

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

March 1, 2021

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Lawrence Pfeffer, at 12:03 PM on March 1, 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, Mace Coday, PhD, Julio F. Cordero-Morales, PhD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, KU Malik, PhD, DSc, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Katherine Nearing, MD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Ryan Rahman, MD, Reese Scroggs, PhD, Burt Sharp, MD, Claudette Shepherd, MD, Laura Sprabery, MD, Neena Thomas-Gosain, MD, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Thad Wilson, PhD

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

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

Approval of minutes

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

Business

The meeting began with updates from Dean Strome. He noted that the county has now seen the entrée of several coronavirus variants including Brazil, UK, New York, and South Africa. Although current vaccines appear to be reasonably effective against variants, it is too early to tell for sure whether the vaccines will be quite as effective for the Brazilian and South African variants.

He indicated that UT, as an institution, will not be receiving more vaccine but, as we are now running both the Pipkin and Appling sites, UT personnel who have not yet been vaccinated will be able to secure vaccination per the county's priority system.

Regarding the CoM's clinical situation with Methodist, Dr. Strome observed that "homes" have been found for many of our personnel, and that UT CoM will in the end be in a better place with

a stronger presence at both RoH and BMH, with RoH likely to serve as a University hospital at some point in the future. That said, UT will still maintain a presence in the Methodist system, e.g., in neurosurgery, transplant surgery, also to include about 30 Medicine residents, etc. "Methodist Teaching Physicians" will be a group of faculty who remain associated with Methodist, but that will not be a "growth vehicle," although it will, as noted, include some transplant surgeons, some ENT and the like.

In other updates, Dr. Strome noted that the ObGyn Department chair search is now in negotiating phase; the Pathology Department's search committee has selected 4 candidates for zoom interviews, and continues efforts to expand the applicant pool; and an internal search is authorized to fill the position of Dr. Rick Boop, who will soon retire from neurosurgery.

A new building for the CoM's medicine service (now operating at ROH) is being authorized, and will now enter initial planning phases on or near the downtown campus. In East Memphis, UCH/University Clinical Health owns land on Yates Road, with a clinic building, surgery center and parking lot. UTHSC has bought all the surrounding land, to build an outpatient center. The existing building has been renovated to serve ophthalmology, dermatology, plastic surgery, ENT and other services. Covid-related finances have placed future projects for this site on hold for a time, but work is expected to resume when the financial situation improves. Eventually it will be a multi-specialty clinic, not just for procedures. A concierge practice is in the planning stages, and likely it will be located there.

Tenet Healthcare, which owns St. Francis hospitals locally, has expressed interest in collaborating with UTHSC, although negotiations have not to date gained specificity.

Dr. Strome said that our educational programs are going well. In the nuclear curriculum 200 people have been accepted into the current class. For the new 3-year curriculum that emphasizes primary care, applicants must be accepted into medical school first, then interview for this particular track, which in this first year will be limited to 10 people.

A bimonthly newsletter was proposed, to let faculty know about developments within the CoM, including our more remote sites such as Chattanooga, Nashville and Knoxville. It was suggested that the newsletter be interactive, e.g., with a "comments" section allowing people to comment on various items.

Research committee update: the committee will meet next week and invites anyone to join the meeting. The committee also welcomes new members, especially those who would enhance its diversity.

Policy committee update: Dr. Terry Cooper shared the draft statements for Diversity and Inclusivity, including freedom of speech – diversity of people, and diversity of ideas. The statement (just below) is a potential addition to the Bylaws. If DFAC approves it, it will go to the Dean, the Vice-Chancellor's office, and then the entire CoM at the annual spring meeting. The DFAC approved the statement unanimously.

The faculty and students of the University of Tennessee will undertake ongoing assessment of our performance with respect to diversity and inclusivity. We will encourage recruitment that better

reflects our regional and national community, and we will promote programs to increase diversity and inclusivity in medical science, including education, research, scientific discovery, clinical care, and public service.

We commit to upholding the rights of all to express differing opinions. We will endeavor to respect, not marginalize, diverse ideas and speech with which we do not agree; and we will seek to create opportunities for open dialogue across differences, to generate connection and communication rather than polarization. (Ref: UT Board of Trustees policy BT0021, "Policy Affirming Principles of Free Speech for Students and Faculty").

Branding committee update: Dr. Penny Asbell shared a memo that has been created, to help faculty discern to whom they can share information regarding achievements and developments within the CoM. Information will be forwarded to the UTHSC Communications office. Faculty should communicate with their chairs, or dean or associate deans, who can then make the decision whether to move that information to Communications for the entire UTHSC.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on April 5, 2021, at 12:00 Noon by Zoom.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:06 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary