



Memorial

University of Newfoundland

Office of the Vice-President (Academic)
and Pro Vice-Chancellor

CIAP

APR 24 2007

23 April 2007

Dr. James Rourke
Dean, Faculty of Medicine
Memorial University of Newfoundland

Dear Dr. Rourke.

The Planning and Budget Committee of Senate considered the self-study, review panel report, departmental response, and final action plan that resulted from the Academic Program Review for the Graduate Medicine programs within the Faculty of Medicine at its 14 March 2007 meeting. The PBC wishes to express its appreciation to the Faculty for its participation in the APR process and for undertaking the work that this process requires.

The primary purpose of formal academic program reviews is to give units of the University an opportunity to engage in formative self-assessment and to obtain the advantages of commentary and advice from experts from the discipline in question. The role of PBC is to monitor the process and develop a body of knowledge that is useful in making broad strategic recommendations and providing sound budgetary advice to the University. It is not the role of the Committee to determine allocations to individual units, but we can sometimes offer advice or make potentially useful observations.

An anticipated outcome of the process is a plan that clarifies how best to achieve the unit's objectives with the resources available to it. From the standpoint of the University, the process also provides a measure of accountability to the whole institution and the public that supports us.

During the course of discussion the committee noted the following points:

- The additional space needs of the unit were duly noted. The committee was pleased to see the work in progress on addressing this issue, particularly with reference to plans to increase the number of graduate students at Memorial University.
- The committee did not feel that the action item regarding time to completion rates was adequate. The committee recommends that the unit work with the School of Graduate Studies to find ways to reduce time to completion rates in all graduate medicine programs. Targets should be set to decrease the time to completion rate overall and these targets should be aggressively pursued. Boundaries and expectations need to be set as to what constitutes a masters degree so that it not be confused with the amount of work associated with a Ph.D. degree.

- A study of retention rates of students enrolling in medical school before finishing their graduate degree program should be broadened to consider all disciplines within the University to determine if the issue is particularly prevalent in graduate medicine programs. This will require the cooperation of the School of Graduate Studies.
- The committee did not feel that the panel's comment about dropping the M.D.-Ph.D. program was warranted. This program option for students sets the standard for a great medical school. The committee encourages the unit to continue to closely monitor the program and the progress of students enrolled.
- The issue of stipends with respect to competitiveness may need to be addressed further. The committee encourages the unit to continue to keep funding strategies for graduate students at the top of its priority list.

In general the committee felt that the unit response/action plan to the review panel report and recommendations was forward thinking and addressed many issues identified during the site visit. The unit is to be commended for its high quality graduate programs and the dedication of faculty and staff associated with the Office of Graduate Studies and Research to teaching and research.

I offer my support and that of the committee as you continue the important work outlined in your action plan and the points noted above. We look forward to seeing your one-year update in March 2008.

Sincerely yours,



H. E. A. Campbell
Vice-President (Academic)

- c. Dr. P. Moody-Corbett, Associate Dean of Research and Graduate Studies
Dr. C. Jablonski, Dean of Record
Mr. Paul Chancey, CIAP