

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL

**PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE**

**FOR INFORMATION ONLY**

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**PRESENTED BY:** Bob Tyler, Chair  
Planning and Priorities Committee

**DATE OF MEETING:** November 15, 2012

**SUBJECT:** **Criteria for Assessment of a College of Medicine Renewal Plan**

**COUNCIL ACTION:** For information only

**BACKGROUND:**

On May 17, 2012, University Council approved a new governance framework for the College of Medicine. The new framework was intended as a first but crucial step in addressing issues related to maintaining accreditation of the undergraduate medical education (M.D.) program and increasing the level of research activity in the College, as the existing governance and accountability structure was viewed as a roadblock to progress on these issues. On September 6, Council was directed by the General Academic Assembly to reconsider its decision. On September 12, the President reached an agreement with representatives of the Faculty Council of the College of Medicine, the Provost's Office and Council which would see the College of Medicine develop its own renewal plan as an alternative to the restructuring framework developed by the administration and approved by Council. On September 20, Council reconsidered the motion it approved on May 17, and the motion was defeated. It is anticipated that a renewal plan will be forthcoming from the College for consideration by Council in December. The Planning and Priorities Committee will assess the plan in advance of the December meeting, and will provide its perspective on the plan to Council. Accordingly, the Committee must establish criteria on which to base its assessment. These criteria will be shared with Council, the College of Medicine Dean's Advisory Committee and the College of Medicine Faculty Council.

To improve its understanding of the College of Medicine, particularly issues related to governance, accreditation and research performance, and the College's approach to developing a renewal plan, the Committee met with the College's Associate Dean Undergraduate Medical Education on October 10 and with representatives from the Dean's Advisory Committee and the Accreditation and Governance Working Groups on October 24. The Committee discussed criteria for assessment of a renewal plan at its meetings on October 31 and November 7. The Committee "membership" was expanded on these occasions to include the Chair of the Research, Scholarly and Artistic Work

Committee and a member of the Academic Programs Committee. Some members of the Committee will attend a meeting of the Dean's Advisory Committee in November, and the Committee expects to attend a meeting of the College of Medicine Faculty Council sometime prior to the December meeting of Council.

The draft criteria are presented to Council for information. Comments may be directed to bob.tyler@usask.ca.

**ATTACHMENTS:**

Criteria for Assessment of a College of Medicine Renewal Plan (draft)

## Criteria for Assessment of a College of Medicine Renewal Plan (draft)

The College of Medicine is a complex organization with both academic and clinical departments and correspondingly complex governance and accountability structures. Its mission and mandate include multiple education, research and clinical service roles. These roles are interconnected and fulfilled in partnership with community physicians, the Saskatoon and Regina Qu'Appelle Health Regions, the Ministry of Health, and other Health Science colleges. The operating budget allocation for the College represents a significant proportion (approximately 15%) of the University's operating budget. In recent years, the Province has made very substantial capital investments in the College.

Since being informed of the "warning of probation" for the undergraduate medical education (M.D.) program in February, 2012, the Planning and Priorities Committee has learned a great deal about the College and some of the issues it faces, with those related to delivery and accreditation of the M.D. program and to the level of research activity in the College being of greatest import. We have also learned about frameworks, plans, governance, criteria, resource allocation and accountability. The Committee and University Council anticipate receiving a renewal plan from the College in December. It is the responsibility of the Committee to review and evaluate the acceptability of this plan and to report to Council on its findings. This evaluation requires the establishment of criteria by which this or any renewal plan would be assessed. Ultimately, Council must decide whether a proposed renewal plan is likely to achieve the necessary outcomes and which therefore should receive its support.

Criteria for the assessment of a renewal plan for the College need to reflect the substance and intent of the agreement reached by the President on September 12 with representatives of the Faculty Council of the College of Medicine, the Provost's Office and University Council. The agreement is reiterated below.

