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November 15, 2018

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

From: Rebecca Aanerud, Interim Dean *Rebecca Aanerud*
Kima Cargill, Interim Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and Planning *Kima Cargill, Ph.D.*

RE: Review of the Department of Laboratory Medicine (2017-2018)

This memorandum outlines the Graduate School's final recommendations from the Department of Laboratory Medicine academic 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 (October 27, 2017)
- Self-Study (April 2, 2018)
- Site visit (May 7-8, 2018)
- Review committee report (June 5, 2018)
- Unit response to the report (September 20, 2018)
- Graduate School Council consideration of review (November 15, 2018)

The review committee consisted of:

Beth Devine, Associate Professor, UW Department of Pharmacy (Committee Chair)

John Inadomi, Professor and Division Head, UW Division of Gastroenterology

Diana Wilkins, Professor and Division Head, Department of Pathology, MLS, School of Medicine,
University of Utah

Vicki Freeman, Professor and Interim Dean, Department of Clinical Laboratory, School of Health
Professions, University of Texas Medical Branch

The Department of Laboratory Medicine offers the following degrees: Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science and Master of Science.

Members of the Graduate School Council presented findings and recommendations to the full Council at its meeting on November 15, 2018. A summary of this report, composed by Graduate School Council Members, is attached to this document.

Graduate School Council Recommendations

The Graduate School Council commends the Department of Laboratory Medicine on the strength of its programs, faculty, and students. After discussion, the Council recommended the following:

- Full academic program review in 10 years (2027-2028)
- Interim report in 3 years (2020-2021) to provide an update on progress implementing the MS program strategic plan and a Diversity Committee, as outlined in the Review Committee recommendations

We concur with the Council's recommendations.

cc: Mark Richards, Provost and Executive Vice President
Patricia Moy, Associate Vice Provost for Academic and Student Affairs, Office of the Provost
Jason Johnson, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Academic Affairs
Geoffrey Baird, Chair, Department of Laboratory Medicine
Becky Corriell, Director, Academic Program Review & Strategy, the Graduate School
Academic unit Review Committee Members
Members of the Graduate School Council
GPSS President

Attachment

University of Washington | Graduate Council

Academic Unit Name

Department of Laboratory Medicine

Degrees/Certificates Included in the Review

Bachelor of Science in Medical Laboratory Science (MLS), a 2-year professional program preparing undergraduate students to become Medical Laboratory Scientists.

Master of Science in Laboratory Medicine (MS), a 2-year graduate program offering advanced training with a research component for prospective leadership positions in the clinical laboratory.

1. MLS (BS) program.

Program Strengths

- Involvement and commitment (including financial commitment and adequate space) to the program by departmental leadership, faculty and staff is very strong.
- The program, recently re-accredited by the professional organization, is of very high quality. Graduates perform at much higher levels than national norms on the certification exam and are in strong demand.
- Diversity of the student body is robust as a result of departmental recruitment strategies. In addition, the students are highly enthusiastic about the program and have good relationships with faculty.
- The 5-week research rotation is a highlight of the program, and the newly added rotation in molecular diagnostics is a pro-active move that illustrates the continual evaluation and evolution of the program by its faculty.
- New clinical affiliate sites and progress in scholarship support have enhanced the program since last review.

Challenges & Risks

- Because of national need and high demand for more MLS graduates, the student body should be increased, but this will require the addition of more affiliate clinical sites as well as additional teaching and administrative staff. Existing resources may not be sufficient to respond to the urgent need for more graduates.
- Challenges to teaching included: (1) an inconsistent approach to didactic courses, which might be remedied by offering TAs to MS students; (2) a perception that teaching staff are not adequately appreciated, which might be alleviated by supporting attendance at annual meetings; and (3) a student-originated suggestion for a pre-requisite course in genetics.
- Because the program is the only undergraduate offering in the School of Medicine, it is somewhat isolated and needs a stronger link to the Office of Undergraduate Academic Affairs.
- More extensive engagement with alumni would likely increase program visibility and support.

Areas of Concurrence

- The department concurred with the suggestions and has already made progress on all of the recommendations.

2. MS program.

Program Strengths

- The 2-year thesis MS program, intended to produce leaders in medical laboratory science, shares many of the strengths of the MLS program, including strong departmental support and high performing graduates.
- The program is rigorous and provides excellent results.
- A new director is revitalizing the program by intensifying recruitment and redesigning the curriculum.
- Students receive a monthly scholarship stipend of \$500 that lightens the financial burden.

Challenges & Risks

- The program lacks a critical mass, with an average of 2.2 students/year. For a variety of reasons, suitable candidates are not attracted to the program, even though there is a need for MLS personnel with supervisory skills, especially in rural areas. The review committee recommended strategic planning to consider new directions and “rebranding.”
- Because the program targets individuals with jobs, it is a problem that the program is full-time, and the committee recommended consideration of part-time alternatives such as online offerings.
- More funding options, such as TAships, would further help in relieving the financial burden.
- Greater visibility to the School of Medicine might be achieved by designating a Medical Director of the program, and (as for the MLS program) networking with alumni might aid in visibility and funding as well.

Areas of Concurrence

- The department concurred with the report and is developing a strategic plan for moving the program to an emphasis on scientific training within 3-5 years. They further embrace the ideas of adding online content and working with alumni, although they do not feel a Medical Director needs to be appointed.

3. Overall Review Committee Summary

The review committee considered the MLS and MS programs as “two jewels in the crown” of the department, recognized nationally for excellence. Their overall suggestions included strategic planning, online training, development of a Diversity Committee, marketing efforts, new hires and a succession plan for teaching needs. The committee recommended continuation of both programs for 10 years with a 3-year interim report addressing the strategic planning process and establishment of a diversity committee.

Graduate School Council Recommendation

GSC recommends a 10-year full review cycle for both the MLS and MS programs, but requests a 3-year interim report dealing specifically with the strategic plan for the MS program and progress in carrying it out, as well as an update on the unit’s implementation of a diversity committee.