Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Ed Park, at 12:08 PM on November 5, 2012, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Louisa Balazs, MD, PhD, Maggie DeBon, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Bob Foehring, PhD, Scott Jackson, DVM, Stephen King, MD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Linda K. Myers, MD, Edwards Park, PhD, Kaushik Parthasarathi, PhD, Fruz Pourmotabbed, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Laura Sprabery, MD

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

The primary, though not sole, order of business was to discuss the "Simplified Educational Reporting Tool" draft that had been distributed via email in late September, 2012 (attached to these minutes). Drs. Hofmann and Senogles explained the history of this particular document. Its predecessor was a considerably more complex tool that was intended to be used throughout the various colleges at UTHSC, including throughout the College of Medicine/CoM, as a metric or standard by which to quantify educational activity.

Experience showed the earlier tool not to be widely applicable. It did not fit the diversity of educational efforts and experience from college to college or from one discipline to the next, and it was highly complex. Hence, Dr. Scheid attempted to construct the current "simplified" tool, which was distributed for DFAC commentary. This current version is intended to apply only to basic science education, not to clinical teaching.

The directive to develop a 'tool' came initially from Chancellor Schwab, and ultimately it needs to be relatively simple rather than onerous. In the ensuing DFAC discussion, however, simplicity at the expense of accuracy and completeness was not deemed a virtue.

DFAC members provided a wide variety of comments, concerns and critiques (both at the meeting and via email in advance), as summarized below.
*The tool is heavily focused on lectures presented in classrooms – at the very time that
the LCME has expressly mandated the CoM to move away from such a lecture emphasis.

*The tool eliminates credit for time spent preparing for lectures, responding to student
questions after class, updating curriculum, preparing and grading exams, providing Grand
Rounds, and a variety of other educational activities. DFAC commentary suggested that these
activities lie at the very heart of high-quality education, as distinct from faculty simply going
through some motions to fill out a time-sheet.

*The tool presumes that it is standard for university faculty who devote 100% of their
time to education to typically teach four courses per semester. DFAC discussion suggested that
there is no empirical basis for such a claim and that, in fact, two courses per semester is generally
the standard within our own institution—UT Knoxville. Two-year community colleges may
sometimes place such heavy course loads, but in DFAC members' experience, this would be
highly unusual in a four-year university setting. Moreover, the four-course "baseline" figure
significantly overstates the teaching load common at the graduate/professional school level.

*Equating an hour-long lecture (and presuming zero preparation time) with simply being
present at a student-led seminar (which may require far less advance effort) was thought to
exemplify the problems that arise when very different kind of educational effort are forced into a
single one-size-fits-all format.

*The amount of time and effort required to provide high-quality online instruction is also
seriously underestimated. Some of this time, e.g., is required simply for learning the software and
finding suitable ways to convert lecture-style presentations to an online format, which may be
very different from speaking in a classroom. To deny that this takes time is to give the faculty
member short shrift, or reciprocally to encourage the faculty member to give students short shrift.

*Caps, such as the amount of time credited for supervising a dissertation or for
overseeing student research (cap of 2 students per year) were said to be inadequate, given that
some faculty must supervise considerably more than 2 students, or must spend far more time
supervising their activities, such as a dissertation. Additionally, if only the chair of a dissertation
committee can claim significant credit for that effort, other committee members' major
contributions will be overlooked. In the same vein, a cap on the amount of time spent mentoring
students can, perversely, discourage faculty from being mentors at all.

*High-quality educational effort can take time, and this tool could actually discourage
faculty from spending the kind of time needed to produce high-quality education for students and
other trainees. A one-size-fits-all tool may encourage or pressure some faculty to reduce their
teaching effort in ways that could be detrimental to UT's educational obligations.

*Mentoring is not defined.

*The tool's cap on administrative time likewise can seriously understate the level of effort
required. Some committees, such as Admissions, IRB, tenure and promotion, and IACUC, can
easily consume far more than three hours per week.

*In essence, this tool penalizes faculty for spending serious amounts of time in teaching.
It appears designed to ensure that a conscientious faculty member will fail, and will look
inadequate.
*No tool will capture the difference between the faculty member who simply gives the same lecture s/he has given for the past dozen years, versus the person who continually updates the material in a serious effort to teach well. Some fields, such as pharmacology, require considerably more time for updating one's materials than other fields. A one-size-fits-all tool will not capture this difference well, either.

*It was not clear to DFAC members why there needs to be a "metric" at all, when it appears quite evident that any such metric will be fundamentally unreliable. It may be better simply to go with the chair's evaluation, as adjusted by conversation with the faculty member each year.

* The general consensus seemed to be that such a tool is not realistically feasible nor, should it be devised, desirable.

Dr. Senogles then introduced the need to revise the College of Medicine's Bylaws. "They are written on a shovel. They are old. They are outdated." In 2005 they added the term "executive dean," but otherwise have not been updated. DFAC will need to create a committee. The past, present and future presidents would be a good nucleus.

Three major changes need to be made: [1] factual changes, e.g "UT Memphis" to "UTHSC." [2] Also, organizational changes need to be incorporated, such as the split of "Associate Dean of Academic and Faculty Affairs into two associate deanships, one for Medical Education and one for Faculty Affairs. [3] The Bylaws need to be congruent with the Faculty Handbook, as approved by the Board of Trustees. The Handbook, which can be found on the website, supersedes the Bylaws. Potentially the Bylaws can simply provide links to the appropriate places in the Handbook. The legal department must approve any changes. Then the DFAC will be invited to comment. Ultimately the faculty of the CoM will need to vote on the updated bylaws, ideally at its meeting next spring.

One issue to consider, substantively, is whether the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs should actually chair the Promotion and Tenure Committee, as the Bylaws currently provide. It may be preferable for the Assoc. Dean to be an ex officio advisory member instead, given the potential for conflicts of obligation.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on December 3, 2012, at 12:00 Noon in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:05 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary