from around the nation the opportunity to participate in a clerkship training program.

Detailed comments on the school and its graduate programs can be found in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Comparative Medicine self-study (February, 2010)
- Charge meeting between review committee, department, and administrators (November 18, 2009)
- Site visit (April 26-27, 2010)
- Review committee report (May 13, 2010)
- Comparative Medicine response to the review committee report (July 23, 2010)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (February 3, 2011)

The review committee consisted of:

Michael E. Rosenfeld, Professor, UW Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences
and Pathology (Committee Chair)

Brad T. Cookson, Professor, UW Laboratory Medicine and Microbiology
Charles B. Clifford, Director of Pathology and Technical Services, Charles River Inc.
Ravi Tolwani, Associate Vice President and Research Associate Professor, Comparative
Bioscience Center, Rockefeller University

A subcommittee of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its meeting on February 3, 2011. After discussion, Council recommended continuing status for the Department's MS program, with the next review to be scheduled for the 2019-2020 academic year. Specific comments and recommendations regarding the department and its degree program include the following:

Program Strengths

- The Department of Comparative Medicine (DCM) is an essential part of the UW School of Medicine that supports the extensive translational biomedical research enterprise. Veterinary residents help support the large and increasing service workload of the DCM, which oversees all of the animal research efforts at the UW.
- There is a short supply of veterinarians trained in laboratory animal medicine and the MS program helps prepare students for passing the specialty boards in this area.
- The MS program is "revenue neutral" and thus provides a cost effective means to deliver veterinary care and research support.
- DCM faculty have a strong national reputation and are highly valued by both the students and staff.
- Based on interviews with present and former students, the review committee described a high degree of satisfaction with both the clinical and didactic training provided by the faculty. Similarly, the staff voiced a high degree of satisfaction with the program.
- Graduates of the MS program have joined the faculty at the UW and have filled key positions nationwide.
- The quality of the MS program is enhanced by its close association with the Washington National Primate Research Center and with the Office of Animal Welfare at the UW, and by the integrated roles of the faculty, students, and staff with these units.

Challenges & Risks

- The DCM is currently understaffed due to the 60% increase in animal research funding at the UW last year (now \$400 million). This challenge is compounded by the number of senior faculty who are close to retirement. Thus, there is an immediate need to add faculty to avoid potential negative impacts on the quality of the MS program and repercussions for the continued success of the University's overall research efforts that require veterinary support.
- The laboratory space currently allotted to the DCM is insufficient and outdated, and negatively impacts the research opportunities available to MS students. As noted by the review committee, "It is ironic that the DCM enables the research efforts of so many faculty and staff at the UW, but is rewarded by having some of the worst space on campus."
- A new Ph.D. offered by the DCM would provide additional visibility and opportunities to attract top students, would make students more effective lab animal veterinarians, and would facilitate more effective interactions with scientists involved in basic and

translational research. It would also allow the program to submit an NIH training grant to support the program. However, current resources are insufficient to support such an expansion of the training program at this time.

Areas of Concurrence and/or Disagreement

The DCM found the review to be fair and concurred with all its recommendations:

- The DCM agrees that it is currently understaffed, as described above. The DCM has two tenure track faculty. All other faculty members are funded by service contracts or research. The department needs central funding to increase faculty FTEs. The DCM is in a strategic planning process to replace 2-3 retiring faculty members.
- The DCM agrees that the laboratory space currently allotted to them is insufficient and outdated, and negatively impacts the research opportunities available to MS students. There is no space to add any new faculty. Space possibilities are being sought via a consulting firm. There may be some local space when another group moves to SCLU in 2013/14.
- The DCM agrees that a new interdisciplinary PhD degree program would enhance the program in significant ways. The DCM has named a task force to examine that feasibility of offering a doctoral program in comparative biology and translational medicine with NPRC and maybe others.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

The Graduate School Council recommends continuation of the Department of Comparative Medicine MS degree program with a reevaluation in 10 years (2019-2020).

We concur with the Council's comments and recommendations.

cc: John T. Slattery, Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Education, School of Medicine
H. Denny Liggitt, Chair, Department of Comparative Medicine
Members of the Graduate School Council
David Canfield-Budde, Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School
Sarah Reyneveld, President, GPSS