Certificate Program in Biomedical Research (CPBR) Transition Proposal

**History:** The UCSF Certificate Program in Biomedical Research (CPBR) was designed to facilitate opportunities for medical students to pursue high quality, full-time research for one or more years beyond the standard four year curriculum. Its requirement of a full-year of research along with additional educational experiences made the CPBR distinct from the M.D. with Thesis Program, which had no specific requirements for the duration of the research experience or any additional training. Also, by allowing students to be enrolled in the Graduate Division during their research year, the program enabled students to have health, liability and disability insurance, and ongoing access to Central Student Services, the library, and Millberry Union. The program was administered through the Office of Student Research.

**Proposed Changes:**

1) Transition CPBR oversight from the Office of Student Research to the Pathways to Discovery Program
2) Rename CPBR the Pathways Certificate Program
3) Broaden CPBR to include students doing all types of health-related research
4) Broaden CPBR to include students in all UCSF professional schools and programs
5) Allow students to participate either for 12 consecutive months or, with permission from a pathway director, for 9 months followed by an additional 3 months at a later time

**Why these changes are necessary:** The Pathways to Discovery (PTD) Program is an elective, selective, rigorous research and scholarship program which allows focus in one of five areas: Molecular Medicine, Clinical and Translational Research, Health Professions Education, Health and Society (includes social and behavioral science, diversity research, community and population research, health policy and leadership) and Global Health. Learners must commit to the CPBR program for at least one year. The key program component is a mentored project addressing an issue of importance to health or health care. Course work, scholarly products, participation in Works in Progress sessions, and a significant “legacy” such as a peer reviewed publication, an innovative program or curriculum, or a report to a major institution are also required.

As of 2011-12, all medical students pursuing yearlong full time research training must be enrolled in Pathways. As of 2012-13, the M.D. with Thesis Program will be renamed the M.D. with Distinction Program and be administered through Pathways. These changes are part of an institution-wide effort to consolidate programs and minimize redundancy, make opportunities and requirements more clear to learners and faculty, and provide optimal oversight of training experiences to ensure they consistently meet UCSF’s high standards. While currently based in the School of Medicine, Pathways is open to learners in all UCSF professional schools and programs. Moreover, in keeping with the Chancellor’s initiatives in operational excellence and
interprofessional education, meetings are in progress with Deans from all schools to explore how all existing research and scholarship programs might be combined to create a unified, interprofessional research and scholarship training program for all UCSF trainees.

**What will not change:** The key features of the current CPBR, namely:

- participation for a minimum of 12 months total and a maximum of 24 months on those rare occasions when students decide to extend their research time for an additional year because of the success of their project and the opportunity to do additional work that will result in substantially more impact

- eligibility based on good academic standing and a plan for a high quality research or equivalent scholarly experience
  - this is a Pathways requirement

- a well-defined plan for a high quality project
  - PTD project proposals are reviewed by NIH-style faculty panels

- approval by the M.D. with Distinction Program, where appropriate, i.e. SOM students

- participation in at least 4 journal clubs and presentation at one, or equivalent scholarly activity as approved by the Pathways leadership

- participation in a core curriculum (e.g., Designing Clinical Research for those doing clinical and translational research)
  - this is a Pathways requirement

- completion requirements
  - project acceptance by the M.D. with Distinction committee, where appropriate (SOM); mentor approval; documentation of educational activities; and final approval by the oversight body

- financial support for SOM participants

**What will change:**

- It will be possible for learners to complete the program either in 12 consecutive months or, depending on their funding source and with permission of a pathways director, by completing separate blocks of 9 and 3 months
this will both facilitate participation by learners from other schools and allow participation by SOM students’ who began their clerkships after block one and/or have not decided on a specialty at the time they begin their research period

**Advantages of the changes:** Since all SOM students and increasing numbers from other schools who pursue yearlong research or scholarly work do so through PTD, changing CPBR to the Pathways Certificate Program will decrease confusion, streamline administration, and improve tracking. PTD uses the same Application, Review, and Tracking system as CTSI, so oversight also will improve. Expanding the program to include students working in areas of health research beyond traditional biomedicine and learners from all UCSF schools will modernize the program, improving its alignment with institutional priorities and twenty-first century medicine.