

MEMORANDUM

To: Board of Regents

From: Board Office

Subject: Create a Department of Radiation Oncology in the College of Medicine

Date: April 9, 2001

Recommended Action:

Approve the University of Iowa's proposal to create a Department of Radiation Oncology in the College of Medicine.

Executive Summary:

The University of Iowa requests approval to create a Department of Radiation Oncology in the Department of Radiology within the College of Medicine. The Department would be created from the current Division of Radiation Oncology in the Department of Radiology; therefore, there will be minimal overall change in the number of faculty or staff required for the new department.

Radiation Oncology is a discrete specialty with its own Board certification and has independent departmental status in the majority of academic health centers. The development of a Department of Radiation Oncology will provide more collaborative and integrated educational programs for the physician residents, graduate students in physics and free radical and radiation biology, and radiation therapy students in this discipline. According to the University, there is a critical shortage of trained radiation therapy physicists and the Health Care Finance Administration (HCFA) has approved a physics residency program at the University of Iowa. The new Department of Radiation Oncology would be the home for the planned medical physics program in therapy.

The current Division of Radiation Oncology maintains the only radiation oncology training program in the State of Iowa. This unique interdisciplinary program brings together physicians, biologists, and physicists who share a common mission of education, research, and treatment of cancer.

The establishment of a Department of Radiation Oncology will also further the curriculum needs of other units in the College of Medicine and the University. The multidisciplinary programs in cancer biology, free radical and radiation biology, clinical radiation oncology, medical physics, and dosimetry will enhance

the educational mission of the Holden Comprehensive Cancer Center. The breadth of these programs will expand as the integrated teaching expands to related disciplines, including biomedical engineering, molecular imaging, cardiology, infectious disease, medical oncology, surgical oncology, and neurosurgery. According to the University, expanding the interaction of these programs through the College of Medicine will also work to address the current shortage of physician scientists. Opportunities for physician scientists within a new Center for Free Radical and Radiation Biology will extend across departmental lines. In addition, a strong medical physics program will add to the biomedical engineering and physics within the University to create a translational path for application of emerging technologies.

The University has indicated that the proposal is cost neutral because the new department will continue to be funded by the University of Iowa Health Care. Current personnel will provide administrative support. All resources for the new department will result from a negotiation with the Department of Radiology.

The Board Office has reviewed this proposal and recommends approval.


Diana Gonzalez

Approved: 
Frank J. Stork