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

February 6, 2014

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Larry Reiter, at 12:06 PM on February 3, 2014, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Mark Bugnitz, MD (for Sunny Anand, MD), George Cook, PhD, Martin A. Croce, MD, Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Bob Foehring, PhD, Rebecca Anne Krukowski, PhD, Maggie DeBon, PhD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Kaushik Parthasarathi, PhD, Fruz Pourmotabbed, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Tiffany Seagroves, PhD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Laura Sprabery, MD, Thad Wilcon, PhD

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

William Pulsinelli, MD, PhD, 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

[These minutes begin with the Secretary's recap of relevant events preceding the February 3, 2014 meeting, to provide context and clarity to the minutes.]

The primary focus of the meeting was for the DFAC to consider an Education Metric constructed by a DFAC subcommittee. Efforts to develop some sort of suitable metric have been under way for approximately 4 years: see DFAC minutes from 7/19/11, 11/5/12, 1/7/13, 2/6/13, 3/4/13, 8/5/13, 9/10/13, 10/8/13, 11/5/13, 12/2/13, and 1/7/14, available at the DFAC's website, http://uthsc.edu/Medicine/DFAC/ . The earliest version of a tool had been developed and tested by Dr. Scheid and colleagues, and its apparent disadvantages prompted Dr. Scheid and colleagues to create a "Simplified Tool" ("S-Tool"). In January 2013 the DFAC voted unanimously to express disapproval of the S-Tool and, at its February 6, 2013 meeting, opted to invite Dr. Scheid to meet with the DFAC for further discussion. The discussion with Dr. Scheid took place during the DFAC's March 4, 2013 meeting, with the result that the DFAC was invited to offer its ideas on how to adjust the S-Tool in ways that would address faculty concerns about the S-Tool's accuracy and adequacy as an across-the-board instrument for measuring faculty's educational efforts in all of UTHSC's various colleges and, in particular, the College of Medicine. A DFAC subcommittee was thus formed in July of 2013 to offer modifications to the "Simplified Tool" developed earlier by Vice-Chancellor Cheryl Scheid for purposes of measuring faculty's
educational efforts. Once the subcommittee's Education Metric ("Metric") was reasonably near to completion, Dr. Hofmann undertook to test the Metric, to collect data that might enable some estimation as to its accuracy and adequacy.

[Minutes]

Pres. Larry Reiter began by indicating to DFAC members that, because time would be tight on this day, Dr. Polly Hofmann would have 20 minutes to present her findings; Dr. Terry Cooper would then also have 20 minutes to present his information (primarily a statistician's data-analysis of the subcommittee's Metric), followed by discussion and then a DFAC vote on whether to recommend to the Dean that the Metric be implemented in the College of Medicine.

Dr. Hofmann described her efforts to compare the DFAC's Metric with the Simplified Tool. She sent both the S-Tool and a modified version of the Metric to 25 faculty members, asking them to fill out both with their own information for the most recent academic year. Dr. Hofmann then provided the results via graphs of the correlation between the modified metric percent-effort and the chair/faculty agreed-upon percent-effort in teaching. For faculty whose education effort was identified as being at or below 30%, the Simplified Tool and the DFAC Metric's numbers both fell within a "corridor" of 10% above or below the identified mark. Where the faculty member's agreed-on effort was higher than 30%, she found that the Simplified Tool underestimated the faculty member's actual effort, whereas the modified DFAC metric correlated well with the proposed effort for all but 5 faculty members (discussed below). Overall, Dr. Hofmann found that the Metric estimates faculty education effort within +/- 10% accuracy, and offered a number of other specific conclusions.

Dr. Hofmann described the specific situations (anonymously) of 5 faculty whose results were outside of what one might predict, given the chair-faculty agreement on percent of effort for education. Some faculty appeared to deserve greater credit for their educational efforts, and annual percent-expectations should perhaps be adjusted. In one instance it appeared that the faculty member may simply have failed to count all of the time actually spent on education, e.g., of individual students who needed remediation. In another case the Metric may have overstated what that individual did, with the caveat that such a person's chair might have considerably more information about that person's performance. In all of these cases both over- and underestimation of effort could be qualified with an explanation as to why the calculated effort did not match the proposed effort in education.

Dr. Hofmann then reviewed the particular version of the DFAC Metric that she used for the 25 sample faculty. For the most part it was the same as the DFAC Metric, but it did feature some wording changes and some modifications of 'conversion values' for several categories of teaching. Dr. Hofmann's version, as presented during the DFAC meeting, flagged each such change, and she explained each such modification of the DFAC's original Metric. Discussion at that point generally agreed that certain components still required further refinement and clarification, particularly the Metric's iteration of various kinds of clinical teaching activity.

