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

March 2, 2004

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Fran Tylavsky, at 12:10 PM on March 1, 2004, in the Patio on the 7th floor of the Wm. F. Bowld Hospital.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Peter D. Jones, PhD; Stanley Kaplan, MD; Leonard Lothstein, PhD; Charles Mansbach, MD; E. Haavi Morreim, PhD; William R. Morris, MD; Linda K. Myers, MD; Ron Pfeiffer, MD; Mildred Randolf, DVM; Kenneth D. Sellers, MD; Claudette Shephard, MD; Fran Tylavsky, DrPH; Christopher M. Waters, PhD; Robert S. Waters, PhD; Thad Wilson, PhD

The following members were excused:

Allen S. Edmonson, MD; David Roberts, MD

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

Dianna Johnson, PhD

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written. Minutes had previously been distributed by electronic means. A hard copy of the minutes was available for review by the members.

Old Business

Pres. Tylavsky invited discussion of the Second Annual Dean's Symposium, held last Friday, February 27. Turnout, at approximately 80, was substantially below the previous year's approximately 250. Pres. Tylavsky indicated that at the conclusion of the symposium, Dean Herrod discussed considerations relevant to next year's symposium with Drs. Tylavsky, Bob Waters, and Chris Waters. In their view, the primary problems hindering attendance were competing events and location. Next year it will be important to work with the Development Office, to ensure that competing events are minimized. Options for using the public library will be open for exploration around mid-March. Although the Library can, in principle, bump any scheduled event for its own needs, the likelihood that this would happen is small, and a new staff person is now appointed at the library, to coordinate events such as ours.

Pres. Tylavsky proposed that if we begin early and shift location, such as back to the library, it appears worthwhile to do this again. Publicity, featuring larger posters, might also be worth exploring if budget permits. The DFAC thanked Pres. Tylavsky for her extensive efforts in bringing the second symposium to fruition.
New Business

Dr. Dianna Johnson spoke about the Committee on Committees--now called the Nominations Committee--as that body now begins to transition from a start-up effort to a long-term entity. Dr. Johnson indicated that her assistant, Donna Wilkinson, now works in Dr. Peppler's office. With the freeze on hiring, a replacement cannot be hired at this time. This year there are 4 committees with vacancies: the CAAP committee, the P&P committee for 2006, the Committee for Undergraduate Medical Education, and the Nominations Committee. The Nominations Committee has been receiving a significant response from chairs and faculty; however, if they do not have adequate responses, affirmative contacts are made to find sufficient nominations. For the Nominations Committee itself, the current proposal is for 3-year terms, with 1/3 turnover each year among six members. For selecting the 2 Nominations Committee members every year, Dr. Johnson proposed that all nominations be forwarded to the DFAC, which would choose 2 among them.

On another topic, Dr. Johnson also talked about sexual harassment issues, as UT evaluates its policies and environment on sexual harassment issues. A Professional Conduct Committee, including Bill Rice, Bob Waters, Rajendra Raghow, Dianna Johnson, and Larry Hak, has convened to formulate an analysis and recommendations.

To some extent, concerns focus not only on some of the more familiar scenarios, but also on the international character of the campus, and the fact that people from differing cultures may have differing standards regarding appropriate conduct in the workplace. The Professional Conduct Committee will concentrate on updating the current policy and making the campus aware of it. One of the challenges, as noted, is the campus's increasing cultural diversity. However, workplace conduct should be considered a matter of law, which all are obligated to follow. The Committee has also evaluated AAMC policies on sexual harassment, as well as those of other universities.

Dr. Johnson noted that at UT, there is no ongoing training regarding sexual harassment for faculty, to ensure that people are aware of what it is and how to report it. Plans are under way to have mandatory ongoing training, much as that implemented for HIPAA. For manager-employee relations, UT does not currently provide a clear route or office to contact, so that UT can be "user-friendly" and non-threatening. The goal is to establish an office or avenue to provide information and counseling to those who are considering filing a complaint about sexual harassment. A report with these proposals has been filed with Chancellor Rice.

Dr. Johnson noted that at UT, there is no ongoing training regarding sexual harassment for faculty, to ensure that people are aware of what it is and how to report it. Plans are under way to have mandatory ongoing training, much as that implemented for HIPAA. For manager-employee relations, UT currently provides only a single point of contact to register a complaint and only a single option, and that is to file a formal complaint. Plans are to provide a group of contact people and a chance for individuals to discuss options other than a formal complaint. This should bring us into compliance with AAMC guidelines for a policy that is "user-friendly" and non-threatening. The goal is to establish an office or avenue to provide information and counseling to those who are considering filing a complaint about sexual harassment. A report with these proposals has been filed with Chancellor Rice.

The sexual harassment training currently under consideration would be an online program with records kept to document employees' completion of the training. Dr. Johnson reviewed, slide by slide, one such training program.

A second part of the Professional Conduct Committee's proposal is to expand the procedure for making a complaint. There was general agreement that this needs to be improved.
Unresolved questions include what the contact people should do once they are approached with a complaint. For instance, that person may need to advise the complainant that if the complaint is serious, (s)he may need to proceed even if the complainant decides not to pursue the issue. A related question is whether the reporting office will have the capacity to offer mediation, shy of legal action, if that is what the parties want. Dr. Johnson indicated that a broad flexibility will be sought for the UT program, to resolve issues in ways that are acceptable to those who have been harassed. The policy also will incorporate procedures to address false claims.

During general discussion, it was suggested that perhaps more concrete examples might be provided in the training module. Dr. Johnson replied that in the exam that accompanies the training, case studies are the focus. Another important question concerns what to do with people who "don't get it." Dr. Johnson distinguished between meeting a legal requirement versus a moral obligation. Part of meeting the latter may require involving colleagues of those who are engaged in offensive conduct. Dr. Johnson indicated that new students and new employees receive training in sexual harassment, but faculty currently are not exposed to systematic training. Among the other questions are: how often should faculty and staff be expected to re-train, once the initial training is completed. The VA requires training annually, whereas some other institutions have a less frequent schedule.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on April 5, 2004, at 12:00 Noon in the Patio on the 7th floor of the Wm. F. Bowld Hospital.

Adjournment

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

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, PhD
Secretary