Wayne State University School of Medicine
Reorganization Committee

Recommendation for Restructuring of the Basic Science Departments

A thoughtful and progressive re-visioning of the departmental structure of the SOM requires time and resources. A limited restructuring based only on circumstances is not likely to result in an energized and dynamic departmental structure.

Therefore the committee believes that given current budgetary and time constraints, the greatest likelihood for a successful next decade for the Basic Science departments at the SOM, and by extension the research enterprise at the SOM and at WSU, would be a strategic reinvestment in the Departments of Biochemistry/Molecular Biology and Immunology/Microbiology. The success of these two departments and the School of Medicine depends on strong leadership at the departmental level. Across the country countless 'problematic' departments have been rejuvenated by the hiring of a new chair with resources including about five tenure lines to rebuild the department. We are committed to creating and maintaining an atmosphere of excitement and anticipation to maximize the likelihood of securing a forward-thinking, funded chairperson who is excited about cross-campus research supporting the campus-wide research initiative of decreasing health disparities. The renewed enthusiasm of the faculty as they engage in the recruitment of new leadership and the arrival of new leadership in turn will create excitement, revitalize the departments, and boost morale. The Departments of Biochemistry/Molecular Biology and Immunology/Microbiology are deeply committed to developing long and strong focused research collaborations with iBio faculty members. The new chairs and faculty recruits to the two departments must be closely aligned with and serving the mission of the iBio programmatic themes and can (partially) be located there. * Our recommendation is that this strategy should be given highest priority.

The committee thanks the Dean for the opportunity to advise him on this topic and is happy to continue our discussions and explore alternatives to the above suggestion and explore additional structural changes including creation of new centers or programs if asked to do so by the Dean.

* Drs. Kovari and Yang in BMB are already exploring, with Dr. Lanier, a Drug Discovery and Resistance Program or Center that builds on existing expertise and unique resources, in BMB, IMM, ID, Karmanos, HF, and the VA. BMB is also exploring the idea of a department-wide, group research focus on a specific disease, with the criteria that its challenges span the interests of most faculty.