



UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON

The Graduate School

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To Phyllis M. Wise, Provost
Ana Mari Cauce, Executive Vice Provost
Office of the Provost, Box 351237

From: Suzanne Ortega
Vice Provost and Dean

RE: Review of the Department of Genome Sciences

At its meeting of May 17, 2007, the Graduate School Council met with members of the team that reviewed the Department of Genome Sciences graduate degree programs (Christopher Wilson, Professor, Immunology, Wylie Burke, Professor, Medical History and Ethics, and Mani Soma, Professor, Electrical Engineering), and with Robert Waterston, Professor and Chair, Genome Sciences, and John Slattery, Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Education, School of Medicine. The program review included a charge meeting on November 2, 2006, between the Review Committee and administrators involved in the review. The site visit held on December 4-5, 2006 included the external review committee members Jasper Rine from the Department of Molecular and Cell Biology at University of California, Berkeley, and Barbara Wold, Director of Biology and Director of the Beckman Institute at California Institute of Technology.

At the Graduate School Council meeting on May 17, Professors Wilson, Burke, and Soma summarized their findings from the Review Committee Report (submitted December 19, 2006). The committee found a very strong program that is a leading department in its field. The program attracts top students, and although efforts have been made, minority student recruitment has not been as successful as the Department would like. The low number of women and minority faculty was also noted. The Department is strengthening the statistics component of its curriculum and the work on balancing core courses in the experimental biology and computation biology areas is intended to better meet the needs of students. The review committee recommended continuation of the M.S. and Ph.D. degree programs with the next review to occur in 10 years. The committee also recommended that the Department improve the number of female students and

faculty, offer more proactive student advising, and that the University provide more financial support for the Genome 371 course. Details of the committee's findings and recommendations are in the December 19, 2006 report.

The Department Chair indicated two new faculty hires are women, which will assist in recruiting female students. New student admissions for 2007-2008 include four females and four males, which includes one minority student. The Department has implemented an advising initiative. Regarding career advising, the faculty considered involving industry representatives at seminars and has scheduled a series of informal faculty talks for incoming graduate students. The Chair noted that a statistics course was added and two computational programming courses are offered for students who do not have background in programming. With the merger of two departments, the Department's has achieved phenomenal success and is the best example of resources that were wisely invested.

The Graduate School Council agreed that graduate student mentoring and advising have the faculty's attention. Most graduates seek academic or postdoctoral positions, but some go into industry which the field is growing. In this regard, the Department was encouraged to provide information to students on alternative careers. The Council considers the departmental environment being cultivated to be a healthy one. The Council agreed with the review committee that the Department graduate program be continued with the next review in 10 year, specifically, the 2016-2017 academic year.

c: John T. Slattery, Vice Dean, Research and Graduate Education, School of
Medicine
Melissa Austin, Associate Dean, Academic Programs, The Graduate School
Robert Waterston, Professor and Chair, Department of Genome Sciences
David Brown, President, Graduate and Professional Senate
Genome Sciences Review Committee
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Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, The Graduate School