Minutes
Research Strategic Plan Subcommittee of the
Medical Education and Research Committee (MERC)
February 14, 2008 at 3:00pm – Room 4250 HSLC

Members Present: Bill Busse, Cindy Czajkowski, Paul DeLuca, Norm Drinkwater, Javier Nieto, Rod Welch, George Wilding

Members Absent: Tom Grist

Staff Present: Tracy Cabot, Cathy Frey, Tonya Mathison, Eileen Smith

1. Call meeting to order

DeLuca called the meeting to order at 3:15pm.

2. Approval of draft January 3, 2008 minutes

The draft minutes of January 3, 2008 were unanimously approved.

3. Discuss the research initiatives proposed at the January 3, 2008 meeting and develop a prioritized list for consideration by MERC

DeLuca distributed a draft document with the suggested actions discussed at the January 3, 2008 Research Strategic Plan Subcommittee meeting. The discussion resulted in the attached “MERC Research Subcommittee Project Initiatives Overview” which will be presented to MERC in March.

Smith reported that a second MERC meeting will be scheduled in late March focused on the work of the three Strategic Plan Subcommittees – Research, Education, and Service/Outreach.

4. Adjourn

DeLuca adjourned the meeting at 4:10pm.

Recorder, Tonya Mathison
The MERC Research Subcommittee met on January 3 and February 14, 2008. The membership of the Subcommittee was as follows: Paul DeLuca (chair), Bill Busse, Cindy Czajkowski, Norm Drinkwater, Tom Grist, Javier Nieto, Rod Welch, and George Wilding.

The overarching goal of the initiatives proposed by the Research Subcommittee is as follows:

**To support research that encompasses biomedical sciences, care of patients, and the health of populations and that addresses the healthcare needs of the public through prevention, diagnosis, and treatment of disease.**

The Research Subcommittee concluded that a balanced portfolio along a spectrum from basic, clinical, population health, and social science research to education is essential for MERC to capitalize on the School’s strengths in the basic sciences and to cross bridges to the translational and applied public health sciences. Additionally, the subcommittee concluded that ensuring a balanced portfolio requires criteria which encourage education proposals and which provide a relevant review process.

The Subcommittee reached agreement on the following proposed initiatives:

### MERC Research Initiatives

- Develop a parallel competitive process to the Collaborative Health Sciences Program (CHSP) targeting Dean Golden’s strategic priorities for Research and Education. Target up to three of the Dean’s priorities each year.

  MERC may expand the Dean’s priorities to include processes and systems, such as access to care or health disparities, and additional diseases, for example cardiovascular disease or cancer. Proposals must comprehensively bridge basic to translational and applied research, address the Wisconsin Partnership Program goals, and comprise at least three investigators along the spectrum of basic, clinical, and population health science. In addition, projects must be structured like NIH program project grants and utilize infrastructure of MERC directed initiatives, such as SHOW and WiNHR. Awards will be over two-years and will be used to leverage NIH program project funding.

- Develop a workgroup of OAC and MERC to consider collaborative, bi-directional efforts of the two committees, such as:
  - MERC provides supplemental funding for research or evaluation components of Community-Academic Partnership Fund grants.
- OAC provides supplemental funding for the translation of the results of MERC-funded Collaborative Health Sciences Program grants into communities.

- MERC/OAC consideration of a special initiative and/or development of a joint RFp on a common priority topic.

  - Refine the criteria for the New Investigator Program (NIP) to emphasize the entire spectrum from basic to clinical, population health and social science research and revise the review process to ensure appropriate expert reviewers. To avoid the creation of silos, the Subcommittee does not recommend developing separate review processes for the types of research.

  - Recruit a critical mass of faculty positions – similar to named professorships – in priority areas aimed at supporting the transformation of the School. Although agreement was not reached on the track of the professorships, consideration was given to tenure and CHS tracks. The Subcommittee agreed that the Research Advisory Council should set the priorities for these strategic hires.

An important objective of MERC should be to develop infrastructure that results in novel opportunities for broadening research. A process should be included in the next five year plan for the assessment and consideration of renewing or continuing MERC’s infrastructure investments in programs such as WiNHR, SHOW, ICTR, Human Proteomics, and Regenerative Medicine. In addition, MERC must develop a method for establishing benchmarks and ensuring that the programs become self-sustaining, when appropriate. Faculty should be encouraged to take advantage of such programs by using their data or infrastructure to apply for a New Investigator Program or Collaborative Health Sciences Program grant.

MERC should also acknowledge the need to build additional infrastructure to further its research aims within the goals of the WPP.