

Contact: Diana Gonzalez

**PROPOSED PROGRAM CHANGES IN THE
CLINICAL LABORATORY SCIENCES PROGRAM AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF IOWA**

Action Requested: Consider recommending to the Board that the proposed changes in the Clinical Laboratory Sciences Program at the University of Iowa be approved.

Executive Summary: The Clinical Laboratory Sciences (CLS) Program has been offered at the University of Iowa for approximately 40 years. Initially, the program was administered by the College of Liberal Arts but, in the recent past, the Carver College of Medicine has administered the program through the Department of Pathology; the program has been funded almost entirely by the University of Iowa Hospitals and Clinics (UIHC). In 2005, SUI began to study the termination of the program as a cost cutting measure. However, rather than closing the program, the university explored alternative models which would reduce the cost of the program while continuing to deliver high quality instruction which would enable graduates to pass the national certification examination.

This report outlines the University of Iowa's proposal to enter into a partnership with the University of Nebraska Medical Center (UNMC) whereby students would receive the introductory laboratory and didactic elements of the program through UNMC in Omaha. Students would continue to receive the majority of their clinical experience in Iowa City and would continue to earn the BS degree in Clinical Laboratory Sciences from SUI.

◆ **Highlights of Proposed Changes:**

- ☑ Clinical laboratory scientists work in a wide variety of medical and other laboratory settings. Entry into the profession typically requires a BS degree and completion of an accredited CLS program.
- ☑ UNMC will deliver the introductory laboratory and didactic elements of the program. Under the partnership, UNMC will provide on its campus a ten-week introduction to laboratory work that will take place during the summer between the students' 3rd and 4th years and will replace a similar summer experience currently provided in teaching labs in the Carver College of Medicine. UNMC will also provide (through the Internet) lectures, examinations, and other didactic components throughout the students' senior year.
- ☑ UNMC has similar partnerships with institutions in Wyoming, South Dakota, Missouri, and Nebraska.
- ☑ UIHC will develop a loan forgiveness program to help students defray their educational costs if they obtain employment at UIHC.
- ☑ Students will continue to earn the BS degree in the CLS program at the University of Iowa. Students will continue to take their first three years of coursework, including chemistry, biology, and mathematics courses, at the University of Iowa.

- ☑ Students will continue to be eligible to sit for the national certification examination. Passage of the national examination will make students eligible to practice in Iowa. The 5-year pass rate for the SUI program is 95%; UNMC's pass rate between 2002-04 has averaged more than 97%.
- ☑ Students will continue to receive the majority of their clinical experiences in Iowa City and will be able to learn the full range of state-of-the-art techniques in clinical chemistry, hematology, microbiology, and immunohematology.
- ☑ Students will complete all but their introductory laboratory training (which will occur in Omaha) in the same laboratories in which they currently train in the Iowa City area.
- ☑ The undergraduate tuition and fees schedule will not be affected by participation in the UNMC partnership.
- ☑ If approved, the proposed changes will take effect for the 2007-08 school year. Students who apply to begin the CLS portion of their program in May 2007 will be informed of the changes by August 2006.
- ☑ A team from UIHC has been assigned to negotiate the agreement with UNMC.
- ☑ Establishing a partnership with UNMC will allow SUI to deliver a high quality program at reduced costs. Cost savings arise from the economies of scale available at UNMC because they have developed the infrastructure to deliver distance education to multiple sites and their marginal cost per additional student is modest.