

I'm not engaging in either side of the argument that you present other than to suggest that you look at content rather than funding source.

Cheryl

From: Hancock, Dale
Sent: Thursday, June 25, 2009 8:16 AM
To: CVM Faculty Distribution List
Subject: RE: PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST...

Charlie and fellow CVM Faculty,

Here is something related to the public records request you mention below that could use a few beams of the sunshine of public discourse. If I need to put it in the form of a hard copy letter to get it to the requestor, please let me know. This is just one faculty person's opinion, of course, but I have included a number of citations which constitute a basis for my opinion that a long-standing conflict of interest exists within the curriculum of our College.

When the majority of our two core nutrition courses (the dog and cat portions of VM580 and VM590) are given over to a person employed by a pet food company, there is prima facie evidence of an ongoing conflict of interest. The conflict seems especially problematical when this perennial service is provided to the College gratis, rather than on a one-time, fee-for-service basis to fill a short-term personnel gap. Would we consider giving over our core vet pharmacology course, in such a lock-stock-and-barrel manner, to a drug company in the name of saving money or reducing faculty workload? (one is a little afraid to ask). Somebody explain to me how that would be different from what we are doing with core nutrition in our curriculum. Anyway, the issue is not one of lack of expertise among our faculty—the ag animal faculty have managed to teach the relevant parts of the two courses in question (and volunteered for more regarding monogastrics: e.g., birds), and we surely must have faculty able to do the same for dog and cat nutrition.

In case there is doubt about the nature of the conflict, I have attached some internet references (including Mark Morris Institute site) regarding Dr. Hammond's employment during the time he has been acting as instructor in VM580 and VM590 at WSU CVM. Also attached is some info on the Mark Morris Institute which provides funding and (by our default) oversight of VM580 and VM590, two core courses in our curriculum.

“David Hammond, D.V.M., is a veterinarian in private practice in Pleasant Hill, Oregon, and veterinary affairs manager for Hill's Pet Nutrition.”
(http://www.petsmart.com/uc/petarticles_db.jsp?ucCategory=ARTICLE&ucTopic=CAT&ucSubTopic=HEALTH&ucSubTopic2=&ucContent=/articles/content/dog_cat/health/nausea/280.html)
“Dr. Hammond was a faculty member at the University of Pennsylvania before joining Hill's Pet Nutrition as a Veterinary Affairs Manager.”
(http://www.markmorrisinstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=71)

From what I hear, Dr. Hammond is very knowledgeable on the subject of vet nutrition—maybe even among the best. But (hopefully) we would not entrust 2/3 of a core pharmacology course to a “veterinary affairs manager” for a pharmaceutical company, without any WSU faculty being present in the room, just because we had great respect for him/her. A guest lecture, perhaps. Two at a stretch—and even then with faculty oversight and possible anti-commercial messages in a follow-on lecture. *That* would be due diligence.

To the best of my knowledge (someone correct me if I'm wrong) the Mark Morris Institute (MMI) provides the funding (“faculty” pay, primarily) for the small animal nutrition instruction in our two core courses (and

nutrition courses at other CVMs). From their web site, it appears that they designed the instructional program, provide oversight of the content, and choose the “faculty”(http://www.markmorrisinstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=50&Itemid=63). In the bios of all the persons listed as “Faculty” you will find that employment at Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc. is mentioned for 11 of the 15 faculty (including Dr. Hammond), mostly in the present tense. No mention of other pet nutrition companies was found, either as current or past employment-- as one might expect if MMI were industry-affiliated in a more ecumenical way.

The executive director of MMI is an employee of Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc. and her bio at one site (hosted at WSU, interestingly) lists her affiliation as “Mark Morris Institute/Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc..” separated only by a slash.. In the same document, her contact email is at Hill’s (http://www.vetmed.wsu.edu/org_cgs/About%20CGS/Officers/Past%20Officers/Debbie%20Davenport/davenport.htm):

“Davenport, Deborah Jo
Mark Morris Institute/Hill's Pet Nutrition, Inc.
Box 1493
(785) 286-8032 Office/Voice Mail
(785) 286-8010 Fax
E-Mail: debbie_davenport@hillspet.com”

In Zoominfo (http://www.zoominfo.com/people/Davenport_Deborah_343580587.aspx), the following sentence occurs dated 07/06/03:

“Davenport is director of professional education for Hill's Pet Nutrition and executive director of the Mark Morris Institute.”

