

Dean's Newsletter

March 5, 2012

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Moving Forward Toward a New Curriculum for Graduate Education

Following the themes articulated at the 2012 Strategic Planning Leadership Retreat, Dr. Dan Herschlag, Professor of Biochemistry and Senior Associate Dean for Graduate Education and Postdoctoral Affairs, held a Town Hall Meeting on Tuesday, February 21st to discuss proposed revisions to the curriculum for graduate student education in the biosciences at Stanford. As noted in previous communications, our mission and philosophy in this area are evolving in ways that include:

- Educating each student to “think like a scientist”
- Training leaders and innovators
- Leaving no graduate student behind, by addressing advising and mentoring and choice of labs to work in
- Encouraging each student to pursue her or his career of choice, regardless of which path that follows (e.g., research, education, industry), and honoring that choice.

Dr. Herschlag outlined some of the key components of the curriculum changes being considered and solicited feedback and engagement – from the students who attended the Town Hall as well as those who were unable to participate but who hopefully will become involved as the process moves forward. Among the innovations being considered is a “biosciences kernel core course” that will foster an interdisciplinary experience and that will be project and not lecture based. A key feature of this course will be small group discussions that emphasize concepts over facts and that promote active learning as well as the acquisition of critical analytic skills in reading and understanding the literature, design of experiments and communication and collaboration. Crucial components will include, first, learning how to develop hypotheses, and, second, determining the right experimental approaches for addressing them. An additional goal is to have the educational process become a multi-year effort that incorporates mini-courses and roundtables that expose students to core concepts as well as leaders in science

broadly defined. Included will be interactions with alumni who are pursuing broad career pathways – from academia to industry and beyond.

Providing mentorship is an essential component of our education goals – both for research proficiency and for career development. These two types of mentoring should be performed and coordinated by different individuals. Another key goal is shortening the time to degree, with a goal of accelerating the time students enter destination labs, do qualifying exams and complete all requirements. In total this should be five years or less.

Following an interactive discussion on these and related issues at the Town Hall, several action items were delineated, including:

1. ***Student and Advisor Rights and Responsibilities***. There was great interest in developing a “Rights and Responsibilities” document for students and advisors. The goal for this document is to engender open, ongoing discussion between students and advisors and to empower students, particularly as a needed and additional resource for their transition from undergraduate to graduate studies. A group will meet to craft this document; additional students and faculty interested in participating this process should contact Melanie Bocanegra, Assistant Dean for Graduate Education (mbocanegra@stanford.edu).
2. ***Curriculum***. There was enthusiasm for the proposed curriculum changes delineated above as well as a note of caution, since they will entail a new “experiment” in their own right. In this respect the Town Hall participants felt it was important that the new interdisciplinary course not be required of students, although it is likely that at least several Home Programs will strongly recommend it to their students. It was noted that Drs. Tom Clandinin (Neurobiology), Tim Stearns (Biology) and Aaron Straight (Biochemistry) will be developing an initial syllabus over the next month to share with departments and core courses directors in order to help optimize the timing and format of courses for the coming academic year. In addition, funds have been allocated from the Dean’s Office to help in the development of graduate mini-courses. A call for proposals will go out in March, and faculty, students and postdocs will be encouraged to apply for funding to help revamp and improve existing courses and to develop new mini-courses, with special emphasis on interdisciplinary experiences and short, intensive special topics.
3. ***Second Mentor Program***. Students have previously identified the desire for “second mentors” – mentors beyond their advisor and thesis committee who can provide mentoring in a number of ways, including career advice, outside perspectives, and free and nonjudgmental discussion. Louis Fernandes, President of Stanford Biosciences Student Association (SBSA), has initiated a survey of students to nominate faculty members who they feel would be particularly adept in this role. There is additional interest in expanding this program to local alumni. Accordingly, if you know of faculty or alumni who you think would excel in this role, please contact Louis Fernandes (louisf@stanford.edu).

4. ***“Career of Choice” and Alumni Forum.*** Students often first begin to consider career options outside of academia in their 3rd or 4th year of graduate school. Often when research projects are launched, there is considerable excitement and anticipation. Of course, research is filled with as many frustrations and disappointments (often more) than moments of exhilaration. While students may seek to follow a career outside of research for a number of reasons, sometimes these pursuits grow out of the understandable frustration and disappointment that can accompany pursuit of quite challenging research questions. But it is important that each student, regardless of the nature of his/her particular research experience, explore and search for a career of choice – the career that will bring the most fulfillment and allow that student to ultimately contribute the most to society. Further, as there are many ways to utilize training in science, students should not feel compelled to take one path or be judged for the paths that they choose – or don’t choose.

