GPP PRESENTATION TO SITE VISITORS

OVERARCHING QUESTIONS FOR THE SITE VISIT TEAM

1. Has the GPP demonstrated it can assemble the infrastructure and resources to manage a high quality graduate program on the NIH campus?
2. Is Graduate Student training at the NIH at or above the level of current standards for quality biomedical Ph.D. training in the US?
3. Do the proposed Core Characteristics of NIH-University partnerships define the right criteria and framework by which to assess current, and establish new, graduate training partnerships?
4. Does the NIH model of collaborative dissertations embodied in several of the GPP partnerships show potential of providing important skills for future scientists without sacrificing core competencies expected of all Ph.D. graduates?
5. What strengths and unique capabilities of the current partnerships and the NIH Intramural Research Program should be built upon as the GPP looks to the future?

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE SELF-STUDY

GPP INFRASTRUCTURE

- Major GPP Infrastructure Established During the Last Five Years
  - National recruiting of quality students with effective interviews and admissions processes
  - Database of students – partnership and independent
  - IRTA authority within GPP and funding mechanisms for students – US and international
  - GPP Website for use by external and internal communities
  - Methods for payment of tuition to universities for partnership students
  - Graduate Student Services, community building, and Graduate Student Council
  - Individual student advising and graduating student exit interviews

- Areas to Improve in Infrastructure within GPP
  - Common funding model for all partnerships with adaptation for research collaborations
  - Better monitoring of student progress
  - Facilitated payment of students' tuition to universities

STUDENTS

- The Student Experience at NIH
  - High level of satisfaction
  - Good mentoring – some room for improvement
  - Cooperative, collaborative environment
  - Research productivity is high
  - Able to try novel ideas
  - Excellent access to outstanding scientists
  - Satisfied with student support and programs
  - Active Graduate Student Council

- Collaborative Dissertations for Students
  - Allow faster and greater professional development for prepared students
  - Build skills for interdisciplinary and collaborative research
  - Add value for both university and NIH
  - Requires new but achievable student guidance early in training
  - Might shorten time to research independence

- Areas to Improve the Student Experience
  - More guidance on choosing mentors by GPP and Partnerships
  - Earlier identification/orientation of independent students by GPP
  - More partnership-specific student and mentor handbooks needed

PARTNERSHIPS

- Major Findings on Partnerships
  - Core Characteristics for successful partnerships have been identified
  - Human resources for partnerships assembled: NIH and University Directors and faculty
  - Few students choose NIH after year one in a partnership if there was minimal commitment to NIH at the time of admission
  - The university administration and faculty must view the relationship with NIH as a true training partnership, not see NIH as merely a source of revenue
  - In the collaborative dissertation model, pre-identification of potential NIH-university collaborations is necessary to initiate the partnership and aid students in mentor selection

- Areas to Improve for Partnerships
  - Sustain/improve University-NIH shared monitoring of student progress
  - Raise universities' expectations that accepted students will do research at NIH and ensure NIH role in student selection
  - Identification of appropriate graduate courses at NIH and in DC by GPP for partnerships
  - Ensure guidance for student laboratory rotations by partnership Directors and faculty
  - Administrative support needed for partnerships with a large number of students
  - Succession planning for Partnership Directors needed

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES FOR THE NEXT FIVE YEARS

1. Establish a common funding model for all partnerships which can also accommodate research collaborations
2. At appropriate intervals, review the present partnerships with established partnership Core Characteristics
3. For partnerships having or considering student collaborative projects, enhance the communication between university faculty and NIH investigators through Symposia or other means
4. Establish an adequate tracking system for both partnership and individual agreement students to following student professional outcomes
5. To augment the recruitment of high ability students to NIH, establish a few new partnerships capable of achieving the Core Characteristics of Successful Partnerships taking advantage of the unique capabilities and priority research areas of the NIH