

School of Medicine Research Coordinating Council (RCC)

Minutes for Thursday, June 1, 2006

8:00-9:00 a.m., 301 BRB II/III

Present: Gaulton, Gur, Kaestner, Lazar, Rader, Sehgal, Strom, Winston, Gocke

Absent: Drebin, Johnson, Metlay, Schnall

Agenda

- **Discussion of the Comprehensive Neuroscience Center and Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research**
- **Discussion of the Pennsylvania Muscle Institute**

RCC members discussed the proposed Comprehensive Neuroscience Center (CNC) presentation (May 18, 2006) and questioned the role of the CNC vis-à-vis the INS. While strongly supporting the concept of a Comprehensive Neuroscience Center, members agreed that only one overarching neuroscience center—either the CNC or the INS—should exist in the SOM. The role of the Center for Neurodegenerative Disease Research (CNDR), as an independent Type II center or as a part of the CNC, was also discussed. The CNDR has benefited from a specific mission and the outstanding leadership of Dr. Lee, and is a highly accomplished center. RCC members discussed their recommendation of integrating the CNDR as a Type I center under the comprehensive umbrella of the CNC, and providing to that Type I center committed resources from the Dean in the form of recruiting lines and financial resources, as well as being part of the CNC leadership and decision-making team. Ideally, the CNDR would become a model of a Type I center of Excellence under the CNC. It was also acknowledged that leadership issues for the CNC will be decided by the Dean.

The Pennsylvania Muscle Institute (PMI) was then discussed by the RCC. It was noted that, while excellent work has been accomplished by the PMI faculty, its focus has remained relatively narrow for a Type II center, and the prior review highlighted concerns with continued designation as a Type II center. Dr. Gaulton distributed both the PMI review (1998), and the center and Institute Review (2004), and noted the split recommendation for conversion of PMI to a Type I center. It was noted by several members that the Type II designation may be considered highly desirable, if it is seen as carrying recognition of excellence internally. On the other hand, to the outside world, the distinctions between these types of centers are invisible.

It was recommended that Dr. Yale Goldman, Director of the PMI, provide an update of the PMI at the June 29, 2006 RCC meeting. The Committee is interested in determining what issues may be impeding the progress of the PMI as well as understanding the requirements for PMI's future success. RCC members will also focus on the science at the institute, now and in the future. It was also recommended that Drs. Sweeney and Epstein attend this meeting following Dr. Goldman's interview to further discuss the over-arching concerns of the institute.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Gocke

The next RCC meeting will be held on Thursday, June 15, 2006 in 301 BRB II/III from 8:00-9:00 am.