

Dean's Council

December 6, 2006

Minutes

Present: Dr. Arnold, Dr. Ford, Dr. Garibaldi, Mr. Gillon, Dr. Jacob, Dr. Kenny,
Dr. Koeppen, Dr. Pappano, Dr. Simon

Excused: Dr. Deckers, Dr. Gould, Dr. Lalande, Dr. Strongwater, Dr. Weber

Guests: Dr. Barbarese, Dr. Renfro, Dr. Sha'afi

The meeting was called to order at 4:40 p.m.

1. The minutes of the November 13, 2006 meeting were unanimously approved.
2. Nominees to the Research Misconduct Committee

The Dean's Council was asked to recommend nominees to replace Drs. Thrall and Carson on the Research Misconduct Committee, whose terms have expired. The names were reviewed and will be forwarded to Dr. Deckers, who will make the appointments.

3. Department of Pharmacology Review

Drs. Renfro and Barbarese, who served on the Pharmacology Department Review Team, and Dr. Sha'afi, Chairman of the Department of Pharmacology, joined the meeting (Dr. Renfro participated by telephone). Dr. Koeppen explained that they were asked to attend to answer questions and provide clarification on the review report and Dr. Sha'afi's response to the report prior to the DC making a recommendation to the Dean (both documents were distributed prior to the meeting). The meeting was then opened up to questions. When asked whether they favored revitalizing the department or finding a way to help the Pharmacology faculty, or the entire department, merge with another department, the reviewers responded that their desire was to have a vital pharmacology group, which could be accomplished either way. Revitalization of the department depended upon whether additional positions could be provided. They further explained that merging the department with another department was considered a good option if preservation of the department was not possible. The option of splitting the faculty, however, was not favored by the review team. When asked why keeping the faculty together was seen as critical, they indicated that one of the main reasons was the educational mission and that pharmacology is taught best by a cohesive group. The research program was less of a

factor because it is very diverse and extends beyond the department. They also noted the impending retirements of several senior faculty who are primarily responsible for the teaching mission of the department and questioned how these faculty would be replaced.

Dr. Sha'afi explained that the faculty would prefer to have Pharmacology remain a department. However, they would not object to merging with the Center for Vascular Biology because of the similarities in research and teaching. If merged, they would like to remain administratively independent because of their location down the hill. They would also prefer that the merger result in the creation of a new Department of Pharmacology and Vascular Biology but would not object to becoming a Type II center. When asked whether the off-site location is detrimental to the department's academic productivity, the reviewers indicated that they did not think that was a major factor, although it could impact the ability to hire new faculty. Dr. Sha'afi did not agree that it would impact recruitment and noted that they have more space in their current location. He did acknowledge, however, that their off-site location could be a disadvantage to graduate students. Dr. Koeppen explained that a number of researchers will be located off-site once Farmtech is purchased. In addition, the Butler Buildings, where Pharmacology is currently housed, will eventually be replaced with an ambulatory clinical facility. Because of these plans, he stressed the need to make a decision that transcends space. Dr. Sha'afi did take exception to the comments made in the report regarding research productivity and extramural funding, noting that contrary to what was reported, the department does have several grants funded beyond 2006. However, the reviewers felt that although productivity has been adequate, it could be better and might suffer in the near future.

Drs. Renfro, Barbarese, and Sha'afi were then excused. At the Committee's request, Dr. Pappano agreed to provide his thoughts and then recuse himself. Dr. Pappano felt the review report was fair, and expressed his support of Dr. Sha'afi's response. He noted that one argument made by the senior faculty members that does not come out strongly in the report is the need to have a cohesive group to teach pharmacology to medical and dental students. As noted above, a number of senior faculty will be retiring soon, and it was uncertain how they would be replaced. While junior faculty may be able to assume some of this responsibility, Dr. Pappano noted that many of them are already being utilized to their fullest. He expressed his concern that many new recruitments have a strong interest in research but have no desire to teach and that not enough emphasis is placed on teaching when recruiting new faculty. When asked why he believes it is necessary to have a cohesive group of pharmacologists in contiguous space, Dr. Pappano responded that he felt it was important to have a critical mass of people who think pharmacologically to provide a team approach to education. He did indicate, however, that merging with the Center for Vascular

Biology would not be an impediment to accomplishing this. Dr. Pappano then left the meeting.

The Dean's Council agreed that most of the arguments presented for maintaining the department as a separate administrative unit focused on preserving the integrity of pharmacology teaching and the need to recruit people who can carry out that responsibility when senior faculty retire. While the Dean's Council acknowledged the importance of preserving the ability to teach pharmacology to medical and dental students, they were not convinced that this would require a cohesive unit (i.e. a department, center, etc.). It was noted that a number of basic science disciplines are taught across departments. Furthermore, resources are not available to recruit people who only have a passion for teaching. Rather, the institution must attract people who have a research or clinical program and then cultivate the passion to teach. There was agreement that if the department was disbanded, pharmacology faculty members could be integrated into new academic homes that best fit their research programs. If this occurred, it was also felt that pharmacology could continue to be taught appropriately to medical and dental students by faculty both within and outside the School who have the appropriate expertise.

Because the option of disbanding the department was being considered, a question was raised whether such action was consistent with the recommendations of the review committee. After discussion, it was concluded that disbanding the department, while not the first option offered by the review committee, was indeed an option considered. Moreover, it was noted that the opinion of the review committee was but one piece of data available to the Dean's Council, and that the Council would not be doing due diligence if all it did was simply recommend to the Dean the suggestions of this or any future review team.

A motion was made and seconded to advise the Dean to disband the Department of Pharmacology. The motion was unanimously approved. Dr. Koeppen will circulate a draft recommendation for approval by the DC, which will then be submitted to the Dean (see attached).

The Dean's Council also agreed that in the future, members of the DC who hold appointments within the department/center being discussed will recuse themselves from discussion.

4. Dr. Koeppen announced that Dr. Weber is on maternity leave, and that Dr. Jacqueline Nissen was elected by the Education Council to serve on the Dean's Council during her absence.

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The meeting was adjourned at 6:00 p.m. The next meeting will be held on Monday, December 18, from 3:30-5:00 p.m. in the Walker Academic Affairs Conference Room, AG-070.

Respectfully submitted,

Lynn Donatelli