Neuroscience Mission statement

The Neuroscience Program is designed to foster interactions between diverse faculty and students who have a common interest in neuroscience issues. The Program provides a formal mechanism for cross-fertilization of research ideas, promotes collaborative research efforts among faculty from a variety of different departments and colleges. The Program provides similarly diverse graduate students a cohesive common core of neuroscience foundation courses as the basis for subsequent specialization and research training in pursuit of their career goal.
Neuroscience Program History and Development

The need for a Neuroscience Program at Iowa State University was recognized in the late 1980s when more than 20 faculty dispersed across three colleges and seven different departments were identified as active in neuroscience research and teaching. Fourteen graduate students with neuroscience interests were also identified. At that time there was no mechanism in place to maintain awareness and foster interactions among these diverse faculty and students with their common interest in neuroscience. Development of a neuroscience program would promote synergistic interactions among faculty and provide students with a cohesive interdisciplinary exposure to neuroscience issues.

The various faculty and students expressed keen interest in the possibility of a neuroscience program. A proposal was framed by Janine Carithers and Srdija Jeftinija (Veterinary Anatomy) with assistance from Phillip Haydon (Zoology), Michael Taylor (Veterinary Physiology and Pharmacology), and Ronald Peters (Psychology). The Neuroscience Program proposal was approved in 1990 with 32 faculty representing the colleges of Agriculture, Sciences and Humanities (now Liberal Arts and Sciences), and Veterinary Medicine. Twelve Ph.D. candidates were enrolled in 90-91. By Spring Semester 1996 the faculty had increased to 37 members representing one additional college, Engineering, and 10 departments. Retirements and alterations in research direction reduced current neuroscience faculty to 25 members representing 10 departments and 4 colleges. Appendix A lists faculty (1996 & 1997). Through Fall Semester 1997 twelve students received neuroscience degrees (7 Ph.D. and 5 MS). Current (S97) student enrollment is 15 (14 doctoral candidates and one masters degree candidate). Current neuroscience graduate students are listed in Appendix B and former students in Appendix C.
Governance Structure

Supervisory Committee

Five members from the Neuroscience Faculty constitute the Neuroscience Supervisory Committee. Supervisory Committee members serve a three-year term and normally serve no more than two consecutive terms. Membership should include faculty representation from at least two colleges. Nominations for Supervisory Committee members are made at a general Neuroscience Faculty meeting or may be submitted by mail prior to that meeting. The election is conducted by mail ballot; if only one nominee is put forth and approved by the supervisory committee, final approval will be sought from faculty via e-mail. Current and Past Supervisory Committee Members are listed in Appendix D.

Selection of Chair, Neuroscience Supervisory Committee

The Neuroscience Supervisory Committee elects a Chair from among its members. The Chair of the Neuroscience Supervisory Committee serves for a three-year term and may be re-elected.

Subcommittees (Membership listed in Appendix D)

Admissions: Three members of the Neuroscience faculty comprise the admissions committee. These Individuals examine applicant credentials and submit recommendations to the Supervisory Committee.

Recruitment: Responsible for development of recruitment materials, dissemination of recruitment material, and maintenance of the internet web page.

Seminar: Coordination of seminar activities. Responsible for Neuroscience 696. Presentation and discussion of research by students, faculty, and visiting scholars.
Admission of New Neuroscience Faculty

Criteria

In considering an applicant for membership in the Neuroscience Faculty, the applicant’s activities in the following areas during the previous five years are examined. The applicant must be dedicated to graduate education and must show evidence of maintaining high standards of scholarship. The applicant must be committed to the idea of interdisciplinary training and must be willing to participate actively in the affairs of the Neuroscience Program, attend the Neuroscience seminars and encourage students to do the same. The applicant must have an active, high quality, research program. The quality of the research program will be judged on the basis of a complete curriculum vita and five publications produced during the last five years. Five copies of each of these should be submitted to the Neuroscience Supervisory Committee.

Procedure

The supervisory committee reviews the credentials of the applicant. The committee prepares a summary of the applicant’s file and submits this summary along with their recommendation, the complete curriculum vitae, and copies of the five publications to the Neuroscience faculty. Ballots are sent to the Neuroscience Faculty. The chairperson informs the applicant of the decision of the Neuroscience Faculty. Election is for a term of five years.

Renewal of Neuroscience Membership

Criteria

While the primary point for exercising quality control is at admission, membership in the program depends on continued evidence of research productivity and graduate student training. Criteria for retention of membership are, therefore, the same as those for the original selection plus evidence of active participation is the affairs of the Neuroscience Program.
Procedure

The faculty whose membership in Neuroscience will expire at the end of the academic year, are notified by the Neuroscience Supervisory Committee Chair and asked to review and bring their files up to date to reflect accurately their research and graduate student training activities. The Supervisory Committee will review the credentials of the members under consideration for renewal. If in the judgment of the Committee a member is not actively participating in the Neuroscience Program and still wishes to be renewed, the member may submit additional supporting documentation for membership to be continued. Any member whose renewal application has been denied by the Supervisory Committee may request that the Neuroscience faculty review the application.

Yearly Report to the Dean

Each year a report of the activities of the Neuroscience Program will be submitted to the Dean of the Graduate College. Reports may also be submitted to other administrative units (e.g., College of Agriculture, College of Liberal Arts and Sciences and College of Veterinary Medicine).