**Neuroscience Program**

**Faculty Advisory Committee**

**Meeting Agenda**

**December 18, 2020**

1. Approve November Meeting Minutes Galligan
2. T32 Summary Statement Galligan
3. 2021 Graduate Student Recruiting Galligan/Swain
4. Graduate Program Curriculum and Updates Swain/Galligan
5. Old Business Galligan
6. New Business Galligan

**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://msu.zoom.us/j/98913895794>

**Meeting ID**: 989 1389 5794

**Passcode**: 024768

**Neuroscience Faculty Advisory Committee**

**December 18, 2020 at 10:15am**

**Attendance via Zoom**

**Attendance**: Marc Breedlove, Jim Galligan, Hanne Hoffmann, Gina Leinninger, Joe Lonstein, Ahlam Soliman (student rep), and Greg Swain

**New Business:**

1. Approve minutes from FAC meeting minutes from November 20, 2020
* Motion to Approve: Marc Breedlove
* Second: Gina Leinninger
* Motion passes
1. T32 Summary Statement: Jim Galligan
	* Jim Galligan reported that we received the comments and critiques from the reviewers. Jim stated our overall program is strong; we have a well-established curriculum, well-funded faculty, diversity, broad training and emphasize on quantitative skills. Jim said a critique that we received was what our students are doing after graduation. Jim stated students should move on to post-baccalaureate positions at research-intensive universities after graduation, but that is a minority of our students.
	* Gina Leinninger stated that the first critic noted this, but the third critic did not see this as a problem. Gina said the question might be if the intent of the T32 is to ensure that students go into academia. That is what we should try to understand.
	* Jim answered that it depends on the individual reviewer. Jim believes our program is preparing our students for a career in Neuroscience. Jim said some students go on to academic positions but most choose non-academic paths. Jim stated that when you are training Ph.D. students, you are training them for a range of science-related careers. Jim said these points are underlined in many National Institutes of Health (NIH) documents on the website.
	* Joe Lonstein commented that the Scientific Review Officer (SRO) failed not to emphasize this and address comments that are consistent with NIH’s mission. Jim said he is going to talk to the SRO to get some guidance on how to address some of these complaints, particularly this matter.
	* Ahlam Soliman stated that a good mentor should prepare and support a student in his or her career goals. Ahlam said a strength of the program is that it prepares students for a wide range of careers and the ability to be a good asset in any field.
	* Joe asked if there were statements from the National Academies or other sources about how we want education for science students in all sectors of American life.
	* Jim answered that this is a good rebuttal, but some reviewers will not be moved by this. Jim stated that reviewers often have an idea of what they have done in their own careers and the expectation for other graduate students to follow suit.
	* Hanne Hoffmann asked if there was a way to rephrase in the grant that we are preparing our students with jobs other than post-docs, and that only 10% of post-docs end up in academic careers.
	* Jim agreed and stated that in our resubmission we will have to emphasize that not every graduate student wants to go into academics.
	* Jim said that other positive comments the program received was the program’s recruitment of minority students, and the student’s involvement in the administrative aspects of the program. Jim said that one persistent criticism is that the program only requires two lab rotations. Jim suggested this is something we could discuss and consider, though he believes two rotations is best.
	* Joe asked why they want us to have three rotations, and if we can leave this up to the student to decide if they want two or three.
	* Jim answered that this has come up in previous applications. Jim stated other programs have students do three or four rotations. Jim suggested we emphasize that if a student does not find a home in two rotations that a third lab rotation is possible.
	* There was general agreement that two lab rotations offers a fuller experience and gives students time to get a feel for each lab. There was also general discussion about how three lab rotations might be a bad idea, and that students completing three lab rotations would only get about six weeks in each lab.
	* Jim said the program plans to revise and resubmit the grant. Jim said the hard part was putting this first draft together, but the revision will be much less painful.
2. 2021 Graduate Student Recruiting: Jim Galligan/Greg Swain/Eleri Thomas
* Eleri Thomas reported that the program looked into using the Easy Virtual Fair event platform, but it was unfortunately too expensive. The program will use traditional Zoom to hold recruitment activities this year. Eleri asked to update the latest version of Zoom if you plan to participate.
* Jim asked how the students would present Poster Sessions virtually.
* Eleri replied that presentations would be PowerPoint slideshows that included audio.
* General discussion continued on the appropriate length of the student presentations and the fear of overloading candidates with information. The committee agreed that five-minute presentations would be the better option.
* Joe inquired about the number of applicants the program received.
* Greg responded that the number of applicants is in a similar range compared to previous years. Greg said he was pleased by the number of minority students that applied this year. Greg stated we plan to invite 10 to 15 candidates this year.
* Greg reported the program plans to have an official list of applicants next week and we will send invites out to those applicants.
1. Graduate Program Curriculum and Updates: Jim Galligan/Greg Swain
	* Jim reported the program is looking for alternative course to NEU 815. So far, we have two options: FOR 875 (R Programming and Data Science, 3 credits), and the CMSE 890 modules (301, 302, and 303 – each 1 credit). Jim stated want to make both of these options available to the students, and the program will bring these changes to the Curriculum Meeting in January 2021.
	* Greg stated he was attracted to these courses because of the content and the organization of the professors. Greg added the only downside is that some courses take place in the summer along with PHM 830.
	* General discussion ensued on the timing of these course changes, and whether this would be too many credits for the students to take over the summer. Greg said he would bring these issues to the GAC and see what we can provide.
	* Gina said that these are great options, and Gina asked for an update on how NEU 815 ended this past fall semester.
	* Greg reported that he is not sure how it ended, but Greg was aware that the students did not know what their final project was a week before finals. Greg does not believe the course will turn out well for everyone.
	* Joe added that this situation was an embarrassment for all levels of administration that nothing could have been done about this course.
	* Greg is very disappointed as well, as he thought this course could have been very effective if the instructor could have made some adjustments and followed guidelines.
	* Jim stated that is exactly why it is important to add these alternative courses to our curriculum. Jim believes this course might be cancelled all together.
	* Gina suggested that we reach out to the students as a program because there has been some collateral damage here. Gina added that it is important to recognize that and let the students know we are in their corner.
	* Greg said he would reach out to the students regarding this issue.
2. No New Business
3. No Old Business

Meeting adjourned: 11:04am