University of Pittsburgh School of Pharmacy
Charges and Guidance Document
Graduate Program Council

MISSION OF THE GRADUATE PROGRAM

The faculty of the graduate program is committed to educating and training the next generation of leaders and decision-makers seeking to improve the health of the community through outstanding basic, translational, and clinical research.

BACKGROUND

The Graduate Program Council of the School of Pharmacy serves as the communication forum among faculty, graduate students, and staff who collectively participate in the Pharmaceutical Sciences Graduate Program.

COMPOSITION OF THE COUNCIL

The council comprises:

- Chair of the Council: Appointed by the dean
- Vice Chair of the Council (optional): Appointed by the dean
- Chairs of standing committees: Appointed by the dean
- Faculty representing the disciplinary tracts (Biochemical Pharmacology, Medicinal Chemistry, Pharmaceutics, Clinical Pharmaceutical Sciences): Selected by faculty within the respective tracks
- Three graduate student representatives elected by students – One PhD candidate, one student who is either pre-candidate in the PhD program or from the MS thesis program; one student in the MS program.
- The Director of the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences: *Ex officio*
- Chair of both departments in the School: *Ex officio*
- Senior Associate Dean: *Ex officio*
- Graduate Program Coordinator: *Ex Officio*

The Chair of the Graduate Program Council, who serves for a two-year term, may be reappointed. A vice chair will generally be appointed as the next chair of the Council. The chair generally serves as past chair for one year at the end of the term of appointment.

CHARGE TO THE COUNCIL

The council is charged to:

- Coordinate the overall functioning of the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences and assure communication among faculty representing the tracks.

- Assure that graduate students have:
  - The maximum possible opportunities for developing research, critical thinking, and the personal skills to become superb researchers at the level appropriate to the degree program in which they are enrolled;
  - Opportunities to personalize their education.

- Assure that quality infuses the graduate program, which should also embrace the School's mission, values, and Long Range Plan.

- Serve as the "Awards Committee" for travel grants and for internal annual awards. This function may also be conducted by a subset of the Council.

- Periodically review the Web site for the Graduate Program Council and assure that the content meets the needs of applicants, enrolled students, and program faculty.

- Make recommendations to the Curriculum Committee for potential actions and agenda items.

- Review the completed Provost's Assessment Matrix and refer actions to the appropriate committee, faculty member, department chair, and/or track for action.

- Assure that the Graduate Program in Pharmaceutical Sciences:
  - Functions in accordance with University of Pittsburgh policies for graduate study (http://www.pitt.edu/~graduate/policies.html)
  - Meets the expectations and deadlines of the University in all functions of the graduate program, including program assessment, record keeping, and reporting data on graduates.

- Periodically review policies pertinent to graduate study and recommend changes if needed. Recommend development of new policies as needed.

- Provide direction to faculty of each track regarding numbers of students to be admitted with financial support from the School. This is accomplished with input from the senior associate dean.

- Assure the protection of confidential information about students.

- Identify issues and recommends to the dean the need for appointing and convening Ad Hoc Task Forces.

GOVERNANCE

Governance of the Graduate Program Council is generally accomplished by consensus, which is a process consistent with the School of Pharmacy Bylaws (http://www.pages.pharmacy.pitt.edu/school-of-pharmacy-bylaws/, Section B: Governance) and the culture within the School of Pharmacy.

FULFILLING THE CHARGES AND THE MISSION

In order to fulfill the stated charges and graduate program mission, the committee shall:

- Serve as a communication forum for graduate faculty, council members and staff for all actions and issues related to the graduate program.

- Create synergy of expertise regarding initiatives.

- Work with the Leadership Team and faculty to achieve the strategic outcomes for the graduate program.

- Set milestones for progress toward stated goals and track verifiable outcomes related to the strategic plan.

- Identify and interpret pertinent data and information for assessment and benchmarking.

- Coordinate the preparation of documentation for the annual report.

- Implement policies and procedures.

- Oversee TA assignments and evaluation of TA performance.

- Periodically review and update content for the Web site.

- Review and recommend changes to existing policies; recommend new policies and procedures for action according to the Bylaws.

- Propose Council structure changes (e.g., combining committees, recommending appointment of specific officers), as necessary, to the dean.

- Develop, coordinate, and oversee programs such as retreats, summer internship programs, and social and celebratory events.
  The intent of programs is to assure that students have opportunities for:
  - Experiencing the local, regional, and national culture of working within the pharmaceutical sciences;
  - Developing leadership skills;
  - Networking with scientists and other students.

- Approve processes for the allocation of program-sponsored student awards.

- Suggest the formation of new committees and ad hoc taskforces and the membership for committees/taskforces, as necessary, to the dean.

- Provide updates of Council activity at faculty or department meetings as requested by the dean or department chairs.

MEETINGS AND COMMUNICATION

Meetings are usually held monthly, with additional meetings as necessary to accomplish the mission of the Council. An agenda and minutes of the previous meeting are distributed to members prior to each meeting and posted for faculty on the School's electronic network. Faculty members are informed of the Council's work through a meeting summary provided on the School's electronic network. The Council can recommend topics to the dean for "For Your Information and Input" sessions.

Since the Council reports to the dean, the Chair will be invited periodically to the Leadership Team to review progress toward strategic objectives.

Faculty and students who identify issues of concern that are appropriate for Council action are encouraged to communicate the issue in writing to the Council Chair, or to faculty or student representatives, who will present the issue to the Council for discussion and possible action. The Council may invite the individual to the Council meeting and may also recommend that an *ad hoc* task force be appointed to address specific topics and recommend action. When a specific issue has been brought to the Council by a faculty member or student, the Council provides the individual with a written summary of the action on the specific issues.

Patricia D. Kroboth, Dean
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