

Interfaculty Council Meeting Minutes FY 2021 – September 15, 2021 – Webex

Present: Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, Dr. Cameron Jeter, Dr. Elda Ramirez, Dr. Nicholas R. De Lay, Dr. Joseph Alcorn, Dr. Catherine Ambrose, Dr. Georgene Hergenroeder, Dr. Elaheh Ashtari, Dr. Kulvinder Bajwa, Dr. Meena Bhattacharjee, Dr. Linh Bui, Dr. Carmen Dessauer, Dr. Syed Hashmi, Dr. Rashedah Ekeoduru, Dr. Nahid Rianon, Dr. Bethany Williams, Dr. Licong Cui, Dr. Luca Giancardo, Dr. Assaf Gottlieb, Dr. Kirk Roberts, Dr. Debora Simmons, Dr. Asif Harmanci, Dr. Daniel Harrington, Dr. June Sadowsky, Dr. Kurt Kasper, Dr. Dharini van der Hoeven, Dr. Michele White, Dr. Alan Myers, Dr. Omobola Oyeleye, Dr. Vaunette Fay, Dr. Carole Mackavey, Dr. Seth Stephens, Dr. Ross Shegog, Dr. Michael Swartz, Dr. Yun Xin Fu, and Ms. Alainna Talton

Absent: Dr. Sandra Branson, Dr. Nachum Dafny, Dr. Cecilia Ganduglia-Cazaban, and Dr. Craig Hanis

Guests: Mr. Scott Forbes and Ms. Kara Crawford

Ex-Officio Attendees: Dr. Kevin Morano and Dr. Gurur Biliciler-Denktaş

Administrative Personnel: Ms. Terrie Schade-Lugo

I. CALL TO ORDER

Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, IFC Chair FY 2021

Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer thanked the membership for FY 2021 and FY 2022 for quickly accessing the Webex link to the IFC Meeting after the UTHealth Town Hall concluded. After calling the meeting to order at 12:02 PM, Dr. Champagne-Langabeer advised that we would be taking a few items on the agenda out of order due to time constraints.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Associate Vice President, UTHealth Faculty Affairs & Development

Dr. Kevin A. Morano

Dr. Kevin Morano expressed that he hoped that the members had attended the UTHealth Town Hall -as it happened largely because of the advocacy of the IFC. UTHealth Executive Leadership was thinking about holding a Town Hall; however, after a phone call and discussion with the IFC leadership, things crystalized that the Town Hall was needed. Dr. Morano wanted the IFC membership to understand that they have a voice and impact to direct the course of things at UTHealth. If anyone did not get their questions answered during the event, please let Dr. Morano know, and he will be happy to navigate a response.

Dr. Morano provided an update regarding the mentoring program that was to launch at McGovern Medical School. He advised that the program finally launched on September 1, 2021. Dr. Morano advised that 200 mentees signed up to participate, so 15 different group-based mentoring cohorts were established. The cohorts are sized for between 8-13 participants per group with a pair of mentors (senior and mid-level experienced faculty). He advised that they have ten non-tenure clinical track assistant professor groups with (well over 100 junior clinical faculty, three groups for non-tenure-track faculty, and two groups for our tenure track faculty. The goal is to run this program over the course of a year and collect the results and feedback. This program was in collaboration with the Office of Faculty Affairs and Administration and a sub-committee of the Faculty Senate, led by Dr. Nahid Rianon at McGovern Medical School. This subcommittee's pre and post-surveys will gauge the program's impact and possibly generate some novel scholarship.

