

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

September 14, 2020

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Larry Pfeffer, at 12:00 PM on September 14, 2020, on the Zoom online platform due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Penny A. Asbell, MD, Mace Coday, PhD, Julio F. Cordero-Morales, PhD, , Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Neena Thomas-Gosain, MD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Laura Sprabery, MD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Burt Sharp, MD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Katherine Nearing, MD, Thad Wilson, PhD, Claudette Shepherd, MD, Katherine Nearing, MD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD

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

Scott Strome, MD, Polly Hofmann, PhD, Fruz Pourmottabed, PhD, Matthew Ennis, PhD, Alan Burns, Kimberly Coca

Approval of minutes

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

Business

Drs. Strome and Hofmann began by summarizing the CoM's draft Strategic Plan for Clinical Missions, which had been sent to DFAC members earlier. They noted that the Strategic Plan for Clinical Missions is somewhat broadly structured, in part because of Covid-19, and also because negotiations with Methodist are ongoing, as UT Methodist Physicians (UTMP) will end in June 2021. Dean Strome emphasized that this does not mean the UT-Methodist relationship will end, but rather that the relationship will change. Dr. Strome shared information with DFAC regarding his support for UTHSC CoM faculty and the CoM's missions of clinical care, service, teaching and research.

Dr. Matt Ennis then discussed the CoM's Strategic Plan for Education and invited comments and suggestions. For both draft plans, DFAC are to be provided one additional day for commentary, either to the secretary or to the president, no later than the end of the day on Tuesday, Sept. 14th.

Dr. Terry Cooper then brought forth the most recent recommended changes in the draft CoM Bylaws. Using screen sharing on the zoom platform, Dr. Cooper explained these changes and their respective rationales. It was moved and seconded that the ByLaws be accepted as amended. DFAC voted unanimously in favor.

Dr. Penny Asbell provided an update from the DFAC Branding Committee. One issue that has been brought to attention is the fact that, when someone has achieved something notable, it may difficult for UTHSC to become aware of, and properly communicate that accomplishment. Mr. Alan Burns from the CoM Communications office noted that a number of avenues are available for sharing such news, and Dr. Asbell shared a draft memo to be sent to faculty, with information on what they can share with whom, to get the word out.

Dr. Asbell also described the focus of the branding effort, and why it is important for UTHSC. She observed that misinformation is a problem sometimes, and this too needs to be addressed. Dr. Cooper indicated that, in a recent meeting of the Board of Trustees, murals similar to the one currently visible on the side of the Van Vleet building will now be placed in at least one location in each of Tennessee's 95 counties. They may be on buildings, on sides of barns, billboards, and in various other places throughout the state.

Dr. Burt Sharp updated DFAC on the Research Committee's recent meeting with Dr. Andy Griffith, the new Associate Dean for Research. The Research Committee is highly interested in working with him to enhance the research environment at the CoM. They also described to him the new/proposed clinical investigators' program that was developed by the committee last year. A future meeting is anticipated, to learn what Dr. Griffith considers to be main priorities for research in the CoM, which he will present in his draft Strategic Plan for Research in an upcoming DFAC meeting.

A final conversation focused on ways in which Covid-19 has altered many routine activities for faculty. Clinical people may have lost RVU opportunities; researchers may have had setbacks; and teaching faculty likely have lost some teaching opportunities. However, the pandemic has also sparked opportunities for new forms of service, clinical care and teaching.

DFAC then discussed what, if anything, to recommend regarding how these developments may affect annual evaluations. The DFAC hereby encourages Dean Strome to consider several responses:

[a] Dean Strome could indicate to the Council of the CoM that department chairs should take the effects of Covid-19 into consideration in annual evaluations of faculty as goals have needed revision;

[b] A memo, created mutually between DFAC and the dean, should be sent to the faculty, inviting faculty to list accomplishments that arose as creative responses to the pandemic, as well as to list otherwise-planned activities that were unexpectedly lost due to the pandemic, in research, clinical, teaching, or service; these latter should be enumerated specifically as to which particular planned activities could no longer be executed;

[c] Chairs (and/or Division Chiefs undertaking evaluations) should be encouraged to create a separate list of all their faculty's creative responses to Covid-19, as listed in various faculty statements of annual "accomplishments," which can then be shared with the UT Board of Trustees. It was suggested that all the Colleges in UTHSC would be well-advised to list such creative responses.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on October 5, 2020, at 12:00 Noon by Zoom.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary