

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

January 4, 2021

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Lawrence Pfeffer, at 12:02 PM on January 4, 2021, on the Zoom online platform due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Penny A. Asbell, MD, Mark Bugnitz, MD, Julio F. Cordero-Morales, PhD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, KU Malik, PhD, DSc, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Ryan Rahman, MD, Burt Sharp, MD, Claudette Shepherd, MD, Laura Sprabery, MD, Neena Thomas-Gosain, MD, MBA, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA, Thad Wilson, PhD

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

Scott Strome, MD, Richard Smith, PhD, Polly Hofmann, PhD, Andrew Griffith, MD, PhD

Approval of minutes

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

Business

Dr. Polly Hofmann provided an update regarding the upcoming LCME/Liaison Committee on Medical Education review. A first draft of the major (300-page) document to be submitted to LCME has been mainly completed, and the roughly 5-page Executive Summary is being written. Progress is moving along well, with the help of an excellent consultant who is helping to ensure everything is moving along well.

Dr. Strome provided several updates.

Clinical: Efforts are progressing to find new practice "homes" for UTMP (UT-Methodist Physicians) faculty in the wake of Methodist's unilateral severing of most ties with UTHSC CoM. In the end, this will help the CoM broaden its footprint in ways that will widen our reach and strengthen the institution overall. This process additionally involves student as well as

resident rotations. Dr. Strome anticipates we will be able to preserve the majority of our residency slots, though not necessarily all of them. It is hoped that some residencies can actually expand in the future. Details will be available when agreements are finalized. With respect to oncology, UT has now hired several oncologists for work at ROH, while surgical and radiation oncology settings have yet to be finalized.

Covid-19: The CoM and UTHSC as a whole are working with the state and local government to set up websites to enable students and their preceptors to volunteer to participate in the Covid-19 vaccination program.

Community outreach: UT is likely to open its first farm (community garden) soon, eventually using 140 plots of blighted land throughout the city. Another program, "Equitable Health and Neighborhoods," is founded on the idea that everyone needs a provider to care for them. Initially this outreach will focus on diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

Education: The first class of Master Educators will be ready soon. A question arose regarding the impact of a recent agreement with Meharry Medical School and other institutions. Dr. Strome considers the agreement to have limited effects here at UT CoM. Our own students can only be taught by UT faculty, and the same is true for Meharry students, except where the Meharry students directly do a rotation with us. That said, some of these students now rotate through Pediatrics, for instance, much the same as other visiting students can do a rotation here. It is possible that community physicians in Memphis will do some of the teaching referred to in the report.

Further discussion: Dr. Strome emphasized that the CoM does not want just to "put a patch on the problem," but rather is seeking to fix the underlying problems. It is expected that the path forward will be bumpy, but he asked that UT CoM faculty and staff have confidence in these efforts to move forward. An additional benefit of reorganizing faculty and residency clinical settings is that we will have greater control over our own clinical services. For instance, a new medical school building is in planning stages, so we can provide outpatient services at this site. Dr. Strome notes that UTHSC is a natural partner with an institution like RoH, which like UT has state subsidies, although ROH also receives a county subsidy. Hence, a major academic home for the foreseeable future will be with ROH. Overall, we don't have many firm answers for the many outstanding questions emerging from a changing landscape just yet, but we do have a solid path forward.

Dr. Andrew Griffith then provided an update regarding CoM research. He continues to work on the strategic plan. The process is evolving, based on comments in earlier sessions regarding the draft plan. A question arose regarding the Clinical Trials Office, and the Covid trial(s). The highest-profile trial is with Regeneron and its monoclonal antibody treatment for keeping early covid patients out of the hospital. Patient accrual is proceeding well, as is the trial as a whole, although at present there is a need for more nurse coordinators. LeBonheur has many initiatives, including through Dr. Terry Finkel, a prominent pediatric rheumatologist, who is very involved in some of the inflammatory sequelae of covid-19, e.g. as seen in the "long-haulers." Dr. Nick Verne, chair of Medicine, is working with Cyrilyn Waters with the "Long Covid" project to care for such patients. Dr. Griffith identified several other Covid-related initiatives.

Dr. Griffith indicated that the process for developing a campus-wide research strategy has evolved considerably. As the campus research plan has developed, it has become clear that some things may need to be more college-driven than campus-driven. For instance, development of young physician-scientists, and how we recruit, retain and mentor faculty will likewise more likely be more college- than campus-based. The campus research plan should especially emphasize shared opportunities and shared endeavors that truly require more than one college.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on February 1, 2021, at 12:00 Noon by Zoom.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:30 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary