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December 14, 2016

To: John T. Slattery  
Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Education  
School of Medicine

From: David L. Eaton, Vice Provost and Dean  
Rebecca Aanerud Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning,  
The Graduate School

RE: Department of Immunology 2015-2016 Review

This memorandum outlines the Graduate School's recommendations on the Department of Immunology program review. Detailed comments on the review can be found in the documents that were part of the following formal review proceedings:

- Charge meeting between review committee and administrators (March 14, 2016)
- Self-Study (April 8, 2016)
- Site visit (April 28-29, 2016)
- GPSS report (April 15, 2-16)
- Review committee report (June 13, 2016)
- Immunology response to the report (September 9, 2016)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (November 17, 2016)

The review committee consisted of:

David Raible, Professor, UW Department of Biological Structure (Committee Chair)  
G. Stanley McKnight, Professor, UW Department of Pharmacology  
Anthony De Franco, Professor, Department of Microbiology and Immunology,  
School of Medicine, University of California, San Francisco  
Ann Marshak-Rothstein, Professor, Department of Medicine, School of Medicine,  
University of Massachusetts

A member of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its meeting on November 17, 2016. Professor Joaquin Herranz's summary of the department review is attached to this document.

We concur with the Council's recommendations noted in the attached summary.

cc: Gerald Baldasty, Provost and Executive Vice President, Office of the Provost  
Patricia Moy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs,  
Office of the Provost  
Joan Governman, Professor and Chair, Department of Immunology  
Immunology Review Committee  
Graduate School Council  
Augustine McCaffery, Senior Academic Program Specialist, Academic Affairs and  
Planning, The Graduate School

Attachment: Graduate School Council Review Summary

**Graduate School Council**  
**Department of Immunology Program Review, November 17, 2016**  
**(Prepared by Professor Joaquin Herranz)**

**DEPARTMENT OF IMMUNOLOGY**

The Immunology Department offers only a Ph.D. degree. The department does not offer certificate programs.

**Greatest strengths of the unit and its programs, ranked according to priorities:**

- Immunology's greatest strength is its faculty. There are 10 tenured or tenure-track Immunology faculty. Four Assistant Professors have been recruited since 2010.
  - Additionally, the unit has 18 affiliate/adjunct faculty members across many units.
  - Graduate students benefit via distribution among a variety of laboratories.
- The unit has an outstanding reputation as one of the top Immunology programs in the country.
- The Department administration and financial management are in excellent shape.
- The Department chair is considered a strong leader.
- The Department maintains a strong and vigorous training program.
  - "There are currently 44 pre-doctoral trainees spread across all research sites. In addition, there are about 70 postdoctoral trainees, of which 20 are within labs of PIs with primary appointments. The Department graduate program is highly competitive, with recent applications increasing by 40%. Acceptance rates are near 10%, with approximately 40% matriculation rate. Time to degree is outstanding, currently under 5.5 years."
- The recruitment of underrepresented students by the Department is excellent and matches the percentage of the overall URM students in the applicant pool.

**Challenges and risks facing the unit and its programs, ranked according to priorities:**

- Despite strong external demand for graduates, financing graduate training is challenging since the unit receives no financial support from the Graduate School or any other UW entity. Instead, relationships with affiliate and adjunct faculty have allowed it to put in place agreements with these other institutions to share expenses.
  - Relatedly, by maintaining a lean administrative and fiscal office team the department retains a positive operating balance.
- There are indications that the retention of URM students could be a problem.

**The Review Committee also made six specific recommendations. The unit concurred with these suggestions and has already followed-up with each one as indicated below:**

- 1. The review committee suggested that the Department explore options to decrease the time to the General Exam.
  - The unit agreed and responded by indicating the Qualifying Exam requirement has since been replaced with other curricular changes, allowing the deadline for the General Exam to be moved up to end of Spring quarter in year 3.

- 2. The review committee suggested that students should form and engage their thesis committee earlier in their graduate career.
  - The unit agreed and modified program requirements accordingly.
- 3. The review committee suggested that the Department formalize rules surrounding the publication requirement for graduation and more clearly articulate the cases for exception.
  - The unit responded that while it believes its guidelines for petitioning for a waiver are quite clear, it modified its Program Requirements to ensure adequate discussion of each petition to ensure “the most fair and consistent process.”
- 4. The review committee suggested that the unit re-engage in medical teaching.
  - The unit responded that it agreed with this goal and has taken steps to achieve it.
- 5. The review committee suggested that the unit make greater efforts to integrate postdoctoral trainees into the fabric of the Department.
  - The unit responded that it recognizes that its postdoctoral fellows do not have a strong sense of community, agree that they would benefit from additional forms of mentoring, and have taken steps to explore and implement several of the committee’s specific suggestions.
- 6. The review committee suggested that the Department’s “notable success in the recruitment of underrepresented students needs to be complemented with additional effort in retention. As suggested by current URM trainees, the department should establish a designated advisor for URM trainees distinct from the GPC that would serve as a direct line to resources at UW for these students.”
  - The unit responded by stating that it has “taken this suggestion very seriously and have established the position of liaison for URM trainees to the department. Dr. Dan Stetson has agreed to take on this role and recently met with URM students and postdoctoral fellows.”

### **Graduate School Council Recommendations**

The Graduate School Council’s key recommendations to the Dean of the Graduate School, including the timeline for next review:

- “Overall the review of the Department found it in great shape, clearly succeeding in training students, recruiting and nurturing junior faculty, and excelling in scientific research. The Review Committee recommends that the next Department of Immunology review occur following the regular timeline, in ten years” specifically, in the 2025-2026 academic year.