Indeed, students should recognize from day one in graduate school that part of their journey involves reflection and consideration about their longer-term career goals. To facilitate this process, and to celebrate the great and diverse careers of our alumni, the Graduate Education office will hold an Alumni Forum for all 3rd and 4th year graduate students. More details will follow; everyone was advised that *this May 4th will be a starting point and that an event is planned for that date that will provide an introduction to alumni and career paths, discussions with alumni, and advice from our outstanding Career Center on how to begin the path to one’s career of choice.*

5. ***Student/Faculty Focus Groups on Advising, Curriculum and Careers.*** The Graduate Education office will host a series of focus group discussions in March and April to seek input for the new biosciences website, new student orientation, proposed workshops and wellness programs. Your participation and feedback will help shape initiatives that address the holistic development and well-being of our students. Students and faculty interested in joining these efforts should e-mail Dan Herschlag (herschla@stanford.edu).

Even though the attendance of graduate students in this first Town Hall Meeting was somewhat low, the event was a great beginning, and I do feel very confident that interest and participation will continue to grow as new programs are explored and initiated. It is great to see the progress that has been made, and I am grateful to the collaboration among students, staff and faculty that is moving this initiative forward. It is very exciting!

Approval of Principal Investigator Status for Clinician Educators For Research Related to the Practice of Medicine

Two important issues have converged that, as a result, have permitted a decision to expand the opportunity for Clinician Educator faculty in the School of Medicine to serve as principal investigators (PIs) on research studies related to the practice of

medicine. The Provost granted approval for this expanded opportunity following a small group meeting with him on February 21st that included Drs. Mark Cullen, Professor of Medicine and Chief of the Division of General Medical Services in the Department of Medicine; Harry Greenberg, Joseph D Grant Professor of Medicine and Senior Associate Dean for Research; Ann Arvin, Lucile Salter Packard Professor of Pediatrics and Vice Provost and Dean of Research; and myself. The underlying premise of the proposal we made to the Provost is that Clinician Educators, who are on the front lines of medical practice, have a unique opportunity to advance new models and methods of medical care delivery – from improving quality and efficiency of medical care to innovative ways of promoting health and treating disease in ambulatory, hospital and community settings.

Until now Clinician Educators have been permitted to be PIs only on multicenter industry sponsored clinical trials on which they served as site director (but not the overall PI). This new opportunity will permit a Clinician Educator to request a PI waiver from her or his division or department chair for studies that relate to the practice of medicine at Stanford. Final approval of a PI waiver request for a Clinician Educator will be granted by the Senior Associate Deans for Research and for Academic Affairs. Waivers could be granted for such projects as studies of therapeutic interventions, innovations in medical practice and healthcare delivery, novel approaches to diagnosis, disease stratification or disease management. Once approved, a research application on which the Clinician Educator is the PI can be submitted to federal or state funding agencies (e.g., NIH, the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality, the Patient Oriented Outcomes Research Institute) or private foundations.

This new opportunity for Clinician Educators who wish to pursue a research opportunity is timely in light of the major changes underway in healthcare reform and policy in the US – as well as the funding sources addressing quality, patient outcomes, healthcare delivery, etc. It is also timely in light of our burgeoning efforts in developing Population Health Science at Stanford, a topic that is covered in a February 27th article by Krista Conger entitled “*Population Studies at Heart of Initiative to Improve Health*” (see: <http://med.stanford.edu/ism/2012/february/population-0227.html>).

I also want to underscore that this additional opportunity for our Clinician Educator faculty is optional and offers an opportunity for members of our community to pursue issues and questions they deem important. At the same time, it is important to view the primary role of Clinician Educators as providing outstanding patient care and education – missions that are equally important to the success of Stanford as an academic medical center.

Academic Senate Considers Revisions to University Conflict of Interest

The topic of financial conflict of interest has engendered considerable discussion and debate over the past decade, particularly regarding payments or gifts, small and large, from industry to physicians as well as institutions. The Stanford School of Medicine “*Policy and Guidelines for Interactions between the Stanford University School of Medicine, the Stanford Hospital and Clinics, and Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital with the Pharmaceutical, Biotech, Medical Device, and Hospital and Research*

Equipment and Supplies Industries ("Industry")” can be found on our website at <http://med.stanford.edu/coi/siip/policy.html>. Thanks to the incredible support of faculty, students and staff, Stanford’s policies have been transparent and are seen as a model of excellence in the nation.