In the latest Kansas VMA membership directory Dr. Davenport’s affiliation is listed as “Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc.”

At the MMI site, the following sentence appears in reference to Dr. Davenport: “She is currently the Director of Professional Education at Hill’s Pet Nutrition and the Executive Director of the Mark Morris Institute.” (http://www.markmorrisinstitute.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=46&Itemid=71)

From these references it does not appear that MMI and Hill’s Pet Nutrition, Inc. are independent organizations as regards day-to-day administration, and faculty, of small animal nutrition courses. Seemingly, a College would want assurances of independence from commercial interests before outsourcing core courses. One would think that this would be a fundamental part of the due diligence required of a College in outsourcing its courses on such a long term basis as WSU CVM has done for its core nutrition courses.

Given the hundreds of industry-provided freebies doled out to our veterinary students during any given semester right here on the WSU Campus (notably including tons of pet food) and the provision of venues for untold numbers of brazenly commercial presentations which usually come with freebie inducements for attendees and at least semi-official endorsement, our College administration and even we faculty could possibly use a refresher on what constitutes due diligence in avoiding conflicts of interest in veterinary education. There’s getting to be quite a literature on this as some med schools have become more conscious not only of the need to avoid institutional conflicts in their curricula, but also the perceived need to teach some ethical standards regarding industry relations to future practitioners.

Here are some samples from the literature.

Amy Brodkey,

- “Pharmaceutical marketers know that lasting habits and attitudes are formed early in physicians’ training (52–54). They therefore make resolute efforts to cultivate frequent contact with trainees, hoping to establish PRs as sources of both information and gratification.”
- “A large number of studies demonstrate a relationship between obtaining information from industry, as well as other interactions, and less appropriate prescribing patterns (e.g., 53, 68–71).”

Quotes from article by Brodkey in: *Academic Psychiatry* 2005; 29:222–229.

Troyen A. Brennan

- “Most of the recommendations from medical and industry groups share 2 key assumptions. The first is that small gifts do not significantly influence physician behavior. The second is that disclosure of financial conflicts is sufficient to satisfy the need to protect patients’ interests. Although these 2 assumptions are widely accepted among physicians, compelling research findings using a variety of methods have called their validity into question.”
- “The widespread influence of drug manufacturers on current CME activities makes more stringent regulation necessary. 27 Manufacturers should not be permitted to provide support directly or indirectly through a subsidiary agency to any ACCME-accredited program.”

Quotes from Brennan et al in: *JAMA*. 2006;295:429-433

Daniella Zipkin

- In a random sample of family practice programs, residents from programs without policies were more likely than residents from other programs to view interactions with pharmaceutical representatives as beneficial (54% vs 27%, $P=.003$), to view detailing as helpful (41% vs 10%, $P=.001$), and to feel that the gifts were appropriate (50% vs 19% for inexpensive gifts, $P=.001$, 18% vs 5% for expensive gifts, $P=.005$).⁴⁶
- “Many programs lacked policies to regulate or inform interactions with industry representatives, and trainees reported insufficient training in how to approach these interactions and other forms of industry promotion, despite a high frequency of contact.”

Quotes from Zipkin et al in *J GEN INTERN MED* 2005; 20:777–786.

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From: Powell, Charlie
Sent: Wednesday, June 24, 2009 10:57 AM
To: CVM Faculty Distribution List
Subject: FW: PUBLIC RECORDS REQUEST...
Importance: High

From: Powell, Charlie
Sent: Tuesday, June 23, 2009 11:53 AM
To: 'CVM Faculty'; Russell, Steven Paul; Bayly, Warwick M; Grimes, Howard Dean