



THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

May 24, 2106

TO: Joel Berg, Dean, School of Dentistry; Proxy Dean for Academic Program Review
CC: David Eaton, Vice Provost and Dean, The Graduate School
FROM: Lee Ann Campbell, Director, Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in Pathobiology
RE: **Response to Academic Program Review – Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in Pathobiology**

We thank the Academic Program Review Committee for their comprehensive and thoughtful review of our Interdisciplinary Doctoral Program in Pathobiology (IDPP) and for giving generously of their time for this review process. As summarized in our response below, we concur with their assessment of both the strengths of our Program and the challenges. We embrace the recommendation of the Committee that our Pathobiology Program formally move into the Department of Global Health. Our faculty, students, and staff are united in their belief that the establishment of a permanent home and sense of community resulting from the long-awaited transition from being an “auxiliary” Program in DGH to an “integral” one would further vitalize our Graduate Program and energize faculty and students in their commitment to Global Health.

Strengths

We appreciate the recognition of the uniqueness of our training Program, the commitment of the faculty and administration to a training program of excellence, the quality and satisfaction of our students, and the responsiveness of the IDPP to student-driven Program improvement. We are very proud of our Program and concur with the summary of our strengths.

Challenges and Risks (addresses comments under this section and in the summary section of committee report)

As recognized by the reviewers, the challenges to our Program, as with other graduate programs, are financial. This is due in large part to the Activity Based Budget (ABB) model, which rewards undergraduate training with large class sizes, which in turn puts graduate programs with small class sizes at risk. This is especially true in the SPH, in which Departments historically were focused on and excelled in graduate level training. At the time that the ABB model was put into place, the vision was that the funds obtained from undergraduate training would supplement the smaller return from graduate level training. Thus, the paradigm has shifted within the SPH toward undergraduate training as sources of sustainable revenue. As outlined in our review and below, there is a strong need for undergraduate training in biological sciences within the SPH, MPH programs, and DGH, which our faculty have the expertise to provide. DGH has been both receptive to and appreciative of our involvement in undergraduate training, which not only increases our integration and

contribution to DGH, but also provides additional ABB returns to the Department as support for our Program.

Per the comment that there does not appear to be a cushion of support in place for students should a PI lose funding, it is correct that there are no such designated programmatic funds. However, since the first students entered our Doctoral Program in 1990, with the exception of two students who made the decision to enter the same laboratory without financial support, all of our students have been fully funded throughout their tenure in our Program. To minimize risks, faculty must have funding in place for a few years with institutional or departmental backing of this commitment prior to the Director's approval of the student's choice of mentor. In the one case that a faculty member anticipated that there might be a loss of funding, the steering committee worked with the faculty member and the student in advance to develop a contingency plan in the event of this occurrence so that the student could complete her degree. Fortunately, this plan did not need to be executed as our faculty have been very resourceful in identifying funds. We do have funds available through generous donations to our Program that could be used for short term funding for a student.

With regard to challenges to Program administration at different sites, we have taken various steps to attempt to accommodate students/schedules and respond to changing demographics of both students and faculty. As examples, while our original policy was that courses, seminars, and student doctoral defenses should be held at the UW main campus, in response to changing locations of students and faculty, some courses are offered at locations more central to the majority of students who are taking the course (for example, at FHCRC and UW South Lake Union). We also changed the seminar location from the UW to SLU to limit disruption to laboratory schedules for the majority of students, and to augment faculty participation as the majority of the faculty and students are within walking distance to this site. As other approaches, we have also changed the scheduled time of our required courses to avoid conflicts with other courses that our students take, or to offer courses in tandem with other required courses to minimize travel to the UW (e.g. the PABIO 551 time slot was changed to follow Immun 441, both of which are taken by our incoming students in fall quarter). Although we cannot assure ideal scheduling that meets every student's need, we have made a concerted effort to minimize conflicts and traveling times. We will continue to do so.

Concerns

We heartily concur with the recommendations of the Committee that the formal affiliation of the IDPP with the DGH needs to move forward as soon as possible. The steps that have been taken towards financial stability of the Program include cost-sharing of non-teaching program costs (teaching costs are provided by DGH) with affiliated institutes and development and teaching of undergraduate courses relevant to our area of expertise that fill a gap in the DGH curriculum and complement existing curriculum as stated above. The IDPP and DGH have consulted with the Graduate School about the process of our formal affiliation with DGH. As a first step, several years ago, the IDPP faculty voted to move into DGH. The next step lies with the department and the IDPP is now dependent upon DGH's action in this regard.

