

**Interfaculty Council Meeting Minutes**  
**FY 2022 – February 16, 2022 – Webex**

**Present:** Dr. Cameron Jeter, Dr. Daniel Harrington, Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, Dr. Elaheh Ashtari, Dr. Omobola Oyeleye, Dr. Nicholas De Lay, Dr. Jennifer Bailey, Dr. Joseph Alcorn, Dr. Meena Bhattacharjee, Dr. Linh Bui, Dr. Nachum Dafny, Dr. Rhashedah Ekeoduru, Dr. Syed Hashmi, Dr. Georgene Hergenroeder, Dr. Nahid Rianon, Dr. Alan Myers, Dr. Bethany Williams, Dr. Licong Cui, Dr. Assaf Gottlieb, Dr. Arif Harmanci, Dr. June Sadowsky, Dr. Kirk Roberts, Dr. Kurt Kasper, Dr. Dharini van der Hoeven, Dr. Vaunette Fay, Dr. Carole Mackavey, Dr. Seth Stephens, Dr. Craig Hanis, Dr. Eric Jones, Dr. Ross Shegog, Dr. Yun Xin Fu, Ms. Courtney Liddell, and Ms. Angela Hayes

**Ex-Officio Attendees:** Dr. Kevin Morano

**Guests:** Ms. Meredith Raine, Assistant Vice President, Media Relations; Ms. Deborah Lake, Director, Media Relations; Ms. Lauren Mathews, Director of Branding and Creative Services; Mr. Michael Tramonte, Senior Vice President, Finance and Business Services and Chief Financial Officer; Andrew Casas, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer, Practice Plan; Patricia Hinojosa, Director, Payroll and Benefits; Laura Chambers, Executive Director of Employee Benefits, UT System

**Administrative Personnel:** Ms. Terrie Schade-Lugo

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**I. CALL TO ORDER / APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

***Dr. Cameron Jeter, IFC Chair FY 2022***

Dr. Cameron Jeter, IFC Chair FY 2022, called the meeting to order at 11:32 AM and polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes for January 19, 2022. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved, as presented.

**II. ANNOUNCEMENTS**

***Dr. Kevin A. Morano, Associate VP for Faculty Affairs & Development***

Dr. Morano provided his info as follows:

- The Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences Dean search is expected to kick off on March 2 with an announcement at the faculty meeting.
- An announcement of the Dean of McGovern Medical School is expected in the near future.
- Dr. Morano provided an update on local COVID-19 test positivity. Rates are falling quickly and expected to continue to drop in the coming weeks. Dr. Morano advised the committee to watch for directions from leadership regarding ongoing safety measures.

***Dr. Elaheh Ashtari, Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council:***

- The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Council is in its inaugural year and is thus discussing Council plans, goals, and recruitment strategies.
- The Council is working on educational modules to provide current diversity, equity, and inclusion training to Council members to ensure consistency in messaging across Council initiatives.
- The Council has identified LGBTQ+-related learning modules on LinkedIn to provide training to individuals interested in being identified as allies by the University. The ally program is anticipated to go live in June 2022.
- The Council is working on identifying a Council member to join the HOOP Policy Council to provide guidance on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion language.
- Dr. Ashtari requested that any Diversity events be sent to Dr. Asia McCleary-Gaddy to be included in the Office of Diversity and Inclusion calendar.

### III. NEW BUSINESS

#### ***UTHealth Media Relations***

***Ms. Meredith Raine, Assistant Vice President,***

***Ms. Deborah Lake, Director***

***Ms. Lauren Mathews, Director of Branding and Creative Services***

Dr. Jeter welcomed Ms. Meredith Raine, Ms. Deborah Lake, and Ms. Lauren Mathews to the IFC's Meeting. In preparation for this meeting, Dr. Jeter provided our guests with a selection of questions to consider addressing with the membership.

Ms. Meredith Raine introduced Ms. Deborah Lake as the Director of UTHealth Houston Media Relations. Ms. Lake began with a discussion of the role of Media Relations at UTHealth Houston, indicating that Media Relations is responsible for managing the University and its faculty and staff with media outlets. She discussed the "beat system" structure of Media Relations and provided information on how to find the appropriate Media Relations contact for each "beat," or area, within the University. Ms. Lake discussed the importance of including Media Relations in any and all communication with the media to control messaging from the University and manage the University's reputation. Ms. Lake concluded with a discussion regarding the role of faculty specialists and the requirements to become a faculty specialist (i.e., availability on short notice, responsiveness to requests). In response to a question from Dr. Kasper, Ms. Lake discussed available training opportunities related to media interactions.

