

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

January 6, 2025

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Phyllis Richey, at 12:03 PM on January 6, 2025, in person and on the Zoom online platform.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Tina Dudney, MD, Jay Fowke, PhD, MPH, MS, Rajeshwary Ghosh, PhD, Ian Gray, MD, Bruce L. Keisling, PhD, FAAIDD, Natalie Kerr, MD, MBA, Patrick Koo, MD, Khyati Kothari, MD, Chris Ledbetter, MD, Francesca-Fang Liao, PhD, Matthew Mihelic, MD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Lawrence Pfeffer, PhD, Crystal Pourciau, MD, Phyllis Richey, PhD, Reese Scroggs, PhD, Burt Sharp, MD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Evan Ward, DHSc, PA-C, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Thad Wilson, PhD

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

G. Nicholas Verne, MD, Matthew Ennis, PhD

Approval of minutes

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

Business

Pres. Richey welcomed Dr. Matt Ennis as the new interim associate dean for faculty affairs. She then turned the meeting over to Dean Verne, who provided various updates.

In terms of searches, the Chair of Medical Education is expected to be announced in the next couple weeks. For Pathology, candidates will come for interview visits in January and February. For Pediatrics, a search committee is coming together and will be charged in late January. For the Executive Dean's search, candidates will come to campus this month, with an expectation that the search will be complete in the spring.

Pres. Richey indicated that Dr. Bugnitz of the Pediatrics Department has retired, and so he will be replaced. There was discussion regarding how new DFAC members are chosen. President Richey indicated that, when a vacancy arises, typically the department chair is contacted to facilitate an election. A look at the CoM bylaws reaffirmed that members should be elected. As a historic reality, however, it was observed that sometimes the chair conducts an election, and sometimes s/he simply appoints someone, with no vote by the department faculty. Of the eight most recently added members, two were elected and most if not all of the others were appointed by their chairs. The question then was whether DFAC should identify the appropriate process for identifying new DFAC members with more detail.

Pres. Richey emphasized that DFAC members should be elected, not appointed. That said, she suggested that chairs should be provided with information from the relevant CoM bylaw and then permitted to run the election as they see fit, and that DFAC should not impose itself on the process. Further discussion concerned the appropriate role for chairs. On one hand, Dr. Verne, Dr. Ennis and a number of DFAC members agreed that chairs should have a role, similar to their role when vacancies arise in the Faculty Senate. At the same time, additional discussion observed that DFAC is a faculty organization rather than an arm of administration, and that problems can sometimes arise if administration takes too strong a role. The DFAC bylaws were viewed by ScreenShare (Art. VI) and it was noted that the bylaws do not mention any role for chairs in the election of DFAC members. The balance can be delicate, it was said, and maintaining the integrity of the organization is important.

A motion was made that DFAC members should not be involved in directly running elections, but rather should request that chairs conduct elections and that DFAC would refer them for IT assistance if needed. The motion was approved by a large, though not unanimous, vote. Finally, it was affirmed that, although the DFAC will not be running these elections, it is the DFAC secretary's duty to notify the department chair when a vacancy appears.

Pres. Richey noted that the new DASH Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system had launched as of 8:00am 1/6/25 and encouraged all members to remind their department colleagues to log in and confirm contact their information.

On behalf of the Research Committee, Dr. Larry Pfeffer reported that the committee has decided to proceed first with re-evaluating the clinician-scientist track, to update it. The previous version has been sent to committee members, although as yet no update suggestions have come in. Dr. Verne requested the committee reference the summary notes from the COM June 2024 research retreat he previously forwarded to inform the update/revision of the clinician-scientist track proposal, to apprise the incoming dean and the new Vice Chancellor of this initiative for future pursuit. Dr. Keisling briefly discussed the current draft proposal on a training program.

For the Policy Committee, Dr. Claudette Shepherd noted that, since the DFAC has voted its approval of the latest bylaw revision, the CoM administration will now distribute an online ballot to the CoM faculty. The next meeting of the committee will consider peer review of teaching, and also term limits for DFAC members.

It was noted that the one-phrase revision of a CoM bylaw now needs to go to the faculty for a vote. Dr. Ennis as interim associate dean of faculty will undertake that task.

The Faculty Development committee had a meeting in mid-November, and had no new developments to report. Pres. Richey noted that the committee is in the process of formulating recommendations, based on notes from the COM Spring 2024 Faculty Focus Group sessions, on how to streamline and improve faculty onboarding with potential for standardization across departments and campuses.

On behalf of colleagues, Dr. Liao raised the question whether the MRC core can be moved to a different location. The response from knowledgeable DFAC members indicated that the core's current location was a firm part of the broader resource/facilities plan on campus.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on February 3, 2025, 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 12:50 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary