TO:            Paul M. DeLuca, Jr., Provost
FROM:      Lisa Beckstrand, UW-System Academic Planner
                      Norman Drinkwater, Professor of Oncology
                      Linda Denise Oakley, Professor of Nursing (Committee Chair)
                      Donna Paulnock, Professor of Medical Microbiology and Immunology,
                      Associate Dean, Graduate School
                      Mary Schneider, Professor of Kinesiology and Director of the
                      Occupational Therapy Program
RE:     Report of Joint Review Committee for the MS in Occupational Therapy

As a responsibility of the University Academic Planning Council our Committee charge
was to conduct a five year review of the MS in Occupational Therapy program.

The directed purpose of our review was to perform a portion of the Institutional review in
the Joint Institution and UW System Administration Program Review.

To this end, our review sought to (1) determine whether the program meets its originally
stated program goals and objectives, (2) summarize identifiable opportunities for
improvements, and (3) offer our recommendation regarding continuing the program.

**Committee activities and materials reviewed**

a. All members of the Committee met December 12, 2011. The Committee is
   pleased that Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Analysis, also
   attended this meeting.

b. Materials provided and reviewed by the Committee are the (1) Five Year Review/
   Self-Study for Joint Review prepared by the program faculty and staff, (2) May 7,
   2004 Executive Summary of the New Program Authorization/Initial Review
   submitted for consideration by the Board of Regents, and (3) UW-Madison Joint
   Review Guidelines.
Committee determination whether the program meets the goals and objectives of the program as originally stated in the program proposal

a. The Committee finds that the program meets or exceeds the original stated goals and objectives of the MS Occupational Therapy program. The program curriculum, faculty, and staff provide highly qualified students with excellent academic courses, clinical field work, and mentored research experiences.

b. The program received an onsite accreditation review in March 2008 by the Accreditation Council for Occupational Therapy Education (ACOTE). The outcome of this comprehensive review of the curriculum, faculty, and staff review was full program accreditation through 2017.

c. Self-identified opportunities to better meet program research curriculum goals resulted in substantive changes in course content and credits. In order to better meet program research, scientific inquiry, and theory development learning goals the program faculty made substantive changes. The original “group” research mentoring strategies were replaced with intense “individual” research mentoring strategies. All students develop and present their research in an annual Poster Research event attended by area leaders in the field. And lastly, with no change in total required program credits, research course credits were adjusted in order to decrease identified redundancy in research methods content and increase content in research data collection and analysis.

Committee determination of the program’s relationship to other programs at UW-Madison and its importance to the range of campus program offerings

a. The Committee finds that program accomplishments include at least two major areas of demonstrated importance: (1) Wisconsin professional workforce: all program graduates consistently find employment in their field shortly after graduation and (2) National shortage of PhD prepared researchers in occupational therapy: by contributing to the pool of well-trained clinical professionals the program also contributes to the pool of well-qualified PhD program applicants. The program presently is considering seeking opportunities to further reduce the current length of time required to qualify for and complete the PhD program.

Committee assessment of the level of quality achieved in the program since its implementation five years ago

a. The Committee finds that the program has demonstrated overall excellence.

b. The faculty has a sustained track record of successful extramural research funding, the program offers field experiences in Ireland and New Zealand, faculty seeking promotion with tenure have been successful and, the program is nationally ranked as #12 among the 153 OT programs in the United States.

c. The program is actively engaged in continuous exploration of opportunities to meet anticipated education trends and research opportunities to sustain quality achievements. Classrooms and technology are continually being updated to reflect current practice trends and student learning styles, an electronic admissions process was recently implemented to manage the high volume of applications, and the addition of an advanced specialty degree is under consideration.
d. The program has demonstrated its commitment to developing leaders in the field. Students have successfully disseminated their faculty collaborative research projects through peer-reviewed national conferences and publications. Alumni of the program have enrolled in programs to obtain advanced research and clinical degrees.

e. All graduates of the MSOT program have passed the National Board for Certification in Occupational Therapy exam. The UW five year average first time pass rate is 93% which is substantially higher than the national average of 78% for all first time test takers in the United States. One hundred per cent of the 2010 graduates passed the exam on their first attempt.

f. The need for qualified Occupational Therapists is high. One hundred per cent of UW OT program graduates seeking full time employment have found jobs within six months of graduation.

Committee identified program strengths, challenges, and opportunities for improvements

a. The growing number of program applicants, presently over 200 applicants for 25 admission slots, has created the opportunity to hire a full time Academic Staff position to smoothly manage the process. Current numbers of faculty and academic staff does not restrict program growth but the associated workload presents efficiency challenges. Recent adoption of the mentor model of research training will by design, increase the time demands for faculty and limit the student to faculty ratio. Combined these challenges create the opportunity to recruit and hire additional OT research faculty.

b. A small percentage of admitted applicants appear to be attracted away by the greater availability of scholarships and grants offered by other programs. This challenge speaks to the high quality of the program’s curriculum in that the top applicants admitted who are admitted have undergraduate GPA’s of about 3.7 and their Graduate Record Exam scores exceed the 70th percentile. The data suggest that had similar funding been made available more of these highly competitive applicants might find it possible to enroll.

c. Graduates’ survey data shows that students enter the program seeking evidence based education and training to become highly qualified clinical practitioners. However many of these students show exceptional aptitude for research. This challenge provides the faculty with an opportunity to pursue their program goal of increasing the MSOT to PhD program admissions by 10%. The goal of increased enrollment of occupational therapists in PhD programs is both a program and national goal. The Committee wondered if these circumstances provide faculty with the opportunity to consider developing an Early Entry program that reduces the total number of years required to complete both the MSOT and PhD programs.

d. Ongoing interest in curriculum and program offerings led the faculty to consider additional models/strategies of distance education course work. The challenge
presented by additional distance education course work is continuing to meet the program goal of learning excellence in current fieldwork and research courses and research mentoring. Nevertheless, additional distance education course work offers the opportunity to take further advantage of the program’s recent innovations in teaching and learning.

e. Ongoing faculty and staff efforts to increase enrollment of targeted under-represented minority students currently are tied to the availability of targeted scholarship and grant funds. With the pool of under-represented applicants approaching 20%, the faculty and staff are engaged in ongoing strategic planning to find sustainable means of funding competitive targeted applicants.

f. Identified program strengths include an Advisory Board of area clinical professionals, 100% graduate pass rate for professional board exam and 100% employment rate in the field, over 100 excellent fieldwork placements in Wisconsin, productive teaching, training, and research collaborations with area clinical professionals. Student resident to non-resident ratio approaches equal distribution at 60:40 respectively, and the program has demonstrated learning and research value to its academic partners in the Kinesiology department.

Committee determination of the resource implications of continuing the program

a. While current program budgets are adequate, the program seeks to expand to accommodate the high demand for occupational therapists in the field and to supply the profession’s future research and faculty needs. Approval to expand would require filling new Academic Staff and faculty positions. These positions will support the efficient management of the high volume of admission applications received annually and make possible identified improvements in the curriculum and research mentoring opportunities.

b. The program curriculum requires satisfactory completion of UW Madison School of Medicine and Public Health anatomy and physiology courses. Modifications within the SOMPH could have an impact on this requirement. The program plans to continue to collaborate with the SOMPH.

c. Recent classroom and technology infrastructure updates presently are adequate but steady increases in student technology demands soon may exceed current capacities.

Committee Recommendation

a. Based on its review the Committee unanimously recommends that the Master of Science in Occupational Therapy program be continued.

Cc: Jocelyn Milner, Director of Academic Planning and Analysis