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Dr. Rafael Palacios  
Coordinator  
Undergraduate Program on Genomic Sciences  
National Autonomous University of Mexico

Dear Dr. Palacios,

I am happy to comment on the quality of your Undergraduate Program on Genomic Sciences. First, let me apologize for the delay in my response. I have been undergoing chemotherapy for a lymphoma that was recently diagnosed and thus I have had to postpone many of my obligations. Second, my comments are based largely on the impressions from my visit to the Program in the Fall of 2006.

*Quality of the Program:*

This is a very forward-looking program, especially since it is at the undergraduate level. There are very few in the world to which it might be compared. My view of the formal and informal training opportunities provide for the students is that they are exceptional. This is no small challenge, since the backgrounds of the students is by necessity very diverse. The curriculum covers all of the foundational subjects for the interdisciplinary field of Genomic Sciences. It also includes course on the evolving interface between the more traditional fields. It is admirable that it also deals with the important issues of ethical, legal and social issues associated with a field with the potential for such broad impact. Finally, the Program excites students and makes them aware of the opportunities to contribute in important ways to the scientific and technical culture of the world in general and of Mexico in particular.

*Quality of the Students:*

During my visit I interacted with the students in several settings. I had them in my lectures, I had informal research discussions with many of them, I also had them as social escorts and companions at dinner. During my lectures they ask very thoughtful questions, which showed the level of preparation and their interest and motivation. These question/answer sessions were some of the most stimulating that I have had with students on campuses anywhere. In the smaller research-group settings, I found that they had an excellent grasp of their research projects and that they were performing at a level found among many graduate students. In the more social settings they were

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very open about their lives outside the classroom and their dreams and plans for the future. Here I found differences in the levels of maturity, as would be expected among any group of undergraduates, but I must say that as a group they were very impressive.

In summary, I can only wish that our university had such a program and such a select group of enthusiastic students. I wish you all the best for the continued success of your Program.

Sincerely yours,

Michael A. Savageau

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