DATE: January 27, 2010

TO: John C. Keller, Ph.D.
Dean, Graduate College

FROM: Donna L. Hammond, Ph.D.

RE: Pharmacology Program Ranking

On behalf of the faculty of the Department of Pharmacology, I thank the Strategic Task Force for their balanced appraisal of the strengths and weaknesses of the graduate program. By this memo, I would like to update the Task Force about the status of the search for a new Head, highlight an aspect of the program that was overlooked and clarify our graduate rate.

All first interviews for the Head of Pharmacology were completed in December 2009, and two highly qualified women candidates will return for second visits by the end of February. We expect that a permanent head will be identified by the end of this semester, and with this announcement recruitment efforts to expand the faculty will commence quickly.

Pharmacology, by virtue of its multidisciplinary nature, functions as a nexus between many different disciplines. Not surprisingly, many of our faculty train a significant number of students from other programs. These students also add to the vitality and strength of our program through their interactions with Pharmacology students and faculty.

Our Ph.D. graduation rate is admittedly lower than the national average. However, this percentage reflects the impact of recruitments in 1998 and 1999. Since 2000 we have been proactive in directing students to our M.S. program as soon as it becomes clear that the student lacks the capabilities to successfully complete the Ph.D. We believe that this is in the best interests of the program, the discipline and the student. As a result, our M.S. rate is higher than the national average. However, our experience is that student and faculty satisfaction is much higher when the student is directed to a program that is better aligned with their capabilities and that they can successfully complete. We have also been more active in retention of current students. When the graduation rate is based on 2000 forward, factoring in planned graduations this year, our Ph.D. graduation rate increases to 64%, the M.S. rate is 20% and the non-degree rate is 16%. These numbers are in alignment with the national average.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide clarification and an update.