



University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process (UTQAP) Cyclical Review: Final Assessment Report & Implementation Plan

Program(s):	Medical Biophysics, M.Sc., Ph.D.
Division/Unit:	Department of Medical Biophysics, Faculty of Medicine
Commissioning Officer:	Dean, Faculty of Medicine
Reviewers (Name, Affiliation):	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Philip Branton, PhD, FRSC, Gilman Cheney Professor, Department of Biochemistry, McGill University2. Ian Smith, PhD, OC, FRSC, Director General, NRC Institute for Biodiagnostics, National Research Council3. Etta Pisano, MD, Vice President for Medical Affairs and Dean, College of Medicine, Medical University of South Carolina; Member, Institute of Medicine, National Academy of Sciences
Date of review visit:	March 21-22, 2012
Date reported to AP&P:	April 16, 2013

1 Outcome

The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.

2 Significant Program Strengths

- Exceptional opportunity for students to achieve their potential within Canada's most successful biomedical graduate program
- Outstanding quality of educational experience, teaching, and graduate supervision
- World renowned faculty; research "second-to-none in quality and scope" with "huge impact" on medical practice

- Innovative cross-disciplinary approach to research and education creates breadth of experience for students
- Highly selective graduate program; many excellent, qualified applicants
- Large number of student lead-author manuscripts
- Very high student completion rates; excellent graduates find leadership positions in academia and private industry
- Very high faculty and student morale

3 Opportunities for Program Improvement and Enhancement

The reviewers recommended that the following be considered:

- Continuing the current process of curriculum revision, taking into account emerging areas and student feedback
- Ensuring that doctoral times to completion are appropriate
- Ensuring the Department has sufficient influence on faculty recruitment and research directions
- Exploring ways to further strengthen collaborations across multiple sites and disciplinary areas to support the department's teaching and research missions
- Developing a uniform admissions process and a common first and second year curriculum across the basic science graduate programs

4 Implementation Plan

The Dean undertook in consultation with the Department to support the following changes:

- Immediate Term (6 months)
 - Continuing curriculum revision
 - The Department will continue its curriculum revision process and address low faculty attendance to the research seminar
 - Ensuring that doctoral times to completion are appropriate
 - The Department will address doctoral students' time to completion so that the length is in line with the Faculty's expected average of five years
- Medium Term (1-2 years)
 - Developing a uniform admissions process and a common first and second year curriculum across the basic science graduate programs
 - The Basic Science departments will assess interest in these approaches
 - Strengthening collaborations
 - The Faculty of Medicine Advancement Office will work with the Department to establish joint fundraising efforts with hospital-based foundations
 - Ensuring the Department's influence on recruitment and research
 - The Faculty will assist in developing a more formal agreement between the Department and the hospital partners; this will be consistent with the current Governing Council Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that articulates the commitment of the Faculty and the affiliated hospitals and their foundations to the joint academic mission

- As part of the Faculty Research Strategic Plan, the Department will work with the Faculty of Medicine and the hospitals/research institutes to track key performance indicators in research and education

The Dean's Office will follow up annually with the unit to assess progress.

5 Executive Summary

The reviewers identified the programs' strengths as its position as Canada's most successful biomedical graduate program; outstanding quality of the applicants, faculty, graduates, educational experience, teaching, and graduate supervision; the Department's innovative cross-disciplinary approach to research and education; large number of student lead-author manuscripts; and very high faculty and student morale. The reviewers recommended that the following issues be addressed: continuing curriculum revision; ensuring appropriate doctoral times to completion; ensuring the Department has sufficient influence on faculty recruitment and research directions; further strengthening collaborations across multiple sites and disciplinary areas to support the Department's teaching and research missions; and developing a uniform admissions process and a common first and second year curriculum across the basic science graduate programs. The Department will continue its curriculum revision process and will address doctoral students' time to completion so that the length is in line with the Faculty's expected average of five years. The Basic Science departments will assess interest in common curricular and admissions approaches. The Faculty of Medicine Advancement Office will work with the Department to establish joint fundraising efforts with hospital-based foundations, and the Faculty will assist in developing a more formal agreement between the Department and the hospital partners. As part of the Faculty Research Strategic Plan, the Department will work with the Faculty of Medicine and the hospitals/research institutes to track key performance indicators in research and education. The Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) concluded that the Decanal response adequately addressed the review recommendations.