While the potential for conflict of interest in education and patient care is still a very important issue, with rare exception, concerns about conflicts related to these areas have been well managed. And when the Physician Sunshine Act, which mandates public disclosure of industry payments to physicians, was passed as part of the Affordable Care Act in March 2010, Stanford was already ahead of almost every other academic center. Specifically, all payments to faculty from industry above \$5000 that are related to their consulting activities are shown on individual publicly accessible CAP (Community Academic Profile) listings. Over the past year or so, our discussions about academic-industry relations have focused increasingly on how we can foster more effective research collaborations that both avoid conflict and promote research activity and technology transfer. This was the topic of a Think Tank held on October 15, 2011 and also a panel at our *Strategic Planning Leadership Retreat*.

Against this backdrop, new requirements regarding conflict of interest and commitment in research have been mandated by the National Institutes of Health (<http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/FR-2011-08-25/pdf/2011-21633.pdf>). These new requirements, which become effective on August 24, 2012, necessitate revisions in Stanford’s conflict of interest policy on research, which was first approved on April 14, 1994 and modified on December 2, 2004. On February 23, 2012, Professor Peter Michelson, chair of the Academic Senate Committee on Research, presented an overview of the proposed revisions to the “Faculty Policy on Conflict of Commitment and Interest” (RPH4.1) that are needed to make Stanford compliant with the new federal guidelines (see: <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2012/february/faculty-senate-three-022312.html>). The revisions presented followed months of intense work led by Harry Greenberg, Joseph D. Grant Professor of Medicine and Senior Associate Dean for Research, and Ann Arvin, Lucile Salter Packard Professor of Pediatrics and Vice Provost and Dean of Research, who carefully reviewed the federal guidelines and distilled the key issues that Stanford needs to address.

Given the nature of some of the changes that are coming, it seems useful to highlight some of the major revisions that are being mandated by the NIH, as follows:

- The threshold at which a relationship must be managed, if FCOI (Financial Conflict of Interest) is present will be decreased from \$10,000 in the current policy to \$5,000 in the 2012 revision
- Before grant dollars can be spent on PHS awards, institutions must sign an assurance to NIH that they have managed all FCOIs related to the specific project and this assurance needs to be updated annually
- The institution must determine whether a faculty member’s outside interests overlap with/are related to their institutional responsibilities and if so, if they are related to their research/scholarship responsibilities (and specifically to PHS

- funded research. If that is the case the institution must determine whether an FCOI exists, rather than allowing the faculty member to make this determination
- Almost all sponsored travel must be reported to the institution
 - The amount of information that must be reported to the NIH if an FCOI exists is significantly increased
 - Institutions must make accessible to the public within 5 days all FCOIs overlapping with NIH/PHS funded awards
 - A requirement for investigator training before engaging in any PHS-funded research and every four years thereafter
 - If noncompliance with regulations found, a series of significant review procedures required to take place

The Academic Senate will vote on the proposed changes to the policy on conflict of commitment and interest at its March 8, 2012 meeting. Further announcements about the revised policies will be made later in the year.

School of Medicine Faculty Fellows Program Begins Seventh Year

On February 21st Dr. Hannah Valantine, Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Leadership, launched the first meeting of the 2012 School of Medicine Faculty Fellows Leadership Program (<http://med.stanford.edu/diversity/leaders/fellows.html>). This is the 7th year of this highly successful program, which is sponsored by the Office of Diversity and Leadership (ODL). Its purpose is to help mid-level faculty build community and learn about leadership, through monthly dinners with selected Stanford leaders who share and discuss their “leadership journey” as a way of promoting dialogue and discussion. In addition, Faculty Fellows participate in small group mentoring groups as well as personal career development planning. I had the opportunity to be the speaker at the first session and was pleased, once again, to find an exceptional group of faculty who are eager and ready to learn about leadership – and more importantly, to become effective leaders themselves.

The Faculty Fellows Leadership Programs is one of the major initiatives by the Office of Diversity and Leadership (ODL) and is part of a comprehensive effort to further enhance diversity and leadership in the medical school, medical center and university. Dr. Valantine recently offered reflections on the programs she has so ably led in a Podcast available on our Stanford website (<http://med.stanford.edu/121/2012/valantine.html>). I am very pleased to note that over the years graduates of the Faculty Fellows Leadership Program have taken on important leadership roles in the medical school, university and hospitals. Faculty Fellows are selected through a competitive nomination process. They represent an important investment and resource for the future of Stanford Medicine.