*In conversations with the President, representatives of the Faculty Council of the College of Medicine, the Provost's Office and University Council have agreed to the following:*

1. *The university will pull central administrative support for the current Concept Plan provided that the COM Dean's Advisory Committee (DAC) presents an alternative plan for approval to University Council at the December meeting. This plan must include restructuring as necessary to:*
  - *address accreditation concerns within one year,*
  - *rebalance education, research and clinical responsibilities within COM over a 5 year period,*
  - *identify evidenced-based measures to be used to determine implementation success, such measures to be shared periodically with University Council, and*

- *all of the above must be accomplished without additional resources from the university beyond that already committed.*
- 2. *If no plan is forthcoming at the December meeting, then administration would resubmit the original Concept Plan to University Council as it would be the only plan available.*

*Further, although university governance does not let us require concurrence of Faculty Council with the plan of the DAC, we agreed that it would be preferable for everyone to be active in crafting the plan, effectively giving a voice to Faculty Council in the plan development.*

Fundamentally, renewal in the College of Medicine is about establishment of a governance structure that will provide the level of accountability demanded by the undergraduate medical education accrediting bodies and that will enable, over time, the reallocation and realignment of resources necessary to increase substantially the level of research activity in the College. Therefore, a renewal plan must propose a governance structure capable of achieving the desired outcomes, and must provide Council with a reasonable level of confidence that the desired outcomes will indeed be achieved along with some sense of the milestones and metrics that will be used to measure and monitor progress. A third requirement is that the desired outcomes must be achievable without additional University resources (and without negative impacts on teaching or provision of clinical services).

The timeline with respect to accreditation is very short, as a visit by the accreditation site team is expected in March of 2013. By that time, progress made in ensuring accountability for teaching assignments to University faculty must be sufficient to allay the concerns of the accreditation bodies. Within one year, this and all other accreditation issues are to be resolved. A substantial increase in the level of research activity in the College will require the removal of existing obstacles to engagement of faculty in research. These obstacles are related to structure, culture and resource allocation. Ultimately, a substantially improved balance between the education, research and clinical responsibilities of the faculty is necessary. This will require many things, including appropriate apportionment of resources to teaching, research and clinical service provision, reallocation of resources between the Saskatoon Health Region and the University, greater engagement of community physicians in teaching, development of alternative financing plans, strategic hiring of faculty, particularly faculty with a desire to make research a significant part of their activities, and the supports necessary to assure research success. Such a fundamental and substantial shift in culture, structure, personnel and resources will take time and negotiation, hence in their review of a renewal plan, the Committee will be looking for trajectories more than short term targets, e.g. a progressive increase in the number of clinician-researcher faculty, greater engagement of community physicians in teaching, steady improvement in success in research grant competitions, and gradual reallocation and realignment of human and financial resources such that the education, research and clinical service functions are appropriately resourced by the appropriate agency. This said, in keeping with the agreement reached with the President, the Committee will expect to see five-year goals specified in the renewal plan.

The Planning and Priorities Committee has adopted the following criteria that any plan for renewal of the College of Medicine must satisfy:

- 1. The renewal plan will propose a governance structure that will address the concerns of accrediting bodies within one year. In the near term, the proposed structure will assure the accrediting bodies that accountability issues are being addressed effectively.*
- 2. The proposed governance structure will support the change process that the College must undergo if it is to increase its level of research activity substantially over the next five years.*
- 3. The renewal plan will provide Council with a reasonable level of confidence that the desired outcomes will be achieved, along with some sense of the milestones and metrics that will be employed to measure and monitor the extent and trajectory of progress over the next five years.*
- 4. The renewal plan can be implemented without additional resources from the University and it will include a strategy for resource reallocation among the College's responsibilities and among the respective agencies responsible for academic activities and provision of clinical services.*
- 5. The renewal plan will include a description of the process employed in its development, including the degree of engagement of the College of Medicine Faculty Council. In addition, the level of College of Medicine Faculty Council support for the renewal plan will be documented.*

The concept plan approved by University Council in May was a framework for restructuring of the College of Medicine, with implementation left to the College. This time, although implementation of any renewal plan would remain the responsibility of the College, the expectation of the Planning and Priorities Committee is that any renewal plan that Council is asked to approve will reside further along the continuum from framework to implementation plan. This stems from the reality that the renewal plan will be put forward by the College of Medicine, but it is also in response to Council's discomfort in May over the lack of specific information on the impacts and outcomes of the new structural framework once implemented, and is in keeping with the terms specified in the President's agreement. This said, the College won't have had sufficient time since September 12 to develop a formal implementation plan, hence the Committee's expectations regarding the details of implementation will be modest, and as described in the criteria.