

School of Medicine Research Coordinating Council (RCC)

Minutes for Thursday, March 23, 2006

7:30-9:00 a.m., 301 BRB II/III

Present: Gur, Johnson, Kaestner, Lazar, Metlay, Rader, Schnall, Sehgal, Strom, Winston, Gocke

Absent: Gaulton, Drebin

Agenda

- Discussion—Cardiovascular Institute
- Discussion—Proposed Stem Cell Institute
- Presentation—Institute for Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism (Mitchell Lazar, MD, Ph.D.)

Discussion—Cardiovascular Institute

RCC members discussed Dr. Michael Parmacek's presentation (slides attached) on the status of the Cardiovascular Institute (CVI). RCC members noted excellent strategic planning, comprehensive development of an inclusive membership plan, and strong senior leadership and direction for this Institute. Dr. Parmacek noted ambiguities between center and departmental grants' administration, which the RCC agreed to take up later in its agenda. Dr. Parmacek also noted difficulties between the SOM and UPHS, Dr. Strom noted that he and Dr. Gaulton would address these concerns directly with Dr. Parmacek.

Discussion—Stem Cell Presentation (S. Emerson)

RCC members focused their comments on Dr. Stephen Emerson's presentation for a proposed Stem Cell Institute at Penn. Members noted that Dr. Emerson had presented a clear and compelling case for this research initiative, which was critically important and must be encouraged as an institutional priority. However, given the small size of this initiative at this time, many felt the need to proceed cautiously and designate this as a "Developing Center", "Program", or to use some other such nomenclature, which would be encouraged to evolve into a SOM Center or Institute in the future.

Following this discussion, RCC members expressed the need to review all current Type II Centers and Institutes to determine whether if there is overlap, and whether a center or institute is disease- or discipline-based. Discussion continued regarding the optimal number of centers and institutes in the SOM to provide breadth and depth, while avoiding overlap or diluting the focus of established centers. Prior to the next meeting, Ms. Gocke will provide a list of current Type II Center and Institutes with a disease or discipline designation, and a list of supported cores for each Type II Center or Institute.

Presentation—Institute for Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism (Mitchell Lazar)

Dr. Mitchell Lazar presented an update on the Institute for Diabetes, Obesity, and Metabolism (IDOM), and discussed the mission and progress of the IDOM (slides attached). Dr. Lazar presented the historical background and recommendations of the Strategic Plan's ODM workgroup, discussed the short and long-term goals of IDOM, and noted the challenges of finding translational and dry space for the IDOM. Dr. Lazar also noted the strong leadership in the Diabetes (Type I and II), Obesity, and Cardiovascular Metabolism Units of IDOM, as well as the awkwardness of knitting them together into a single organization, a process that nevertheless made sense mechanistically. He also noted the broad spectrum in the types of research done within IDOM, as a disease-oriented center, and that the different types of research did not always work together comfortably, whether at Penn or elsewhere. Dr. Lazar pointed out the focus on enhancing translational research in the Institute. The overlap between IDOM and the other new institutes, as well as prior institutes and centers, made working together collaboratively

critical. Once again, the discussion arose of the need to break down administrative barriers to doing so.

Respectfully submitted,
Joan Gocke

The next RCC meeting will be held on Thursday, April 6, 2006 in 301 BRB II/III from 8:00-9:00 am.