

**Dean's Faculty Advisory Council
University of Tennessee, College of Medicine**

December 2, 2024

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Phyllis Richey, at 12:03 PM on December 2, 2024, in person and on the Zoom online platform.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Charlie Busby, MD, Mace Coday, PhD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Natalie Dunlap, DO, Jay Fowke, PhD, MPH, MS, Rajeshwary Ghosh, PhD, Natalie Kerr, MD, MBA, Patrick Koo, MD, Khyati Kothari, MD, Francesca-Fang Liao, PhD, F. Matthew Mihelic, MD, Erica Mitchell, MD, MEd SE, FACS, DFSVS, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Deidra Mountain, PhD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Phyllis Richey, PhD, Reese Scroggs, PhD, Burt Sharp, MD, Claudette Shephard, MD, MD, Evan Ward, DHSc, PA-C, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Tracy McClinton, DNP, AGACNP-BC, APRN, HGET-C, EBP-C

The following guest(s) was (were) present:

G. Nicholas Verne, MD, James W. Haynes, MD

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written. Minutes had previously been distributed by electronic means.

Business

Pres. Richey opened the meeting by inviting Dean Verne to provide updates. Chair searches include the Department of Medical Education. Finalists are in the process of being interviewed currently. The Department of Pathology Chair search now has identified several finalist candidates who will be invited to campus in January-February. The Pediatrics Department Chair search is starting to gain traction and will kick off in January. Dr. Alicia Diaz Thomas departs UTHSC this month and an interim Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs will be identified. Dr. Verne then referred to the work of DFAC's committees, and brought some issues forward for the committees to consider. Dr. Verne charged the Policy Committee to consider term limits for members and officers of DFAC. Dr. Verne charged the the Research Committee to work on developing a white paper proposal for COM research that will identify challenges and opportunities. These will be based off of those identified during the College of Medicine Research Retreat held this past June, 2024.

On behalf of the Research Committee, Dr. Larry Pfeffer indicated that the committee is now exploring various ideas for collaborating further with other campuses. Additional information will be forthcoming next month. Pres. Richey suggested that specific efforts might benefit from focusing in two directions: basic science and clinical research.

Regarding efforts to build up clinical research, discussion indicated that the oncology group has submitted a T32 application that was scored but not funded. Oncology is a field that draws from a number of departments, hence may be a good focus in that respect. That said, it was suggested that we need to be able to show that we are training people actively in the fields underlying any such grant applications. One direction to look might be to discern which departments have the strongest track record for NIH funding, and to inquire whether they would be interested in pursuing projects such as training grants. Additionally, to support such projects, a department(s) should have a defined curriculum, recruitment program, post-doc training (at least at some point), and a variety of other building blocks to enhance the likelihood of a grant award. As also noted, these grants are typically a zero-sum game in which our own efforts are likely to compete with highly experienced institutions. Notwithstanding the challenges, it was suggested that we attempt to submit at least one training grant this year, whether clinical or basic science. It is one thing to train clinicians, basic scientists and even administrators, and quite a different thing to train people to be clinical investigators. This latter is something we have not undertaken as much, partly because it requires fairly extensive resources including protected time both for senior faculty and for their junior clinical mentees.

Dr. Claudette Shephard, chair of the Policy Committee, reported that the committee met briefly last week to consider its agenda for the year. She observed that some departments have regular faculty meetings, and it would be helpful for DFAC representatives to share the issues arising in such meetings. As a second matter Dr. Shephard brought forth a one-phrase CoM Bylaw change that is required by LCME. Specifically the underlined/bolded portion from the following ByLaw needs to be deleted.

CRITERIA FOR APPOINTMENT IN OR PROMOTION TO SPECIFIC ACADEMIC RANKS

All individuals who supervise UTHSC students and/or trainees must be members of the UTHSC faculty **or receive specific permission to do so from the dean of the college.** Appointment to the Faculty is based on the past demonstration and/or promise of excellence in teaching, clinical care, research/scholarly activity, and/or service. Proper credentials will be the prime criterion for appointment. The original appointment of an individual to a specific faculty rank must be based on credentials documented through the Institutions at which they were obtained (degrees verified by providing an official transcript, postdoctoral training, residency, fellowship, etc.).

Although there are reasons the phrase was introduced, they need to be addressed elsewhere in the CoM Bylaws. The motion was made and seconded to remove the phrase, and was unanimously approved.

An additional issue to be addressed in the Policy Committee, going forward, concerns some language in the Peer Review of Teaching protocol. The best candidate for a reviewer, the policy says, may be from outside the department. However, the question arises whether someone from a different department would be adequately knowledgeable about the field. That said, someone from the same department may have a conflict of interest. Another question arises from the fact that the majority of the evaluations reviewed by CAPT demonstrate a tendency to evaluate the faculty member at the highest level rating thereby raising the question of possible "grade inflation." If so, the evaluations become an unreliable metric.

From the FDEC Committee, Dr. Kothari reported that the DFAC web page is updated with the current membership list. Pres Richey inquired if DFAC member's e-dress should be listed along with the member's names and department/campus affiliations. It is not presently provided, and discussion suggested that adding e-dresses, or perhaps a hyperlink to the member's faculty page. For now, the current status will continue, in which DFAC members' e-dresses are not listed next to their names. Dr. Kothari also indicated that the committee would like to enhance outreach to the regional campuses.

UTHSC Faculty President Dr. McClinton urged faculty to fill out the resources survey, which closes soon. She also stated that the Associate VP for Academic Affairs will address the Senate regarding changes that will affect 9-month faculty. Additionally the December 10 meeting will discuss the upcoming COACHE survey. Information is not to be generally shared with faculty, but may become available through various colleges' respective deans.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on January 6, 2024, at 12:00n CT / 1pm ET by Zoom and in person in room 502, 910 Madison building.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary