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

January 7, 2014

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Larry Reiter, at 12:06 PM on January 6, 2014, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Sunny Anand, MD, George Cook, PhD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, PhD, Bob Foehring, PhD, Scott Jackson, DVM, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Edwards Park, PhD, Fruz Pourmotabbed, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Thad Wilson, PhD

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

Polly Hofmann, PhD, Susan Senogles, PhD

Approval of minutes

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

Business

In the first order of business, Pres. Reiter submitted to Dr. Hofmann the DFAC's 3 nominations for the P&T Committee vacancies: John DeVincenzo, MD, Mack Land, MD, and William Hickerson, MD. Dr. Hofmann will forward them appropriately.

The remainder of the meeting focused on the DFAC subcommittee on the Education Metric. Dr. Terry Cooper provided an overview of the project and the data that have now been collected. The subcommittee's draft metric was provided to faculty across all departments. They were invited to identify how much time it takes them to provide an hour of student-faculty contact-time for each of the metric's various categories of teaching effort. Drs. Cooper and Bill Pulsinelli met with all departments in the CoM, explaining the project and inviting faculty to provide their data anonymously.

The data are now in, and key question becomes how to process the data. Several features were noted.

First, 106 faculty responded. This number represents a strong response - particularly given that many CoM faculty provide only limited non-GME-funded teaching of medical students. Also, 106 responses are a sufficiently high number to be statistically credible.
Second, the data appear to be honest. Anonymity, combined with the fact that all individual data would be combined with other data, tended to reduce the incentive to overstate one's effort. Only a few responses were unexpectedly high or low.

Third, although there was significant variation in all categories, it appeared that these variations likely represent actual differences in the amount of time it takes to provide different kinds of teaching. There may well be bona fide differences from one department to the next as well as from one teacher to the next, although this cannot be verified, given the anonymity of the data.

The DFAC subcommittee's next step will be to meet with a highly-qualified statistician, to seek recommendations regarding how best to construct a coherent, defensible, and useful metric on the basis of these data.

Pending that discussion, the DFAC discussed possible ways that such a metric might be used. One option might be to take the mean response for each category of teaching and use that mean as a default. Thus, for instance, a newly prepared lecture might be 25 hours, a significantly revised one might be 10, and a repeat of an existing lecture might be 5 hours as the defaults. At the same time, given that Administration has emphasized that chairs should have discretion, another feature of the metric might be to acknowledge chairs' authority to adjust the default-numbers upward or downward for individual faculty and/or for the department as a whole. Such alterations would need justification, and one of the major advantages of a detailed metric such as this one is that, if a faculty member is to be acknowledged as having provided a higher level of teaching, that concussion would be the product of systematic, concrete evidence.

Another general observation was that this edition of such a metric should be strictly regarded as 'first-generation,' and that it is highly likely to evolve and improve over time. Dr. Hofmann proposed that one option might be simply to use the metric this year for purposes of further testing and improvement, and then reasses in a year.

Additionally, it was noted that this metric does not by itself provide a "% effort," since it is only the numerator of such a percent. In fact, UT CoM does not collect the data for a denominator. That would require also measuring actual hours spent in service and also in research, alongside teaching. The sum of all three would be the denominator for "total effort." However, a different denominator could be the forty-hour week, given that: [1] UT's presumption as an institution is anchored on a 40-hour week (e.g. as seen in policies regarding annual leave, sick leave etc); [b] the "Simplified Metric" is anchored on a 40-hour week, and [c] the "1800-hour" metric that preceded it was likewise anchored on a 40-hour week. A still-different approach might be, in the end, to convert teaching time into FTE-equivalents. If the ultimate goal for quantifying educational effort is to show the BoT (and for the BoT to show the legislature) what value they are realizing for "orange" dollars invested in education, the FTE could be a suitable unit.

Overall, DFAC discussion noted that these data suggest that variation in teaching effort is very real, not just across faculty but particularly across various types of teaching activity (whether lectures, laboratory, test preparation, mentoring, or whatever). Thus, they cast serious doubt on any one-size-fits-all approach to measuring faculty efforts in education. Additionally, there was discussion about the potential usefulness of having multiple tiers in the accountability calculation (dept to college to university-wide) to accommodate and bridge what current data showed to be significant diversity within the CoM responses and activities. It was speculated that the observed level of diversity would likely be even greater if the same or analogous metric was applied across multiple colleges.
Going forward, Drs. Hofmann and Reiter plan to meet with Dean Stern and with Vice-Chancellor Scheid to update them on the DFAC subcommittee’s progress to date. Additionally, the DFAC intends to formulate responses to three questions Dean Stern recently posed via email (below).

**Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the committee will be held on February 3, 2014, at 12:00 Noon in the Coleman building, Room A101.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary

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1/3/14  [Stern to DFAC
Dear DFAC Members,

I have reviewed the teaching metric and the data collected by the sub-committee. I am concerned. Unfortunately I will not be able to join you on Jan 6 as there is another pressing matter I must attend to. However, I thought I would send on these concerns so that they can be part of the discussion as we work towards a solution.

First, I am concerned the faculty responses to hours needed to develop a lecture have such a high variability as to make this data not helpful. For example, for new lectures the average preparation time was 25 ± 19 hours (mean ± std dev; n=69) with a high of 120 hrs and low of 0.2 hrs. To some extent I think this variability is understandable; giving a single hour, specialty lecture not in your area of expertise might take 40 hrs to prepare whereas giving a 10 hr lecture series in your exact area might only require 20 hrs total prep time or 2 hrs/lecture. I am not sure of the solution, but I do require we have one tool for all of COM and not 22 department specific variations.

Second, the proposed tool appears to go way beyond a modification of the UTHSC tool and now requires many pages of recordkeeping. What are the concerns about returning to the original simplified UTHSC tool and make a handful of modifications so that we can get a ballpark estimate of teaching? I would recommend that one of those modifications be “chair discretion”. This could replace all of the pages of bookkeeping required of the current COM tool.

Third, we cannot have faculty assigned effort that exceeds 100% in teaching. It is not allowed in research or clinical care, and will not be allowed in teaching. I think the way to view this is similar to the effort on an NIH grant. In a grant you are committing to expend a minimum, for example, of 30% effort on that project. However, researchers put in much more time than the minimum with countless hours in, for example, literature and data review. Patient care effort is similar in that there is a minimum expectation of seeing the patient, but then added time spent in reviewing test results, consulting, taking phone calls, etc. The estimation of teaching effort
should reflect the minimum commitment in hrs needed.

I realize COM has a ways to go on this tool. I appreciate the work that has been put into it thus far. Please suggest ways I could be of help in getting us to a final product that gives a reasonable estimation of minimum effort.

Dave