

## **DISCONTINUANCE OF UNDERGRADUATE PATHOLOGISTS' ASSISTANT PROGRAM**

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that the Board of Governors discontinue the Undergraduate Pathologists' Assistant Program in the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, effective spring/summer term, 2019.

### **Background**

The Undergraduate Pathologists' Assistant program placed a moratorium on the admission of undergraduate students into the program effective fall semester 2016 reflective of the new accreditation standards applied by the national accrediting agency for laboratory personnel, the NAACLS, to all accredited programs. The program's last graduating class completed the undergraduate program August 2018 and its students are eligible to sit for the American Society of Clinical Pathology (ASCP) certification examination as recognized by NAACLS. No further admission at the undergraduate were allowed nor do furloughed students exist in the undergraduate program. With changes implemented and mandated by NAACLS, all nationally accredited pathologists' assistant programs offer degrees at the graduate level only. Dual-degreed programs are not recognized by the accrediting agency. The accrediting agency has moved away from bachelors programs in favor of masters level training. The departmental faculty accepted this change in light of the accrediting changes adopted by the NAACLS.

### **Program Description:**

A Pathologists' Assistant is a highly trained professional who assists surgical pathologists in preparation, gross description and dissection of human tissue and surgical specimens. The pathologists' assistant is trained to further assist to prepare and perform postmortem examinations and coordinate autopsy activities, including photography, specimen coding and report filing. They properly restore human remains for release to the funeral director and confirm legal authorization for special sampling, such as tissue donation and organ transplantation, and perform administrative duties as required. Due to the advanced knowledge required for practice in this field, the program has transitioned from being an undergraduate degree to a NAACLS-accredited Pathologists' Assistant Master of Science (authorized by the Board May 2016).

### **Approvals**

The discontinuance of this undergraduate degree program has been approved by the Department of Applied Health Sciences, the Health Sciences Division Curriculum Committee, the Interim Chair of the Department of Applied Health Sciences, Associate Dean for Health Sciences, Interim Dean of the Eugene Applebaum College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences, and the Provost.