NEW BUSINESS

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer advised that we would be hearing from our special guests before taking care of IFC business and introduced our guests from the UTHealth Office of Governmental Relations, as follows:

- Mr. Scott Forbes, Senior Vice President; and
- Ms. Kara Crawford, Vice President

Mr. Scott Forbes advised that he would be providing information on the Texas Legislative Session, which is held in odd calendar years -and often the session was odd -such as this year. The session is odd because it is still ongoing. They will begin their third special session on September 20, 2021. The topics that Mr. Forbes discussed included:

- Financials. The Governmental Relations Office works to provide the resources for the faculty to do their jobs. This year, UTHealth experienced a fairly successful session. We are receiving a total of \$333.9 million which is a \$12.2 million increase from the previous session. It includes instruction/operations, research, and infrastructure (\$283.6 million). We will receive a total of \$13.1 (only \$500K increase over the last session) for GME. The mission-specific formula based on research funding (a pilot program during the last session) is now a permanent program. We got \$25.5 million, which is the same as we received during the last session; no new funding was added. Our total bill pattern is at \$446.7 million and reflects an \$11.7 million increase. Finally, the grand total that we will be receiving is \$600 million -this includes Article 2, Article 7, CLI, Dunn Behavioral Science Center, etc. This makes up close to 15% of a \$2 billion budget for UTHealth -and is a good start for this session -and we have more to go.
- Dunn Behavioral Science Center. In 2019, we received approval to build the Center next to HCPC, and it was a \$125 million project. We will officially open the doors on February 2, 2022. When added to the HCPC, this facility will be the largest academic, mental health complex in the nation. The legislature funded us with \$40.3 million for operations to open this facility (168 beds to start at \$610 a bed day, which was what we requested.)
- HCPC. We requested \$81 million for the next two years. It is all lumped into one deal, and we are in negotiations to receive the \$8 million bump up in the next two years.
- Senate Bill 1251 was passed by the House and Senate, allowing the School of Public Health and MD Anderson to do what is done at GSBS and to have a possible joint degree plan or hybrid and take our talents from both schools and combine them into a degree plan. This legislation will permit a lot of leeway for Dean Boerwinkle and President Pisters on what we can do. Further, this could operate as a model piece of legislation for future collaborations for our sister schools across the state with the School of Public Health.
 - *Why was state legislation necessary for this kind of inter-institutional agreement -was there some other resource(s) allocated?* Mr. Forbes advised that GSBS does have legislation that says that UTHealth and MD Anderson can do this for GSBS. Because it allows this for GSBS, the lawyers were afraid that that means it excludes anyone else. So, it's an allow-to -therefore, no one else is allowed to, because it was for the GSBS program. Filing this Bill will permit opening up to a School of Public Health/School of Population Health degree, depending on what we decide to call it at that time.

Ms. Kara Crawford provided information on the following topics:

- Public Health and Population Health were a definite emphasis this legislative session due in part to the pandemic -there were a significant number of bills filed that addressed improving population health and public health. Fortunately, two pieces of legislation were UTHealth's and were successful.
 - Senate Bill 1780 establishes The Texas Epidemic Population Health Institute (TEPHI). The purpose is to prepare Texas to exit the current pandemic and to be prepared to respond to and manage future pandemics effectively. It will recruit and train up to 3500 public health workers in a public health reserve model built after the National Guard model, an effective financial model for the state. The workers are not full-time employees but rather a reserve force of public health professionals. It will be housed and managed out of UTHealth Houston, which will create a reserve force that can be called to act swiftly in future pandemics. The Institute will establish effective protocols and connections among our other state agencies responsible for public health and emergency management and bring in best practices with our other fellow entities across the state. Having a central entity to help quickly process and disseminate data about testing, vaccine immunity levels, etc., will bring relevant data for responding to COVID or future pandemics to the local decision-makers. All the functions that TEPHI will provide grew out of a great need or areas of weakness identified during the state's response to COVID. We are in the beginning phases of establishing and staffing the actual core 100 FTEs that TEPHI will employ later. Dean Boerwinkle is operating as the interim and acting director. We are extremely fortunate to have him leading in this role and the many other roles he manages. We will be working to secure funding for TEPHI this fall.

