

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

February 6, 2023

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Mace Coday, at 12:03 PM on February 6, 2023, in person and on the Zoom online platform.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Kevin Beier, MD, EM, Suleiman W. Bahouth, PhD, Dave Bhattacharya, MD, Mark Bugnitz, MD, Mace Coday, PhD, Tina Dudley, MD, Ian Gray, MD, Jensen Hyde, MD, Chris Ledbetter, MD, Patrick McConville, MD, Erica Mitchell, MD, MEd SE, FACS, DFSVS, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Katherine Nearing, MD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Burt Sharp, MD, Laura Sprabery, MD, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Thad Wilson, PhD, Jillian McCarthy, Ph.D., CCC-SLP

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

Scott Strome, MD, Melody Cunningham, MD, Kristi Forman, DBA, MEd, Myra Sullivan, Alicia Diaz-Thomas, MD

Approval of minutes

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

Business

Pres. Coday began by introducing Dr. Kristi Forman, Dir of Faculty Affairs, to discuss APPR questions. Dr. Forman noted that a few years ago we transitioned to a calendar year, from the previously standard July-to-June year. That coincided with the shift to Digital Measures, which permits input at any time during the year. Faculty can begin providing year-end documents for APPR on December 1. Digital Measures permits faculty also to provide responses during and at the conclusion of the APPR process.

Each college determines its own deadline for submission of materials. Some colleges are earlier, some are later. The College of Medicine has used January 15 as faculty members' deadline, while evaluators must conclude their submissions by March 15. Within each college, departments can change the deadline. Some make it later, but it is permissible to set an earlier deadline. Ultimately everything must be completed, across the board, by March 15. Even if a department elects to make the deadline earlier, it should provide sufficient notice to faculty.

One question concerned the metric that measures teaching time. Previously, the CoM sent the Teaching Metric every year, and faculty would fill that out. In the last few years that has not been distributed as before, but faculty still can complete the spreadsheet and upload it as a document. Some effort has been made, without success thus far, to integrate it into Digital Measures. Some benefit might be gained

thereby, via accumulating data across the CoM. Additionally, some discussion concerned the possibility of providing faculty with some sort of clerical assistance to fill out the Digital Measures elements.

Turning to the second agenda item, regarding ombuds, Dr. Morreim briefly presented a few PPTs describing different sorts of ombuds (classical, advocate, and organizational), and introduced Dr. Melody Cunningham. Dr. Cunningham indicated that the position she currently holds is as a "navigator" for learners (students, residents, and fellows). Important to this position, and embedded in the current shift from navigator to ombuds, is the importance of confidentiality as well as the other core values of ombuds (neutrality/impartiality, self-determination, voluntariness, independence, and informality). Dr. Cunningham indicated that her title will transition to "ombuds" when a proper charter is in place, perhaps in the next few months. While she lives in Montana currently, she has been available to learners remotely and sometimes visits Memphis. As she has learned, most ombuds offices now function largely via zoom. Some of the issues visitors have brought to her concern professionalism, policy, and a wide variety of other issues. Here and elsewhere, initial meetings are scheduled for 90 minutes so that people don't feel rushed; follow-up meetings are commonly an hour. Additionally, this and most ombuds offices collect broad categories of data regarding types of issues most commonly arising within the organization.

One question concerned whether an ombuds would be available at some point to faculty and staff, not just students. Dr. Cunningham indicated that, in Knoxville, the ombuds office now has 3 ombuds and a staff member, plus someone who focuses on GME. The UTK ombuds are fully available to faculty and staff as well as trainees. It was also noted that, in the Faculty Senate interview with Dr. Howard Gadlin (director of the ombuds office for 20 years at NIH), Dr. Gadlin pointed out that conflict among research scientists, such as authorship issues, presented many ombuds issues at the faculty level.

Dr. Strome indicated that the navigator position is a 'first foray' into this sort of role. This is a start. As Dr. Cunningham gains her footing in this position, she will be able to provide information on what additional needs may be added to the office. Dr. Cunningham made an observation about capacity, and the notion that "if you build it, they will come." Currently the position is 40%. A question then arises whether one person would be able to provide full-spectrum service. The Knoxville ombuds was originally solo but, within a few years, has grown to 3 members.

A question arose, "how do you know if it's working -- if things are better?" The answer to this likely differs between situations in which two or a small number of people are able to resolve an issue among them, versus broader organizational (dys)function that may be identified in the ombuds' annual reports.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on March 6, 2023, 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 1:03 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary