Department of Biomedical Informatics
Faculty Meeting Minutes
9/1/2005

Attending: William Gregg, Dario Giuse, Cindy Gadd, David Tabb, Stuart Weinberg, Nancy Lorenzi, Anderson Spickard, Matt Weinger, Carolyn Cao, Randolph Miller, Dominik Aronsky, Constantin Aliferis, Josh Peterson, Ionnis Tsamadardinos, Terri Ni, Kevin Johnson, Daniel Masys

- DBMI News
  - Introduction/Welcome- New Faculty – Daniel Masys

Dr. Masys introduce and welcomed the following new faculty members to the DBMI faculty:  David Tabb, Ph.D specializing in proteome informatics; Cindy Gadd, Ph.D., Systems Evaluation and Educational Programs; Caroline Cao Visiting Assistant. Professor., Human Factors as her field of study. Terri Ni, Ph.D., whose specialty is in Bioinformatics of Gene Expression will rejoin the department with a secondary appointment. Her primary appointment will remain in Genetic Medicine. Dr. Masys also announced that Paul Harris, who has a current appointment in Biomedical Engineering, will be joining DBMI as a new faculty member. It is yet to be decided if his appointment will be primary or secondary.

Dr. Masys advised the faculty Dr. Kevin Johnson will organize a research seminar series that will give collaborators across campus that are doing work that connects with DBMI an opportunity to present their work to the DBMI faculty in a smaller venue than the Wednesday series. These seminars will take place on Thursdays throughout this academic year when the DBMI faculty does have a scheduled meeting.

Dr. Masys then recognized Constantin Aliferis, Dominik Aronsky, and Shawn Levy for five years of service to Vanderbilt and presented Drs. Aliferis and Aronsky with a five-year service pin. Dr. Levy was unable to attend.

- Notes from 8/31/05:Executive Faculty Meeting

Dr. Masys reported news from the Executive Faculty Meeting. He announced that the Vanderbilt School of Medicine’s new incoming class of medical students have been ranked by AAMC in the top 10 percentile of MCATs in the country for all incoming medical school classes. This class reflects a matriculation of 105 students out of 4500 applicants. Dr. Masys said that Dean Steven Gabbe complimented the class as a group of very well rounded and accomplished group of students.

Sad news was reported at the Executive Faculty Meeting in that a research assistant professor in Gastroenterology, a division of the Department of Medicine, took own life on 8/31/05; faculty appointment would have ended 9/1/05. An investigation is in progress. Faculty members were asked to be sensitive to peers who may be stressed and
in need of assistance. Dr. Masys reminded the group that the university has a pro active employee assistance program and encouraged them to report any signs of distressed colleagues to let someone know.

Vanderbilt may have after effects of Hurricane Katrina in that VUMC is working with FEMA to determine medical needs, and there may be an influx of patients over the weekend. Tulane School of Medicine students were evacuated to Jackson State; Tulane administration is now at University of Mississippi Medical Center. More permanent headquarters are planned to be established in Houston. LSU medical school plans to relocate to Baton Rouge, but administration is fully engaged in relief efforts at present. Dean Gabbe suggested that there may be opportunities for VUMC to provide assistance to students who have been displaced as a result of this tragedy.

A new tenure extension policy is going out with minor changes from previous draft. Dr. Masys announced that the most significant potential change is that there will be a nine year tenure clock rather than seven years for faculty to achieve tenure. The policy is being reviewed for approval to soon become School of Medicine policy.

Dr. Masys reported on the Meharry-Vanderbilt Alliance stating that 35% of medical students from both institutions are participating in MV Student Association activities. These include community outreach and social events, and are developing plans to increase shared academic activities.

Recruiting: Two candidates remain for the chair of Dept. of Anesthesiology. The department expects to conclude the search by end of November.

There is a new Office of Research website with non federal grant opportunities now online at https://medschool.mc.vanderbilt.edu/oor/pd/. This includes foundation and private grant opportunities.

Also reported from the Executive Committee, it was announced that a VUMC student-run free clinic will open in late September (23-24) in Dickerson Road area, including the communities of Bordeaux and East Nashville. Students performed a need-based assessment study working with Nashville’s Department of Health and identified a need in that area. The clinic will be open on Tuesday and Saturday from noon to 4:00 pm, which are the hours not currently covered by existing community based clinics.

It is estimated that 20,000 Nashville residents will lose TennCare coverage on 9/1/05 and the clinic should be able to help with the needs of these residents. The model plan shows pairing first and second year students with fourth year students; students then present cases to attendings. The free clinic needs faculty attendings; residents can also participate with attending approval.
Dr. Masys informed the group that they would be receiving a request to volunteer their services for a few hours a month.

There are new NIH requirements regarding including clinical practice compensation in NIH base salary on grants. Annual letters from chair will include explicit documentation of what fraction of annual salary will be from clinical income.

Dr. Masys reported on more news regarding multiple PI’s on grants. This news includes: NIH and OSTP requesting information on this for the implementation of the Executive Order from last Fall. AAMC will represent all medical schools. Key issues are: allocation of funds to individual PI’s as tracked by NIH; fractional vs. full credit; should NIH discontinue departmental rankings; financial management for awards involving multiple institutions (currently done by subcontract, should model be changed to NIH making independent awards).

Clinical Years Curriculum. Bonnie Miller summarized an 18 month long curriculum revision project. Goals of VMS3 changes: common start date, required intersession weeks, Clinical Transaction Project, and address concerns of the LCME site visit report regarding timely monitoring and feedback to students on clinical rotations. VMS4 changes: there will be a new capstone course which revisits basic science and its integration with clinical care. Intersessions will address ‘orphan topics’ that cross disciplines (e.g., communications skills, medical systems, quality improvement, EBM), will be graded pass/fail. Current 3rd year curriculum is 44 weeks; would become 48 weeks. Year 4 is 32 weeks and would remain that length.

Bridge Funding. Competitive grant renewals had a FY04 success rate of 42%, but so far the FY05 success rate is only 25%. A bridge funding program has been established, whose primary goal is to minimize the need to terminate laboratory personnel when a competitive renewal is not funded on first try. Dept. Chairs can use development funds previously allocated to new faculty recruitment for bridging of current faculty, but are not required to. To be eligible for the VUMC program, an investigator has to be PI on NIH RO1 competing renewal that is scored (not triaged). Priority will be given to PI’s with only one RO1 and no other extramural support. Priority also given to those who submit at least one cycle early (however, there is a problem with NIH, since some study sections are being instructed to triage early resubmissions). Request goes from the Department Chair to the School of Medicine Dean and then copied to Office of Research and Finance.
Elevate update was provided by Kevin Johnson from the most recent Leadership Development Institute on August 17. CREDO behavior statements were distributed for review.

An Emphasis program update was given by Dr. Johnson.