

Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences with Specialization in Biological Communication

Memorandum

To: Lou Esposito, Chair
Senate Steering Committee

From: Robert Gaylor, Chair
Senate Planning Review Committee

Subject: Biology Doctoral Program

Date: November 19, 1999

The Senate Planning Review Committee met today to review the Biology Doctoral Program. We have three concerns regarding this program:

First, that the program needed to provide for the filing of a specific assessment plan.

Second, the Committee has concerns regarding the marketability of the new graduates with this degree.

Third, the Committee was concerned regarding the recruitment of students to this program, especially international students. We hope that recruitment would not be limited to the local market.

With these concerns noted, the Committee approved the program.

cc: Kieran Matheison (School of Business Administration)
David Kidger (Department of Music, Theatre and Dance)
Margo King (Development, Alumni and Community Engagement)
Odel Izraeli (School of Business Administration)
Estela Moreno-Mazzoli (Department of Modern Languages and Literatures)
Frances Jackson (School of Nursing)
Laura Schartman (Office of Institutional Research and Assessment)

12/6/99

Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences with Specialization in Biological Communication

MEMORANDUM

TO: Faculty Senate

FROM: Senate Budget Review Committee

SUBJECT: Proposed Ph.D. in Biomedical Sciences with a Concentration in Biological Communication

DATE: 29 NOV 1999

The proposed Ph.D. Program, if implemented, will have a significant impact on the University's budget. The considerations go beyond the proposal itself. Start-up costs exceed one million dollars, and the steady state of the program requires other expenditures exceeding five hundred thousand dollars in addition to four faculty lines.

What the University gets for these dollars is potentially profound. The Program request appears to be sound, and builds on tremendous successes from the Henry Ford Program. There is adequate rationale that good students can be recruited and that the graduates of the Program will be attractive to the job market. There are two major policy issues the Committee wishes to call to the Senate's attention:

1. This program is very much in the spirit of programs at research universities. The students are research assistants, not teaching assistants. This is in spirit different from most of OU's graduate programs. A major move toward graduate programs of this flavor constitutes a change in the nature of our institution. Determining the correctness of this move is beyond the purview of this Committee.
2. The proposed budget for this program indicates a desire on the part of the proposers to run a high-quality program in a first-class way, with the resources necessary to do so. None of the resources requested are inappropriate for a first-class research-oriented Ph.D. program. But some of the requested resources are atypical for Ph.D. Programs at OU. For example, the program requires \$25,000 annually for library support, and support totaling \$31,000 annually per graduate student. The library allotment for this program is not excessive, but would have very bad consequences to other programs if those funds are merely dedicated from the current library budget. This is not criticism, merely an observation. Approval of the program must include the stipulation that library funds for the program are plus-ups to the current library budget. Similarly, the student support, much higher per student than other OU graduate programs and including benefits not afforded to other OU graduate students, cannot come from the current budget for graduate support. The University must decide if it wishes to create programs funded at these levels, with these expectations, and what guarantees such a program needs to make to the rest of the institution. Again, these decisions are beyond the purview of this Committee.

This Committee, which cannot address these wider questions, urges the Senate to consider them.

A difficulty with the Proposal: Neither the text nor the budget addresses external support. Ph.D. programs in the sciences at research universities are expected to generate considerable external support for graduate students and research facilities. The Committee cannot fully evaluate the financial burden of this proposal without knowing what

expectations are for those faculty hired into the program. For example, are faculty assigned to this program expected to acquire funding to support all of their graduate students? Will these expectations be made concrete to those faculty?

The Committee also urges the Senate to ask of the Administration the following: Assuming this program is implemented, how will the necessary cuts in other programs be made?

In spite of the wider questions, and pending good answers to the question of external support, the Committee believes that the Proposal's budget is commensurate with its promise.

11/30/99