

October 2, 2019

Professor Susan McCahan
Vice-Provost, Academic Programs
University of Toronto

Dear Professor McCahan,

I am writing in response to the request by the Committee on Academic Policy and Programs (AP&P) in regards to the February 12, 2018 external review of the Pharmaceutical Chemistry undergraduate program and the March 19-20, 2018 external review of the Department of Chemistry and its undergraduate and graduate programs. At its meeting of November 1, 2018, AP&P requested a one-year follow-up report from the Pharmaceutical Chemistry program on the relocation of the program to the Department of Chemistry, as well as a one-year follow-up report from the Department of Chemistry with an update on the development of a standardized research requirement within undergraduate programs. The Faculty has worked with the Chair of the Department of Chemistry to address the concerns of the AP&P committee.

Transfer of Pharmaceutical Chemistry into the Department of Chemistry: The Department of Chemistry became the administrative home of the Pharmaceutical Chemistry Specialist Program, effective May 1, 2019. The Department of Chemistry has now assumed responsibility for all aspects of the program administration, including its governance. Prior to the transfer, the complete calendar entry for the Pharmaceutical Chemistry program was listed under Pharmaceutical Chemistry. As of May 1, 2019, the complete calendar entry appears under Chemistry, with a cross-listing under Pharmaceutical Chemistry. The Pharmaceutical Chemistry Specialist program will be reviewed with the Department of Chemistry in the next UTQAP cyclical review, in accordance with the schedule of reviews as determined by the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs. Because the transfer did not involve changes to either program requirements or admissions, the transfer was not expected to have any adverse impact on students. The Director met with students in the Pharmaceutical Chemistry program on November 6, 2018, to discuss the transfer and answer any questions.

A Pharmaceutical Chemistry curriculum committee has now been set up, to be consulted on all aspects of program curriculum. The Director of the Pharmaceutical Chemistry Program, currently a faculty member from the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy (LDFP), is now also a member of the Chemistry Undergraduate Program Committee, ensuring ongoing communication between the Pharmaceutical Chemistry program and the other Undergraduate Chemistry programs. As per the terms of the administrative transfer, the Pharmaceutical Chemistry Director is responsible for program admissions in consultation with the Department of Chemistry Undergraduate Studies Committee.

In their report, the UTQAP reviewers of the Pharmaceutical Chemistry program suggested the addition of CHM499Y as a 400-level research course option as an alternative to PHC489Y. This will

be brought forward to the Arts & Science governance committee during the fall semester, with appropriate mechanisms in place to ensure the ongoing success of PHC489Y.

In sum, the transfer has proceeded smoothly and is substantially to the benefit of all parties involved. The Chair of Chemistry will continue to explore joint opportunities between the Department of Chemistry and the LDFFP, including undergraduate, graduate, and research opportunities within the units and between faculty members. These additional interactions should strengthen relationships and indirectly help provide support for the continued success of the Pharmaceutical Chemistry specialist program.

Chemistry Research: Mounting a standardized research requirement for approximately 150 chemistry program students in one academic year is a significant challenge given the available resources, our faculty complement, funding (research costs), infrastructure (limited laboratory space), and safety considerations. Importantly, there are research components built into the required capstone courses for several of our programs (most notably the Chemistry, Biological Chemistry and Synthetic & Catalytic Chemistry specialist offerings). In these courses students are required to design experiments to test research hypotheses and to undertake practical work with minimal formal supervision. In addition, future students enrolled in the CHM 499Y "Introduction to Chemistry Research" course (also required by several programs) will attend several professional skills workshops on topics including graduate school applications/interviews, searching/reading the primary literature, presenting research findings to different audiences and thesis/poster composition. This is in part to consolidate the consistency of the research experience in this course. The Department will continue to discuss and explore alternative approaches to provide meaningful research experiences to our undergraduate students.

I feel confident that the changes initiated by the program and its faculty address the concerns of the AP&P follow-up request.

Sincerely,



Melanie Woodin
Dean and Professor of Cell and Systems Biology

cc:

Robert Batey, Chair, Department of Chemistry, Faculty of Arts & Science

Poppy Lockwood, Vice-Dean, Academic Planning and Strategic Initiatives, Faculty of Arts & Science

Asher Cutter, Associate Dean, Undergraduate Issues and Academic Planning, Faculty of Arts & Science

Daniella Mallinick, Director, Academic Programs, Planning & Quality Assurance, Office of the Vice-Provost, Academic Programs

Andrea Benoit, Academic Review Officer, Faculty of Arts & Science