Following Ms. Lake's presentation, Ms. Raine introduced Ms. Lauren Mathews as the Director of Branding and Creative Services. Ms. Mathews opened with a discussion of the new UTHealth Houston logos and branding initiatives, including presentation of the John S. Dunn Behavioral Sciences Center, Cizik School of Nursing, and a campaign at Houston Hobby airport for the holidays in 2022. Ms. Mathews directed attendees to <http://www.uth.edu/brand-standards> for current information regarding branding and to find assets related to presentations and poster templates, among other branded items. She discussed upcoming fiftieth-anniversary events. Following her presentation, she took a question about social media training, to which Ms. Raine answered that Media Relations can be contacted for specific questions about best practices and that some further resources are forthcoming on the Media Relations website in regards to social media.

#### ***Memorial Hermann and UT System Updates***

***Mr. Andrew Casas, Senior Vice President, UTHealth and Chief Operating Officer, Practice Plan***

***Mr. Michael Tramonte, Senior Vice President and Chief Financial Officer***

***Ms. Laura Chambers, Executive Director of Employee Benefits, UT System***

***Ms. Patricia Hinojosa, Director of Payroll and Benefits***

Dr. Jeter introduced guests from UTHealth Houston and UT System to discuss ongoing negotiations between Blue Cross Blue Shield of Texas and Memorial Hermann Hospital System. Guests included Mr. Andrew Casas, Mr. Michael Tramonte, and Ms. Laura Chambers. Mr. Casas and Ms. Chambers provided an update on ongoing negotiations between the two organizations, expressing an understanding that negotiations were close to completion.

Dr. Jeter then introduced Ms. Patricia Hinojosa to provide details relating to the newly-created Family Leave Pool. The pool allows for leave donation for employee use in instances not covered by the existing sick leave pool. In response to attendee questions, Ms. Hinojosa clarified that leaves continue to be funded by the same funding source paying each employee's salary.

Dr. Jeter closed the guest presentations by thanking all guests. Guests still on the call exited the meeting.

#### IV. CAMPUS REPORTS

##### Cizik School of Nursing Highlights

**Dr. Carol Mackavey**

Dr. Mackavey gave a presentation about the Cizik School of Nursing, including the following highlights. A copy of the presentation is attached and made a part of these minutes.

- There are 180 full-tuition scholarships provided by the PARTNERS organization.
- Cizik School of Nursing has 1,400 students.
- Postdoctoral and post-master graduate training opportunities are expanding, including new specialty concentrations that are under development.
- The nursing simulation lab was recently renovated.

##### School Campus Reports

The campus reports were provided and are made a part of these minutes.

##### Cizik School of Nursing

**Dr. Carole Mackavey**

- Cizik School of Nursing is developing specialty concentration programs. The first two are almost ready to launch (Post-Graduate Certificate in Cardiovascular Health and Systems Management and Post Graduate Public Health Concentration), two to three didactic courses, and three hundred hours of clinical rotations. Other concentrations include Endocrine with a diabetes focus.
- On February 1, the Cizik School of Nursing celebrated Chinese New Year.
- The School is also celebrating Black History Month by highlighting some School employees.

##### Graduate School of Biomedical Science

**Dr. Nicholas De Lay**

*GSBS Researchers investigating new procedures for monitoring strokes:*

- Dr. Muhammed Haque, Assisting Professor of Neurology at McGovern Medical School, is leading a study focused on determining whether MRI scans can be used to measure the extent to which the stroke-causing hematoma formed in a person's brain due to intracerebral hemorrhage is expanding, i.e., whether the pooled blood in the brain is fully clotted or only partially coagulated.
- This information can be used to determine whether or not surgical intervention is required to prevent further brain damage.
- More information can be found here: <https://gsbs.uth.edu/news/story/researchers-studying-how-special-mri-protocol-can-help-treat-patients-with-brain-hemorrhages>

##### McGovern Medical School

**Dr. Nahid Rianon**

- McGovern Medical School celebrated International Day of Women and Girls in Science with a Symposium on February 11, 2022, featuring Dr. Toi Harris, Associate Provost of Institutional Diversity and Inclusion at Baylor College of Medicine. Two speakers from McGovern Medical School participated in this event, Dr. Patricia Butler, Professor Emerita in the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences, and Dr. Mandy Hill, Associate Professor in the Department of Emergency Medicine. Flyer below.



- Theresa Koehler, PhD, Herbert L. and Margaret W. DuPont Distinguished Professor in Biomedical Sciences, and Vasanthi Jayaraman, PhD, Professor of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, were named fellows of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).
- Dr. Anson Koshy from the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics won the Distinguished Faculty Award in Professionalism Education.
- Jason Burnett, PhD, and Carmel Dyer, MD, were honored by the National Adult Protective Services Association for their work in the field of elder mistreatment.

