

VII. STANDING COMMITTEES

A. Academic and Student Affairs Committee

Department of Rehabilitation Medicine: Establishment of the Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics Degree Program

RECOMMENDED ACTION:

It is the recommendation of the administration and the Academic and Student Affairs Committee that the Board of Regents grant authority to the graduate faculty of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine to offer the Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics (MPO), effective autumn quarter 2011. The graduate degree program will have provisional status with a review to be scheduled in the 2016-2017 academic year. At such time that continuing status is granted, the ten-year review cycle would begin.

BACKGROUND:

In January, 2008, the Graduate School received a proposal from the graduate faculty of the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine requesting authority to establish a Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics degree program. Implementation is planned for autumn quarter 2011. The proposed degree program will replace the existing Bachelor of Science in prosthetics and orthotics. In 2005, the National Commission on Orthotics and Prosthetic Education (NCOPE) changed the professional standards for education and mandated that all entry level programs be transitioned to master's level education programs by 2012. The entry level program will lose its accreditation if it is not transitioned into a graduate level program by 2012. License to practice in Washington State requires that training be from an accredited degree program.

The UW Department of Rehabilitation Medicine Prosthetics and Orthotics Program is the sole source of such practitioner education in the Northwest region of the country. Nationally, it is one of the nine prosthetics and orthotics programs accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). An increasing need exists for prosthetics and orthotics health services as evidenced by an aging population and increased adult obesity and diabetes. NCOPE estimates that demand for orthotic care will increase 35 percent by 2020 and demand for prosthetic care will increase by 47 percent during the same period.

Graduates of the 112-credit Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics program will be prepared to provide clinical prosthetic-orthotic services in both hospital and private practice settings. Student learning objectives of the program will reflect standards of the NCOPE and the American Board for Certification in Orthotics, Prosthetics and Pedorthics (ABC) Practice Analysis. The revised curriculum will better prepare students by the advanced coursework focused on emerging

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technologies, research methods, and evidence-based practice, and increased integration of critical thinking and problem-solving skills into clinical practice.

The program will be funded by internal reallocation of existing state FTE funding and institutional resources from the existing Bachelor of Science in prosthetics and orthotics program. No additional infrastructure or state funding is required. Reallocation will not have adverse impact on the Department's other programs.

On July 29, 2009, the Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School appointed two faculty members in prosthetics and orthotics programs at major research universities to evaluate the Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics proposal. Both faculty members supported approval of the proposed degree program and each made specific recommendations to strengthen the curriculum. The Department of Rehabilitation Medicine responded to each reviewer's recommendations on the proposal.

The Graduate School Council met on November 5, 2009, to discuss the MPO degree program proposal. The Council recommended unanimously that the proposal be forwarded to the Higher Education Coordinating Board for review and approval. The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School concurred with the recommendation.

On June 23, 2010, the Education Committee of the Higher Education Coordinating Board discussed the Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics proposal which was then considered by the full Higher Education Coordinating Board on July 15, 2010. The Board approved the proposal by the Department of Rehabilitation Medicine to offer the Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics degree program.

The Vice Provost and Dean of the Graduate School, the Vice Dean for Research and Graduate Education of the School of Medicine, and the Provost have reviewed and approved the recommendation. The Higher Education Coordinating Board will be informed of the Board of Regents' action on the proposed Master of Prosthetics and Orthotics degree program.