November 30, 2011

Bernard Mair, Ph.D.
Associate Provost for Undergraduate Affairs
Chair, University of Florida Curriculum Committee
PO Box 113175 (238 Tigert Hall)
Gainesville, FL 32611-3175

Dear Dr. Mair:

The University of Florida College of Medicine – Jacksonville (COM-J) Executive Committee and the Faculty Council unanimously approved on November 30, 2011, the proposal to transition the Department of Surgery’s Division of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMS) at COM-J to an independent department of the COM-J. The University’s Senior Vice President for Health Affairs, Dean of the College of Medicine, Dean of the College of Dentistry, and Chair of the Department of Surgery – Jacksonville, are supportive of transitioning the OMS division to the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (OMS) at COM-J.

This reorganization would not impact the College of Medicine nor the College of Dentistry in Gainesville since Gainesville and Jacksonville operate independent from each other. Furthermore, it is not intended for the Department of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery at the College of Dentistry in Gainesville to reorganize as a department of the College of Medicine. As you are probably aware, in June 2007 the decision was made to move away from the model of common clinical departments spanning the two campuses (Gainesville and Jacksonville) to the current model of distinct departments with chairs reporting to their respective campus Dean.

The OMS division, currently housed within the Department of Surgery, dates back to the early 1960’s when its first resident graduated from the program. OMS faculty members perform the entire spectrum of traditional and contemporary oral and maxillofacial surgery. They offer a comprehensive facial trauma and reconstruction practice, pediatric craniomaxillofacial surgery, facial aesthetic surgery, TMJ and corrective jaw surgery, head and neck oncology and microvascular rehabilitation and reconstruction of head and neck defects. The division offers a 6-year residency program which leads to a medical degree and a certificate in Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery. It also offers a post-graduate, one-year Microvascular Surgery Fellowship Program with heavy emphasis on head and neck surgery and reconstruction. The following are key points for the transition to an independent department of COM-J:

- Out of the 102 OMS programs in the country, over 10% are independent departments in the college of medicine; another 42% are hospital based departmental programs.
- All top ranking OMS programs (based on residents rankings) in the country for the past 7 years are independent departments in COM (one exception: COM-J OMS program—ranked in top 3 OMS programs in the country).

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OMS program at COM-J is a “hybrid” program encompassing traditional OMS, as well as comprehensive head and neck trauma, microvascular reconstruction, head and neck oncology, cleft craniofacial surgery (regionally recognized cleft clinic), as well as elective facial plastic surgery. The expanded practice and uniqueness of scope of clinical services can be further enhanced via department status.

- Departmental status will enhance the current national recognition of the OMS residency at COM-J as one of the best OMS programs in the country.
- Resident Review Committee (RRC) for the specialty of OMS allocates a higher “grade” for OMS departments within a medical school compared to OMS divisions during the 5-year site visit cycle.
- Departmental status will facilitate future innovations which may improve the financial bottom line of the OMS Division without any impact from the other current divisions within the Department of Surgery.
- Departmental status will improve the dialogue with Shands leadership regarding future establishment of a center of excellence for head and neck cancer at Shands Jacksonville.
- Departmental status will increase the ability to effectively implement specific educational plans thereby attracting better scientists and faculty members in the future.
- Departmental status will allow more involvement in some of the financial decisions (such as incentive plans) and the ability to communicate on an equal basis with chairs from other departments who may have overlapping or conflicting areas of interest.
- Departmental status will allow for more administrative autonomy within the medical center.
- Departmental status will allow for development of endowed chair positions in the future with a large financial impact on the institution.

I would be pleased if the proposal to transition the OMS division to a department within the COM-J could be placed on the agenda for the December 20, 2011 meeting of the University Curriculum Committee in anticipation of the Faculty Senate meeting on January 26, 2012. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 904 244-3131 or via email at robert.nuss@jax.ufl.edu.

Sincerely,

Robert C. Nuss, M.D.
Dean of the Regional Campus, Jacksonville

cc: David S. Guzick, MD, PhD, Senior Vice President for Health Affairs
    Michael L. Good, M.D., Dean, College of Medicine
    Teresa A. Dolan, DDS, MPH, Dean, College of Dentistry
    Michael S. Nussbaum, M.D., Chair, Department of Surgery - Jacksonville
    Wayne T. McCormack, Ph.D., COM UCC Representative
    Scott Nygren, Ph.D. Faculty Senate Chair
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