- *Has it had been determined where TEPHI is going to be located?* Ms. Crawford said that the physical space had not been identified but would be housed in Houston.
- *What is the intent for TEPHI's longevity and sustainability?* Ms. Crawford advised that the state sees a long-term view for House Bill 2090 and the all payor claims database. As for TEPHI, a reserve model was chosen because most of the 3500 volunteers would be paid a minimum stipend during training and would not be sitting idle as full-time paid employees, which would not be cost-effective. The economic impact of the pandemic on Texas was far greater than anticipated. We were not as prepared as we could have been; therefore, TEPHI is seen as a long-term investment. TEPHI was created as a separate agency and will not affect the higher ed budget; it will have its own legislative appropriations.
- House Bill 2090 will create the Texas all payor claims database and be housed at our School of Public Health, Center for Healthcare Data. An all payor claims database is a comprehensive healthcare data resource of medical, pharmacy, and dental claims and provider and eligibility data housed in a central repository. The data can be analyzed in a meaningful way to drive better policy in public health, to drive better transparency in healthcare cost and pricing, and to drive better quality outcomes for Texans ultimately. We are also working to secure long-term funding.

Mr. Forbes closed out the discussion by adding that a few more items they would be pursuing, as follows:

- The funding request for TEPHI is to be discussed in the third special legislative session;
- Other opportunities were being explored such as possible maintenance of effort for funding higher ed and public ed, which could provide additional formula funding to UTHealth;
- On the Federal side, the *Build Back Better Act* is moving through the House now. It has a lot of possible opportunities for higher ed funding opportunities, especially for health-related institutions like UTHealth, everything from infrastructure, workforce development to research.

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer thanked Mr. Forbes and Ms. Crawford for all that they are doing for UTHealth.

II. RECOGNITION OF PAST-CHAIR AND APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer recognized Dr. Elda Ramirez for her Leadership Service on the IFC from FY 2019-2021. Dr. Champagne-Langabeer explained that in Dr. Ramirez's almost 28-years of service to the university, she had committed herself to represent the faculty with her voice, actions, and position. As Chair with the IFC, she championed equity and diversity -in all forms, not just race and gender. Now we see that Dr. Ramirez is Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion at Cizik School of Nursing. She is creating new programs that will change the experiences of all the nurses that matriculate through the school. Also, when she was Chair at the IFC, she raised the issue of mentorship. We are now hearing about what is happening with mentorship and the importance of having role models for junior faculty and senior faculty having the ability to share their knowledge with the junior faculty. Now through her work and the work of Dr. Rianon at MMS, we have a program on mentoring being championed by Dr. Morano with over 200 junior faculty ready to be mentored by the senior MMS faculty. These are only two examples of the ripples felt by the work of Dr. Ramirez. On behalf of the IFC membership, Dr. Champagne-Langabeer expressed thanks and appreciation for Dr. Ramirez's leadership on the IFC. As a token of appreciation, Dr. Ramirez will be presented with a special gift to recognize her time in leadership on the IFC.

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes for August 18, 2021. As a few members' names were missing from the draft Minutes, Dr. Champagne-Langabeer advised that the Minutes would be corrected and brought back to the October meeting for approval.

III. TRANSITION OF CHAIR

Dr. Cameron Jeter, IFC Chair FY 2022

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer passed the gavel to transition the Chair position to Dr. Cameron Jeter as the 2022 IFC Chair. Dr. Jeter introduced herself as a member of the School of Dentistry and the IFC Chair for FY 2022. She thanked Dr. Ramirez and Dr. Champagne-Langabeer for leading the charge on the IFC during this difficult pandemic and noted that she would continue to rely on their help going forward. She further introduced Dr. Daniel Harrington, also from the School of Dentistry, in his new role as Chair-Elect. The Chair-Elect role on the IFC acts as

the parliamentarian. Typically, in an in-person meeting, the parliamentarian acknowledges those that wish to speak and helps to keep track of the two-minute time limit in addressing the IFC. This role is harder to manage on Webex, but she thanked him for his role and voice.

IV. DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

Dr. Jeter

Dr. Jeter advised that she would be discussing several housekeeping items that require attention at the start of each Fiscal Year on the IFC. She advised that any items that require actions could be done by email after the meeting because it will involve nominating peers to serve on the scholarship committee or tribunal. Next, Dr. Jeter mentioned that the IFC Transition Meeting was attended by the FY 2022 IFC members, some outgoing IFC members from FY 2021, and the new incoming IFC members. She thanked all the outgoing members, welcomed the incoming members, and recognized everyone for their service.