The 2012 Faculty Fellows include:

Dr. Valerie Baker, Assistant Professor, Department of Obstetrics & Gynecology
Dr. Lorinda Chung, Assistant Professor, Department of Medicine
Dr. Brian Hargreaves, Associate Professor, Department of Radiology

Dr. Michael Haberecht, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Psychiatry
Dr. Charles Hill, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Anesthesia
Dr. Jinah Kim, Assistant Professor, Department of Pathology
Dr. Nishita Kothary, Assistant Professor, Department of Radiology
Dr. Marco Lee, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Neurosurgery
Dr. Marc Melcher, Assistant Professor, Department of Surgery
Dr. Kari Nadeau, Associate Professor, Department of Pediatrics
Dr. John Oghalai, Associate Professor, Department of Otolaryngology
Dr. Suma Ramzan, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Anesthesia
Dr. Kimberly Rhoads, Associate Professor, Department of Surgery
Dr. Juergen Willmann, Assistant Professor, Department of Radiology
Dr. Cynthia Wong, Clinical Assistant Professor, Department of Pediatrics
Dr. Paul Zei, Clinical Associate Professor, Department of Medicine

Although it is disappointing to not have any faculty from a basic science in this group of Faculty Fellows (which we have had in previous groups), I am very pleased by the range of interest, disciplines and career plans in the 2012 Faculty Fellow Leadership Group. We wish them well on this new journey.

Celebrating Diversity: Increasing the Numbers of Women in Science Needs to Start Earlier

As an institution of higher learning we are enriched by the diversity of our community – students, faculty and staff. Because we value diversity we are unabashed in our desire to continue to enrich our community with the widest range of diversity possible. We recognize that it makes the education of our students deeper and prepares them better for the global community in which they will live and work. We appreciate that a more diverse faculty and staff are more likely to engage in research questions and scholarship that are more cognizant of biological and environmental variation and the need to study questions in ways that have broad relevance. We also recognize that the diversity of the patients who seek our care is best addressed by healthcare providers who appreciate the impact of societal and cultural issues on health and healthcare.

On Friday, March 2nd we had the opportunity to celebrate diversity during a lunchtime event for Bioscience Graduate applicants who were visiting Stanford for admission interviews. Dr. Melanie Bocanegra, PhD, a 2003 graduate of Stanford's Cancer Biology Program, and currently Director of Biosciences Diversity Programs and Assistant Dean of Graduate Education (<http://med.stanford.edu/phd/diversity/>), organized and led this important event. Dr. Bocanegra and others spoke about why diversity is so important to our graduate education programs and missions and also described the wide array of services and organizations that are in place to support and promote diversity (see: <http://med.stanford.edu/phd/diversity/organizations.html>).

Because of the efforts of many faculty, students and staff, Stanford School of Medicine's MD and PhD classes have become increasingly diverse in the numbers of women and minorities underrepresented in medicine. Efforts have also been made to

increase the diversity of our faculty, as is well described by Dr. Hannah Valentine, Senior Associate Dean for Diversity and Leadership in her Podcast noted above (<http://med.stanford.edu/121/2012/valantine.html>). Despite progress, which has been slower than any of would like, a sobering study entitled “*Survival Analysis of Faculty Retention in Science and Engineering*” was recently published in the February 17th issue of *Science* by Deborah Kaminski and Cheryl Geisler that raises additional concerns (see: <http://www.sciencemag.org/content/335/6070/864.full.pdf?sid=32301a51-6781-496d-ac0b-96a8b1f61675>). In conducting their study, the authors tracked 2966 science and engineering faculty from 14 universities from the time they were appointed until they left the university. Kaminski and Geisler observe that women left the university at a significantly higher rate than men, most dramatically about 5 years after they were appointed, particularly during the pretenure period.

