

**GPSS Report**  
**Graduate Program Review**  
**Department of Pharmacy**

On February 8<sup>th</sup>, 2010 the Graduate and Professional Student Senate had one representative senator attend the Department of Pharmacy program review. The review took place over the course of three separate meetings with graduate students in different aspects of said program, in attendance with a peer committee, which addressed student questions regarding the program and listened to the critique of students. This report comprises the overall concerns and sentiments of the graduate students as it pertained to the strengths and weaknesses of the Pharmacy program and its future.

**Interdepartmental Collaboration**

- Students felt the departmental sense of community was fairly close within a given major, and more distant outside of their own major
- Students expressed that there were few opportunities to collaborate with each other
- Students mentioned that while attempts have been made to organize graduate student events, it is the exception rather than the norm, and event participation is marginal at best

**Committees**

- Students noted that the program did not seem to have a Graduate Advisor to guide coursework or studies within the program itself
- Students requested student representation in faculty meetings

**Program Communication with Students**

- Students agreed that communication of the program for years 1-4 is good, but after that is vague to the extent of being negligent, causing the majority to remain beyond the 'advertised' 5-year length of the program for a sixth and seventh year
- Students expressed the need for improvement of program communication as a recurring theme in each of the three meetings
- Students mentioned that Med-Chem program requirements were changed in the middle of their studies, as opposed to only changing the program for a new incoming class

**Student's Confidence in Career Paths**

- Students feel confident of their chosen career path
- Students felt that while job opportunities, apprenticeships and career advancement are posted in various locations, faculty involvement in pursuit of those positions is minimal

- Students felt TA opportunities and funding for the students added to their academic development

### **Lab Assignments / Choice / Rotation**

- Students would like to see more efficient scheduling of lab time and courses overall
- Students were apprehensive regarding the difficulty in finishing program on time if they decide to, or are made to change to another lab under another professor because of complications in funding
- Students expressed a general lack of clinical experiences

### **Program Courses**

- Students noted they had to rely on word-of-mouth information regarding which classes they should take with the program
- Students felt a need for more balance between coursework and research, specifically less coursework, more research
- Students expressed frustration over the difficulty of entry into required courses in departments outside their department

### **Overview**

In summary, students are satisfied with the goals and direction of the program in the first four years. They also feel it becomes vague from year five and on. Students feel a sense of community and involvement exists inside their own major, but outside of their individual majors is minimal. Some students expressed the need for a student representative in faculty meetings, as well as the need to make sure the faculty takes more initiative to make sure all students have regular graduation checks in all stages of the program. Students feel frustration when changing a lab assignment or changes in the faculty cause them to extend their studies by several years. One area of concern is the fact that most students cannot complete their program in the five years as advertised. This report tends to focus specifically on what needs to be addressed to improve the department, but the students all demonstrated a great sense of pride in their choice to study at UW, and their enthusiasm for the pursuit of excellence in this very challenging department.