IFC Membership Roster:

- Please review your information on the Roster and ensure the information is listed correctly. The Roster information is published on the IFC Webpage (<https://www.uth.edu/ifc/membership.htm>). If any information is incorrect, please email Terrie. As the information for the Roster is drawn from the online Directory, it may be necessary to have it corrected at the department level. Terrie Schade-Lugo will be able to assist in this regard.

IFC Meeting Dates:

- The list of scheduled meeting dates for FY 2022 is included in your meeting materials packet. The IFC Bylaws require that the IFC meet a minimum of nine (9) times each fiscal year. Typically, the IFC does not meet in December, March, and July of each fiscal year. Everyone serving from September 2021 forward should have received calendar invites reflecting the nine scheduled IFC meetings.

IFC Bylaws:

- Dr. Jeter requested that the attendees review the bylaws in the meeting materials packet and pay attention to Article 3, Membership, Section 6, about losing your IFC position. Note that any member of the Interfaculty Council will be removed if you miss three consecutive (i.e., October, November, and January as December is a scheduled month not to attend) or four total of the nine meetings throughout the year. If you are unable to attend an IFC meeting, please select a member from your school to attend in your place and let Terrie know so that she may record your attendance through your substitute. A substitute can only be used for absences to three meetings throughout the year.

IFC Subcommittees:

- There are three subcommittees of the IFC. Each member of the IFC will choose one or more of these subcommittees to serve on -it is a requirement of being an IFC member. At the October meeting, Dr. Jeter will announce the charges that she gives to these three standing subcommittees as Chair. A poll will be circulated to sign up on the subcommittee(s) of your choice after the October meeting. In the meantime, she suggested the membership look over the general topics and purposes regarding the subcommittee(s) provided in the meeting materials packet. The work for each subcommittee will be to answer the charge given by the Chair.

Thomas F. Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit:

The TF Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit is a selection committee comprising six IFC members and three SIC members. This year, we need to find additional members from the School of Dentistry and McGovern Medical School. The purpose of the TF Burks Scholarship Committee is to provide a monetary award to one or more students who show academic merit. An all-electronic process is used to manage the review activities. The Committee's time commitment is a couple of weeks between December and January. The Committee will then bring the results of their review and selection(s) to the IFC membership for vote approval during the January IFC Meeting. Dr. Jeter asked the IFC members from the School of Dentistry and McGovern Medical School who may be interested in serving on this Committee to please email her and copy Terrie.

Faculty Tribunal Panel:

Dr. Jeter explained that on a very rare occasion, a UTHealth tenured faculty member is let go. Part of their ability is to appeal or have their case heard is before this Faculty Tribunal Panel. This process is a part of HOOP 133 – Faculty Termination. The tenured faculty member will appear before the three-person tribunal, selected from a standing panel of nine (9) tenured faculty. We, as the IFC, nominate six of the nine tribunal members. We have two vacancies on the panel and need to identify two (2) new members between October and November 2021. These members do not need to be IFC members themselves but rather need to be tenured UTHealth faculty. The current distribution of members on the panel reflects that we already have representation by members from the School of Public Health, the School of Dentistry, Cizik School of Nursing, and McGovern Medical School. We might consider finding an additional member from the School of Biomedical Informatics and one from any other of the four schools listed. If you have a colleague or peer from your school that is not currently listed or listed at the bottom of the page as a past panel member, please nominate them by emailing Dr. Jeter or Terrie. We would contact the nominated member to ask if they would consider serving. We rarely are called to serve in this way, and we are all relieved.

V. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

VI. ADJOURNMENT

Dr. Jeter

Dr. Jeter thanked everyone for spending two hours of their day attending the Town Hall and the IFC Transition Meeting. She advised that we will convene on October 20, 2021, at the regular meeting time starting at 11:30 AM. The meeting adjourned at 1 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Terrie Schade-Lugo, CAP, on October 18, 2021.

Approved by Interfaculty Council on October 20, 2021.