Attrition of junior faculty, especially women, has been a major concern and is one of the major areas of study and intervention by our Office of Diversity and Leadership. The impact of attrition is incredibly important especially since there is no difference in the success of tenure between men and women nationally (this is true at Stanford as well). However, as Kaminski and Geisler note, “the long span of faculty careers provides considerable inertia in the system”. Their conjecture is that “*it would take about 40 years for a department to match the gender composition of the hiring pool because of the long length of faculty careers. Although...data do show an increase in the percentage of women hired, the goal of 50% women may not be achieved until as late as 2050. Thus, if current trends continue, it may take 100 years before women are 50% of the faculty in STEM (science, technology, engineering, medicine) departments.*”

While acknowledging the value of such projections, they must compel us to not simply accept their conclusions but to find ways to shorten the timeline to achieving a more diverse faculty. Thankfully, a number of programs to address faculty development and attrition are now in place or will soon be introduced. They deserve our attention and support. Equally, we need to do more to improve the pipeline – by fostering opportunities for more women and minorities to enter graduate programs in science and engineering. This needs to include programs that extend to the high school level or even earlier and that create opportunities for support before and during college as well as during graduate school, postdoctoral training and early faculty appointments. There is unlikely to be one simple solution – but there are a lot of things that can, and must, be done if we are to be more successful. And more successful we must be.

Dr. Margaret Hamburg will be the 2012 School of Medicine Commencement Speaker

I am very pleased to announce that Dr. Margaret Hamburg, Commissioner of the Food and Drug Administration, will be the School of Medicine Commencement Speaker on Saturday, June 16th. I have had the privilege of knowing and working with Dr. Hamburg in a number of different settings and have tremendous respect for her commitment to science and medicine. Dr. Hamburg became the 21st Commissioner of the FDA on May 18, 2009. Her distinguished career began on the Stanford campus, where her

father, David Hamburg, was Chair of the Department of Psychiatry and her mother, Beatrix, was the first African-American woman to attend Vassar College and to earn a degree from the Yale University School of Medicine, which had previously excluded black students.

Peggy Hamburg received an MD degree from Harvard Medical School, trained in internal medicine and did research in neuroscience at the Rockefeller University and NIH. It was when her career embraced research in AIDS that I first interacted with Dr. Hamburg at the NIH. She subsequently became the Commissioner of the New York City Department of Health and Hygiene and had a major impact on public health in NYC and, by extension, globally. She was then appointed Assistant Secretary for Policy and Evaluation in the US Department of Health and Human Services from 2001-2005. She then became founding vice president for biological programs at the Nuclear Threat Initiative, where she also served as senior scientist until her appointment to the FDA.

Dr. Hamburg's remarkable career as a physician and scientist as well as in public health, safety and leadership make her a wonderful choice as our 2012 Commencement speaker.

Awards and Honors

- **Dr. Robert Jackler**, The Edward C. and Amy H. Sewall Professor in Otorhinolaryngology, was recently inducted as an Honorary Fellow of the Royal College of Surgeons of England at a ceremony in London. During his visit, Dr. Jackler gave a graduation oration to the diplomates of the Royal College who had recently completed their surgical training. Congratulations to Dr. Jackler.

Appointments and Promotions

Sherry Beaudreau has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, effective 4/1/2012.

Lindsay Butler-Kolderup has been promotion to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective 4/1/2012.

Michael Joshua Cisco has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, effective 7/1/2011.

Amanda Dill has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine, effective 3/1/2012.

James Faix has been appointed to Clinical Professor of Pathology, effective 3/1/2012.

Michele Kastelein has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor of Medicine, effective 9/1/2011.

Camilla Kilbane has been appointed to Clinical Assistant Professor of Neurology and Neurological Sciences, effective 9/1/2012.

Sanjay Kurani has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine, effective 12/1/2011.

Jason Lifshutz has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Neurosurgery, effective 8/1/2012.

Amen Ness has been promoted to Clinical Associate Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective 3/1/2012.

Anna J. Park has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine, effective 3/1/2012.

Andrea H. Polesky has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Medicine, effective 9/1/2011.

Alan Ringold has been reappointed to Clinical Professor of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, effective 9/1/2011.

Kerstin Rosen has been appointed to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Pediatrics, effective 12/1/2011.

Kamala Shankar has been reappointed to Clinical Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Orthopaedic Surgery, effective 9/1/2011.

Andrew Shin has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor of Pediatrics, effective 7/1/2011.

Carla B. Shnier has been reappointed to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Anesthesia, effective 9/1/2011.

Carly E. Siskind has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor (Affiliated) of Neurology and Neurological Science, effective 4/1/2012.

Amy J. Voedisch has been promoted to Clinical Assistant Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology, effective 3/1/2012.

Dorcas C. Yao has been reappointed to Clinical Associate Professor (Affiliated) of Radiology, effective 9/1/2011.