Overall Dr. Hofmann proposed that the Metric be tested by requiring all CoM faculty to complete it in the coming year, and to do so in such a way that the conversion values (hrs/activity), can be refined further through the acquisition of a larger data set. Dr. Hofmann emphasized that the Metric is an evolving tool that is not meant to be regarded as an absolute. She recommended that any faculty member who self-identified a large discrepancy [> +/-10-15%] between their effort and that calculated using the Hofmann-modified metric, present their data to the chair during this year's annual evaluation. The collection of both faculty members’ and chairs’ data would then
provide a basis for improving the metric. During the test period, faculty should be encouraged to have clear discussions with their chairs to discern how well the Metric is working in each case. Pres. Reiter observed that no tool will create flawless alignment with proposed effort every year, and suggested that a tool such as the Metric should be deemed a resource for discussion between the faculty member and chair when adjustments need to be made.

Dr. Terry Cooper then provided information about the Metric's recent data-analysis. Once the subcommittee had crafted and revised its Metric, Drs. Cooper and Pulsinelli provided it to faculty members throughout the CoM, via department and divisional meetings. Faculty were invited to identify, for each type of educational activity, how long it would ordinarily take to perform it (e.g. preparing a new lecture, significantly revising a lecture, presenting an already-existing lecture, etc). In all, 106 faculty members anonymously filled out the Metric with their own information, so that the subcommittee could construct, on the basis of actual data, a profile of how much time should reasonably be attributed to various kinds of teaching activity. In many categories the data showed wide variation – that is, the data showed a fairly broad range of time that it would take various faculty members to perform a particular type of teaching. The subcommittee opted to consult with a statistician, Dr. Betsy Tolley of UTHSC's CoM, who provided a detailed statistical analysis that showed, for each category of teaching, the mean, the 25th percentile, the 50th percentile, the 75th percentile, and various other statistical observations.

Dr. Cooper also provided overall observations that emerged from the subcommittee's experience and Dr. Tolley's assessment:

* The Metric was designed in sections, permitting faculty to ignore large portions of it;
* There was a high level of faculty participation (106 voluntary submissions);
* The method of rollout for the Metric was critical, featuring face-to-face meetings and discussion with faculty, and a purely anonymous, voluntary invitation to provide data;
  * The Metric successfully provided a detailed description of educational activities;
  * The data showed high standard deviations – data were often biphasic and highly skewed;
  * There was no evidence of widespread overestimation of effort;
  * The 75th percentile values would be required to avoid underreporting faculty effort;
  * A question for administration would thus be: what would be a tolerable level of effort underreporting;
  * In the final analysis, the data and statistical analysis suggest that a UTHSC-wide, one-size-fits-all Metric would likely be perceived as inaccurate and unfair.

Following Dr. Cooper's presentation, DFAC discussed the results of the Metric, the data and accompanying statistical analysis, and Dr. Hofmann's test of the (modified version) Metric. Dr. Cooper cited the promise that he and Dr. Pulsinelli had made to the faculty during presentations requesting their participation in completing the subcommittee’s metric, i.e., in return for their participation all of the data collected by the metric would be shared with them. In this regard he asked Larry Reiter whether there were any restrictions on the distribution of the subcommittee's report. Dr. Reiter responded that DFAC is an open meeting so there were no restrictions on any of the materials.

Although a number of members proposed that the 75th percentile would be an appropriate way to identify the "default" multiplier for each category of the Metric, after discussion the DFAC voted unanimously to recommend that Dr. Hofmann's modified version of the Metric be endorsed and forwarded to the Dean, with the understanding that, at least during this first year, it be used only in a testing mode so that it can be further improved before its results are used for any further purpose. That is, at least for the present, it should not be used to determine whether a faculty
member met, or failed to meet, expectations. During this rollout period, faculty would be required to complete the Metric and include its results in discussions with chairs/division chiefs during annual evaluation. Cases identifying a significant discrepancy between the existing percentage of effort and the Metric's results would then prompt further discussion, whether via adjusting the percent-effort for the next year, or via feedback that the Metric provided apparently inaccurate results, or some other appropriate response. During this meeting the DFAC did not yet devise a specific plan for gathering further data about the Metric's accuracy and adequacy during the rollout test-period.

Next Meeting

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

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:08 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary