



COLLEGE OF PHARMACY

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

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November 11th, 2008

Dr. Abdullah M. Al-Bekairi, Ph.D.
Deputy Rector and Dean of Medicine
King Saud University
Riyadh, Saudi Arabia

Dear Dr. Al-Bekairi:

Thank you for the opportunity to review the proposed Pharm.D. curriculum for the new Pharmacy Program at King Saud University to be implemented on the Al-Kharj campus. As Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs at the College of Pharmacy, University of Texas, I have a primary responsibility of coordinating the development, updating, and implementation of all changes in our Pharm.D. curriculum, as well as evaluating outcomes. This is done on a continuous process through our Curriculum Committee and our Program Assessment Team, both consisting of faculty, students, and appropriate administrators. I have also served on the site-visitation teams for a number of programs being evaluated for accreditation by ACPE (the Accreditation Council for Pharmaceutical Education). It is through the perspective of this set of roles that I reviewed your proposed Pharm.D. curriculum.

It is clear that the stated College Mission and Goals are entirely consistent with forefront pharmacy education, focusing on the evolution of practice towards a model of delivering pharmaceutical care. Your College also clearly recognizes the importance of balancing professional education with graduate education and research, not only to provide avenues for educational fulfillment for selected students, but also to foster an environment for creative scientific exploration that benefits all students. Further, I believe your statement of striving for excellence in all areas of professional education and research represents a very positive and balance approach we all should aspire to fulfill. Overall, I believe your mission, goals, and approach are both comparable to and consistent with our Program at the University of Texas, and are forward-thinking in addressing a dynamic profession.

The specifics of your program were detailed by the course listings year-to-year. Yours is basically a one-five program (six years total), while ours is a two-four program, but I see the pre-pharmacy requirements are comparable (a number of courses you have in the

second year within the program we have as pre-pharmacy requirements, such as microbiology, economics, etc). I note that your first and second professional years lay a solid foundation in the traditional pharmaceutical sciences, with strong disciplinary-based coursework in medicinal chemistry, pharmacology, pharmacognosy, and pharmaceutics. In examining these areas and the other foundational coursework (anatomy, physiology, drug information, etc.), I find our programs quite comparable (although sequencing may differ).

I was delighted to see the incorporation of a strong and comprehensive sequence of Pharmacotherapy courses in the fourth year. This is an evolution that we have seen in the United States towards an integrated approach in dealing with disease-state management. This is a hallmark of our program, and I believe to be a forefront approach for the following reasons: first, it provides the opportunity to integrate the basic pharmaceutical sciences and the clinical sciences for the students, rather than hoping they can accomplish this integration on their own in the terminal year. Secondly, it fosters a strong interaction between faculty in different disciplines in understanding the coverage provided by their colleagues, and the importance of their discipline in the broader curriculum. I personally believe this is one of the most rewarding changes we have made in our approach in the last decade, and I applaud your incorporation of this model.

The terminal year (a full calendar year) represents a rigorous set of clerkship opportunities for the students in a variety of therapeutic and administrative areas. The breadth of experiences available to the students is quite impressive, and should help guide them towards informed decision making in terms of career choices. I also note that you have a programmatic requirement for pharmacy experience *earlier* in the program (as do we), and I know you will find this highly beneficial in terms of students understanding the importance of their current coursework in contemporary practice.

In conclusion, I believe that the course sequence represents a rigorous, contemporary program that will result in the education and professional development of excellent practitioners of pharmacy. I wish you and your colleagues every success in the development of this new program on the Al-Kharj campus, continuing the proud heritage of King Saud University.

Sincerely yours,



Patrick J. Davis, Ph.D.
Senior Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
Eckerd Centennial Professor in Pharmacy
University Distinguished Teaching Professor

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