

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

**February 3, 2025**

**Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Phyllis Richey, at 12:04PM on February 3, 2025, in person and on the Zoom online platform.

**Attendance**

The following members were present:

Kevin Beier, MD, EM, Charlie Busby, MD, Mace Coday, PhD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Tina Dudney, MD, Natalie Dunlap, DO, Jay Fowke, PhD, MPH, MS, Rajeshwary Ghosh, PhD, Ian Gray, MD, Chris Ledbetter, MD, Francesca-Fang Liao, PhD, Amanda Linz, MD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Deidra Mountain, PhD, Phyllis Richey, PhD, Burt Sharp, MD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Nir Shimony, MD, Evan Ward, DHSc, PA-C, Joe Willmitch, MPAS, PA-C, Thad Wilson, PhD, Tracy McClinton, DNP, AGACNP-BC, APRN, HGET-C, EBP-C

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

G. Nicholas Verne, MD, Matthew Ennis, PhD, James Haynes, MD

**Approval of minutes**

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

**Business**

Pres. Richey introduced the Pediatrics Department's new member, Dr. Amanda Linz, who specializes in pediatric palliative care.

Dr. Verne then provided updates. For the Pathology chair opening, indicated that 4 candidates are visiting during February, and the first is this week. For the Department of Medical Education, a verbal offer has been made to a candidate and the person is a highly experienced outside person. The Pediatrics Department chair search is likely to open in the next month or so. In Preventive Medicine, Dr. Karen Johnson will be stepping down and an interim will be identified for the near term. For the Executive Dean search, the first group of candidates has now been interviewed in person, and another round of interviews will happen soon. Dr. Verne stated that he has requested that DFAC be invited to interview candidates during the upcoming round.

He also noted that Match Day for graduating medical students, when they learn which residency they have been selected for, will be March 21<sup>st</sup>. The awards ceremony will be held the evening before, and Graduation will be May 12th.

The question arose from DFAC members, as to whether UTHSC and the CoM were involved in the ROH decision to purchase and build at the site of the old Commercial Appeal building on Union Avenue. The completely new site can avoid the piece-by-piece demo-and-construction process that would otherwise need to occur, if the new ROH were to be built where the current hospital is situated. The question arose whether the land purchase is a done deal, or whether it is only under consideration. Current information appears to be that some parcels still need to be acquired, although for some of these, there are letters of intent. Some issues remain to be finalized.

Dr. Lawrence Pfeffer, who could not attend the Feb. 3 DFAC meeting, provided a summary in advance, on behalf of himself and co-chair Dr. Bruce Keisling: “The DFAC Research Committee met on 1/23/25 to review a draft proposal for a multi-year scientist-clinician training program. Feedback was solicited from the group to expand upon and clarify aspects of the proposal. It remains a work in progress. The intention is to submit this proposal to DFAC for review this Spring and then present the proposal with the Interim Dean of Research to the permanent Executive Dean for consideration once the permanent Executive Dean is named.” Dr. Verne then restated his request to the committee to review the summary notes from the CoM research retreat held last June and respond with suggestions to address the current status of research within the college as well as challenges and opportunities of the college’s research infrastructure to support and facilitate research.

Dr. Claudette Shepherd started the committee’s report by sharing the DFAC motto “Voice of the faculty,” which was printed on shirts several years ago, reminding the members of the value and importance of DFAC to all college faculty. Dr. Shepherd then reported that the Policy Committee will be considering some questions regarding the Peer Review of Teaching. She has reached out for various departments’ input on this issue. The Policy Committee will also meet during February to develop a slate of updates to the DFAC bylaws making recommendations for changes including, but not limited to, term limits for department representatives and officers. Updates will be presented to DFAC at the March 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting.

On behalf of the FDEC (Faculty Development, Engagement & Communication), Dr. Ian Gray thanked Pres. Richey for the talking points she sent him. He reported three initiatives committee is working with ITS on: [a] adding a Qualtrics service request form to the ITS Service Catalog; [b] developing a solution for faculty at regional campuses and local practice partner facilities to more easily access UTHSC resources currently requiring only a UTHSC netid option for authentication; [c] expanding the Emma (mass email solution) or creating a similar new resource to facilitate automated maintenance of mass email distribution and/or listservs, to further expedite communication. Dr. Verne then restated his request for the committee to propose recommendations, based on notes from Spring ’24 Faculty Focus Group sessions, to streamline and improve faculty onboarding with potential for standardization across departments and campuses.

Pres. Richey invited Dr. Haynes, Dean at the Chattanooga campus, for input. He agreed that enhanced resource access is needed for regional campus faculty and recommended UTHSC ITS take a “tour” of the IT infrastructure and security requirements at each of the regional/practice partner sites to inform development of the enhanced user credentialing process.

Dr. McClinton, Faculty Senate President, spoke of OSP deadlines and the recent pause on federal grant funding for various kinds of research. The Vice Chancellor for Research is tracking developments and communicating, as those developments arise, regarding the impact on research at UTHSC. She indicated that the next COACHE survey will begin on Feb 27 data from the previous COACHE study is on the internet and will become available, by college.

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the committee will be held on March 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 12:35 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD  
Secretary