



March 7, 2004

Dr. Sherry F. Queener  
Associate Dean, IU Graduate School

Dr. Queener,

I am writing to request that the minimum number of didactic course credits required for the Ph.D. degree in Medical Neurobiology be decreased from 45 to 36 credit hours.

The Curriculum Committee for the Program in Medical Neurobiology met and reviewed the objectives of our educational programs. At the present time, the requirement to complete 45 credits of didactic course work results in students having to take a significant number of courses during their third year of Graduate School. Most of our students generally take between 8 and 10 credit hours of course work per semester, and we recommend they take their qualifying examination and enter candidacy near the beginning of their third year of study. It is for this reason that we are now requesting a change in the minimum number of course credits for the Ph.D. degree.

Our Curriculum Committee feels that 36 credit hours is sufficient to adequately prepare our students for their qualifying examination, and will include all of the current core courses of our Program (Neurochemistry, Neuroanatomy, Behavioral Neuroscience, Psychopharmacology, Neural Substrate for Sensorimotor Control). These core courses total 15 credit hours. The remaining 21 credit hours will be reserved for additional courses taken in fulfillment of the student's minor requirement, and for other courses relevant to the student's chosen area of focus.

On February 20, 2004, a notice of the proposed changes was sent to all faculty members in Medical Neurobiology. To date, there have been no objections. Several faculty members suggested possible alterations to the core curriculum, and these suggestions will be brought before the Curriculum Committee for further discussion.

The Program in Medical Neurobiology Curriculum Committee believes that the change from 45 credit hours to 36 credit hours will benefit our students by allowing them to enter candidacy by the end of their second year of study, and by offering them the opportunity for additional hours of research, and this can be accomplished without sacrificing educational content. Additional courses of interest to a particular student will also still be available for those wishing to take more than the minimum required.

If you require additional information, or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Simon".

Jay R. Simon, Ph.D.  
Professor and Director  
Graduate Program in Medical Neurobiology

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A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "J. Simon", with the date "3/12/04" written below it.

March 7, 2004

Bill,

Enclosed is a revised letter requesting a reduction in the minimum number of credits required for the Ph.D. degree in Medical Neurobiology. The revised version contains a sentence noting that the faculty in Medical Neurobiology have been notified of the proposed changes, and asked for input, and that there were no objections to the proposed change.

I hope that this letter of justification is acceptable. If there are additional items that need to be included, please let me know and I'll take care of it.

Thanks for your help.

Jay