Future Progress

We strongly agree that a long term plan is needed for the program when the IDPP joins DGH to ensure financial sustainability. There has been open and ongoing communication with the former Chair, Dr. King Holmes, and the current Chair, Dr. Judith Wasserheit, with regard to integration of the IDPP into DGH and to assuring financial stability. We have worked with Sally Weatherford, the Administrator, to project future costs and income of the Program. Several

steps as outlined in the review and below have been taken to achieve this goal. The Committee made several helpful recommendations and suggestions that the Program should consider to enhance training and resources. All of the options proposed by the Committee with regard to consideration of degree expansion are being, or will be, explored in establishment of a plan for financial sustainability. We had begun exploring the offering of a dual PhD/MPH degree through informational seeking discussions with Dr. Susan Graham, Associate Professor of DGH, who oversees the dual MD/MPH program in the School of Medicine and with several colleagues in the DGH who are involved in the MPH program. If we pursue offering a dual PhD/MPH program or enrolling students into our Program who are seeking a terminal MS degree, it may be necessary to have students cover their own tuition costs for the master's component. This model presently exists for MPH students in DGH. Based on the prior receptiveness of the DGH to our participation in teaching in the undergraduate major in global health, we envision that participation in an undergraduate global health degree would be welcome and would augment resources for our Program within DGH. The consideration of an undergraduate major in the SPH is an option that we have not yet explored, but will do so in the future.

The Committee emphasized that clarification of salary commitment to the faculty is important. We agree that all faculty must be equally compensated for teaching. Although the IDPP is currently formally housed in the Graduate School, the financial support of Programmatic activities including teaching compensation has been through the DGH as our administrative home. As indicated in our self-study, affiliated institutions contribute to non-teaching programmatic activities on a pro rata basis determined by the number of students performing their doctoral research at that institution. Recently, to address faculty compensation for Programmatic activities including teaching and mentoring as well as departmental compensation for grant writing to faculty whose primary appointment is in DGH, the DGH formed a task force to recommend equitable compensation for these activities. This has been a transparent process that has solicited input from all DGH faculty regardless of their UW appointment through faculty meetings, individualized discussions of DGH leadership with faculty, and solicitation of input through anonymous online polls. The final resulting compensation policy for compensation was provided to all faculty by DGH leadership in March and will be implemented in the 2016-2017 academic year.

We emphatically agree that the focus of our program on basic science is unique and should continue. We are pleased with the unanimous recommendation of the Academic Program Review Committee that our Program undergoes a subsequent review in 10 years.

With regard to Program Visibility, we agree that this could be improved. However, we routinely ask our top applicants how they identified our Program and the common theme is via an internet search (e.g. through Peterson's guide), that has directed them to our web site. We are also exploring advertising our Program in Nature Magazine, which has strategies to highlight graduate programs. Other strategies to increase visibility are to distribute flyers to peer institutes providing undergraduate training relevant to the foundations of our graduate program, to highlight our Program at additional National meetings, such as ASM, and to network more with alumni and colleagues to advertise our Program. We also recognize the need to be more proactive in promoting our courses at the University with the dual benefit of increasing enrollment in our classes and visibility of our Program within the University. As recommended by the Committee, we will form a task force to identify mechanisms to enhance national and local visibility.

As noted by the Committee, a succession plan is key to the continued viability of our Program. Several steps have been taken thus far, following a recent discussion in the Steering Committee

to provide pathways for future leadership roles: 1) New appointments of Junior Faculty to the Curriculum and Admissions Committees with the intent of preparing them for leadership roles as Committee Chairs (all of the original members of the Steering Committee served in these capacities first); 2) Dr. Jennifer Lund (in the process of promotion to Research Associate Professor and former Chair of the Admissions Committee) has been appointed to serve on the Steering Committee. Dr. Salama is stepping down as she will become FHCRC Director of the MCB Program; 3) Dr. Lingappa (current Chair of the Curriculum Committee) will also be joining the Steering Committee meetings to participate in program governance; and 4) Dr. Campbell anticipates that on submission of the competitive renewal of the training grant (will be due September 2019), a co-Director of the training grant will be identified and the co-Director will participate in application preparation and administration process. Dr. Campbell does have a vision for future succession and will solicit input from the Steering Committee and Dr. Wasserheit.

In conclusion, the input of the Academic Program Review Committee has been quite valuable, and we again thank them for their salient recommendations as we look forward to the future of our Program. We are hopeful that the process for our formal movement into DGH can proceed, which we believe will be mutually beneficial and invigorate our Program.