### School of Biomedical Informatics

**Dr. Kirk Roberts**

- CMS is requiring hospitals to use the ONC SAFER Guides to assess the safety of their electronic health record (EHR). The SAFER guides were co-developed by SBMI professor Dean Sittig. See his recent JAMA article for more details and guidance.
- Several SBMI doctoral students have recently been awarded prestigious extramural fellowships/scholarships. This includes awards from NIH (PhD students Astrid Manuel, Ivan Coronado, Evan Yu, and Tasneem Kaochar), CPRIT (PhD students Surabhi Datta, Xinyuam Zhang, Fangfang Yan, Tavleen Singh, and Sarvesh Soni), and AHIMA (DHI student Mary Stanfill).
- Professor James Langabeer, PhD MBA, Associate Professor Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, PhD, and Assistant Professor Andrea Yatsco, PhD earned a \$1.2 million grant award from the US Department of Justice. They will partner with the Houston Police Department to use the grant funds and assess the efficacy of integrating.

### School of Dentistry

**Dr. Alan Myers**

- School of Dentistry held its fourth annual Diversity, Inclusion, and Equity Week (week of January 17). Among the activities were a diversity walk, cultural exhibit and talent show, student-led panel discussion, and keynote presentation by Dr. Ebtissam M. Al-Madi (“Leading the Change for Gender Equality-A Global Perspective”)

### School of Public Health

**Dr. Ross Shegog**

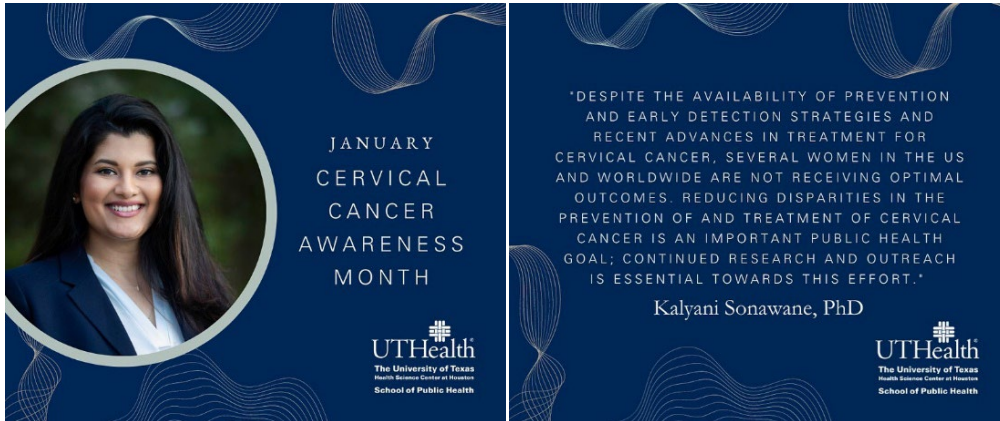
#### *UTHealth School of Public Health Celebrates Black History Month*

To recognize Black History Month in February, Kymberle Landrum Sterling, DrPH, was interviewed on black representation in the field of public health. Dr. Sterling is an associate professor in the Department of Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences, located at the Dallas Campus. She also chairs the Inclusion, Diversity, Equality, and Advocacy (IDEA) Committee at the School. Dr. Sterling says, “It’s important that the people at the table [those involved in public health work be representative of different walks of life and perspectives. It is important that black researchers, educators, and public health practitioners are participating, so that the communities we serve have a voice. No voice should be left unheard. And if every group can have some sort of representation, then we can ensure that we’re addressing the important challenges and problems that each group faces.”



*Cervical Cancer Awareness Month in January*

The research of several faculty at UTHealth School of Public Health was highlighted on social media during Cervical Cancer Awareness Month. Ryan Suk, PhD, Kalyani Sonawane, PhD, Ashish Deshmukh, PhD, and Paulo Cuccaro, PhD conduct research related to HPV vaccinations and cervical cancer.



*Recent Media Coverage*

- Catherine Troisi, PhD talked to The Dallas Morning News about when you should use a rapid test to detect COVID-19. Troisi appeared on the Healthy You podcast to discuss the Omicron surge in Texas and its effect on hospitals, schools, and health care workers statewide, and more.
- Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, MPH, spoke to KXAS-TV in Dallas about the latest COVID-19 variants.

**V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS**

***Dr. Jeter***

The Committee requested to tour the TMC3 site. Ms. Schade-Lugo is expected to work with the TMC3 staff and Interfaculty Council members to find a mutually agreeable time for touring before the April Interfaculty Council meeting.

**VI. MISCELLANEOUS**

***Dr. Jeter***

The Subcommittees Breakout Sessions: The membership was advised that they would be automatically moved into their Subcommittees and that there was no need to return to the IFC Webex when the Breakout Sessions finished.

**VII. ADJOURNMENT**

***Dr. Jeter***

Upon motion made and duly seconded, the meeting adjourned at 12:48 PM. Dr. Jeter reminded the membership that there was not a meeting in March and the IFC would reconvene on April 20, 2022.

Respectfully submitted by Liz Vinson, on April 13, 2022.

Approved by Interfaculty Council on April 20, 2022.