

MINUTES
GRADUATE COUNCIL MEETING
DECEMBER 16, 1994

MEMBERS PRESENT: Karen A. Holbrook, Chair; Karen A. Bjorndal, William Chamberlin, Patricia Craddock, Susan Frost, Joan Herrera, David A. Jones, Mary Grace Kantowski, Philip Posner, Scotty Powers, Rachel Shireman, Anita Spring, Richard Yost

OTHERS PRESENT: Dr. Nicholas Bodor, Dr. Margaret James, Mr. Peter Pevonka, Dr. James W. Simpkins, Dr. Kenneth Sloan

STAFF PRESENT: Richard Lutz, Helen Martin, Mike Phillip, Julie Shih, Bernice Thornton

The Graduate Council meeting was called to order by Dr. Holbrook.

Dr. Bodor described the Center for Drug Discovery and the current program, its graduates, and its students. He views it as an existing program that simply needs a new name because it is to be relocated from Medicinal Chemistry to the Center.

Dr. Simpkins addressed the specific issue of interdisciplinary coursework in place under the auspices of the Center.

Mr. Pevonka spoke on behalf of Dean Schwartz, strongly endorsing the proposal based on past performance of the program.

Questions from the Council sought to clarify the nature of the curriculum. The degree is granted in Pharmaceutical Sciences, and Drug Discovery is quite different from the degree concentration in Pharmacodynamics. Although the proposed program says "interdisciplinary," it does not draw students from "core" disciplines. It is interdisciplinary within the Center, and the Center would assume over-sight responsibility for the concentration. However, in Dr. Bodor's view, it is not a new program (it is part of the pharmaceutical sciences program), but a new location for an existing specialization.

Julie Shih clarified that the proposal is technically the equivalent of a department within a college adding a new specialization under an existing "umbrella" degree at the college level, and therefore does not require BOR approval.

The Associate Dean for Research in the College of Pharmacy would oversee the specialization and all aspects of policy related to it. Concern was raised about the nature of the Center's advisory board and the fact that no college-wide graduate committee operates to supervise the Center or other graduate programs in the College. It was suggested that signatures be obtained from participating faculty to signify their commitment to the Center's program, as well as signoffs from departments that would host the Center's students in their courses (the latter already occurs without difficulty, according to Dr. Bodor).

A training committee exists in the Center associated with the NIH training grant, and it serves as a curriculum committee. The Center really functions as a free-standing department, though technically the chairman of Pharmaceutics signs off on all final exam reports for degrees granted.

Dr. James expressed concern about the nature of the proposed curriculum and its high degree of similarity to the existing concentration in Medicinal Chemistry. Dr. Sloan elaborated on this point and asked for an explanation of the difference between students trained in Medicinal Chemistry and those trained in the Center. Dr. Bodor explained that the course work in the two programs may be similar for some students (but not all), but that the mentorship differs between the Center and Medicinal Chemistry. He views them as noncompeting programs.

The real change that would occur if the program were to be approved is that confusion among students and employers will be reduced as the program acquires an appropriate descriptive label.

Mr. Pevonka opined that the need is to find a mechanism by which the concentrations in both the Center and the Department of Medicinal Chemistry may flourish. The two concentrations have co-existed for more than 10 years, so the issue of overlap is moot, in his judgment. It will make a big difference in the identification of students. Concern remained among some members of Council regarding the duplication of the two concentrations. The question was raised as to whether both the Center and Medicinal Chemistry could use the label "Drug Discovery" as a specialization.

Concern was expressed that students in the Center would not in any real sense be enrolled in a departmental graduate program, a current university guideline.

Council approved a motion requesting that Dr. Bodor prepare a composite, integrated document addressing the issues that were raised in the discussion. In particular, further modification is sought regarding the listing of core courses, signatures of participating faculty and departments, dropping of the "Interdisciplinary" label, the composition and operation of the advisory board and supervisory committees, and the issue of students having a "home" department. By-Laws should be presented. Independently, the College of Pharmacy is to address the overlap issue.

Dr. Bodor's current students meet all the core requirements of the Department of Pharmaceutics, which may address the home department issue. Nevertheless, Council's concern is with the protection of the student.

Pending receipt of the requested materials, Council will consider the request at its January 19, 1995 meeting.