

BMS Graduate Program Committee

March 15, 2017

RGE-330

2:30 - 4:00 p.m.

Present: Alexander Galazyuk, Lucy Coughlin, Yanqiao Zhang, Bill Lynch, Sam Crish,
Gary Meszaros and Margaret Weakland (support)

Meeting called to order.

Alex Galazyuk asked for a motion to approve the minutes from the BMS meeting held on February 22, 2017. Bill Lynch motioned to approve and was seconded by Sam Crish. All in favor; unanimous approval. February 22, 2017 meeting minutes are approved.

Alex shared that at the last Executive Committee meeting at KSU, they discussed the admission of the new cohort of students. Letters will be sent to 13 students soon, 6 are supported by KSU/BMS funds, 4 of them are supported by the department of Biology at KSU, 3 will be supported by NEOMED. The 3 (three) that are to be supported from NEOMED their stipend support will be reversed if they choose to go to KSU. In addition to these 3 students who will be supported from NEOMED other students who will be supported by KSU funds will likely join NEOMED graduate program. The students who are supported by NEOMED funds (3 students) will fulfill their teaching assignments here at NEOMED. Alex also shared that KSU would like to have a 2nd recruitment day for graduate students. The time-frame has not yet been decided but Alex feels that it may be around August/September after all the students have started the academic year and are on campus. Sam Crish stated that when the students were at NEOMED for recruitment day and he gave them a tour they were all impressed with our facility and the wellness center.

Alex informed committee members about a recent meeting that was held with NEOMED administration on issues related to student registration. It was stated that Chris Ritter will oversee this process.

Student mentoring policy; Bill Lynch shared with the committee some of the faculty comments he has received thus far. The first comment stated that there was nothing the deals with a student taking longer than 5 years to finish the program; and particularly relevant for those students who stipends are being paid by grants or teaching assistantships and that it may fall under probationary approval as the policy is currently written. The second, for example a student graduates in December and his/her teaching assignment is in the spring, faculty needs to find a way to work with this, e.g., was that if a student is teaching in for Medical Neuroscience has duties all year-round but the bulk of the work is late spring or early summer; for a student to

get support it is believed that there should be a document committing to completion of a teaching assignment. For the course in this example would mean for a student to stay till the middle of June; if a student graduates in December he/she would forfeit the bulk of this teaching assignment. Bill stated creating additional language of this nature is the challenge. If we want to discuss this additionally as a committee, we'll need to catch it early in the program with having our student mentoring program. Alex wants to wait till we get more feedback till we make any decisions about the policy.

Discussed the re-election of two of our committee members. Tallied ballot sheets were given to each committee member showing the number of votes received per faculty member. Alex stated that he received two ballots and is not sure Margaret Weakland was copied on them, and cannot verify it. Alex will double-check and get back to Margaret. After discussion of the tally sheet, Sam Crish moved to approve our two newest committee members pending validation from Alex; Lisa Cooper seconded the motion; unanimous approval, all in favor. Two new committee members will be Drs. Liya Yin and Sheila Fleming.

Miscellaneous:

Alex shared with the committee the admission of two students who are interested in working with Drs. Yoon-Kwang Lee (Bandar Alrehaili) and Fayez Safadi (Nazar Hussein). Bandar Alrehaili came 2 years ago, and Ernie Freeman recommend the student take an ESL course (English as a Second Language). Bandar's GPA is about a 3.5/3.6 and wants to take the GRE again; his English was between 7-9%, his quantitative 65 -70%. Student has interest in joining Dr. Yoon-Kwang Lee's lab. Bandar will be 100% funded by his government. Without confirming with Dr. Lee; the committee suspects he has 20k in start-up funds and he'll have that and for supplies and 50k in insurance money; bridge funding is also a possibility for Dr. Lee. Margaret was asked to check with Donna/Ernie for additional information on this student. Question was asked if Bandar plans on getting his M.S. degree through the School of BMS; Alex does not know. Committee wants a letter from the government officials that states there is concrete evidence that the student will be funded at 100% for 5 years. Committee is also concerned that they may say there's only money and the we (NEOMED) vowed to support student through his/her time in the program; if student is not performing, that is another issue. Would like a letter from Drs. Lee and Chilian to state support for student if funding from Saudi Arabia is no longer available.

Discussed another student, Nazar Hussein, who is currently in Dr. Safadi's lab. Nazar just finished his M.S. in December 2106 and had been fully supported by Saudi government; he now wants to get his Ph.D. using support from NEOMED funds. However, Dr. Safadi currently does not have any active grant to support this student. Following our student support policy Dr. Safadi may not have a student unless he finds some other source of support for the student. Committee stated they would like a letter from the department chair stating that he will provide

support for student from department funds. Margaret was asked to check the minutes as to whether the committee asked Dr. Safadi for a letter; she brought an email with her to meeting that stated, Fayeze has submitted and will be submitting grants but no specific documentation of him having current funding. Alex stated he will also follow up with Fayeze on support of this student.

Lisa Cooper followed up on the committee discussion from last month's meeting of adding to our policy of benefits (i.e., travel) for graduate students the issue of child care and elder care costs. Faculty that have child-care costs and that there are off-sets for dependent care as well. Lisa shared with the committee, "do we want to have the same for graduate students", monthly child-care/ \$700 and elder-care / \$1800/month is what Lisa shared with the committee. Upon further discussion, committee stated putting a cap on dependent care between \$ 500-700. Lisa was asked to check policies at other universities for comparison. She also shared that it's a strategy to get and retain the best students.

Alex discussed his reasoning of wanting to combine the funds that he has oversight of but wants to discuss with Steven Schmidt. If we get payment for stipend it goes into the 23091 index and then gets transferred to the 22912 index. Sam Crish shared that we still need to discuss how much we need in reserve. Was discussed that the former associate director of the BMS Committee has oversight of it and Alex feels that he is now in that position he should have signing permission on it together with Steven Schmidt.

Meeting adjourned.