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

May 6, 2014

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Larry Reiter, at 12:05 PM on May 5, 2014, 2014, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

George Cook, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Bob Foehring, PhD, Stephen King, MD, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Fruz Pourmotabbed, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Tiffany Seagroves, PhD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Laura Sprabery, MD, 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

Pres Reiter presented the report from the DFAC subcommittee on Translational Research Funding. Dr. Reiter indicated that the ramp-up time for translational research programs can be substantial, so patience is important.

Committee members were Lawrence Reiter PhD, Martin Croce MD, Denis DiAngelo PhD, John Bissler MD, Dave Bridges PhD

The subcommittee's goals are to:

* stimulate additional cross-discipline collaborations between clinicians and basic scientists on campus with pilot funding
* develop projects that will result in NIH Funding
  e.g. R03, R21, R01, STTR, SBIR  
* develop projects that result in NIH-level funding
  e.g. NSF, DoD DARPA, SIMONS, PCORI etc
* establish a network of translational research on campus that will eventually lead to:
  CTSI Center (P30) or cooperative agreement (U19)
  Technology licensing/revenue streams (STTR and SBIR)
Pres. Reiter then surveyed how other institutions approach translational research. He looked at two institutions that have CTSI (Clinical and Translational Science Institute) grants and two that do not. Johns Hopkins does not have a CTSI, nor does OHSU/Ohio State University; in contrast, UCSD/UC San Diego and University of Wisconsin do. He showed an outlay of the typical amounts, durations and numbers of such grants for each institution.

Under the question "who should apply", several considerations emerged. In many cases, what is needed even more than protected time for the investigator is a research coordinator. Clinical investigators may often be primarily in clinical care, and should devote at least 5% effort to the research.

The projects must include some sort of human element, such as human samples or testible outcomes in humans. Critical review of a proposed project should include at least 2 clinicians and 2 basic scientists. One possible requirement would be that by the end of year one, an NIH R21 or R01 whould be submitted; A second year of funding could be contingent on grant submissions and joint publications.

Review and scoring would look at several criteria:

Impact
- will there be broad clinical impact
- is this a focus at UT

Scope
- are samples available or will they become available
- how many individuals with this condition are actually in the mid-South

Synergy
- do the basic science studies supplement the clinical science directly
- will the investigators be able to continue to collaborate after the first study

Funding
- could this lead to a bigger project
- is there potential for NIH R21 or R01 funding

Proposed amounts of money requested by the subcommittee:
- $500,000 to make 4 grants of $50,000 each, and 3 grants of $100,000 each

The projected return would be 50% of ICT

Dr. Reiter than proposed a timeline, with announcement of potential awards to be made in the summer, with deadlines, review of application and grant awards to be made in the fall of that year.

Discussion then focused on additional issues, such as how to bring together people who might work together. One underused approach, Dr. Reiter suggested, is that individuals can simply reach out to each other. It can be important to have a vehicle wherein faculty can gather informally. Other issues concerned whether a 1-year timeframe would be reasonable for producing concrete results, or whether instead a 2-year time would be preferable. Also, it might make sense to let applicants specify how much they want (up to some maximum), and then when the $500,000 runs out, it runs out.

The next steps would include any additional tuning of the proposal, then potentially bring it to the Dean. The Dean could then offer his further ideas for refining the proposal.
The subcommittee's proposal was modified to expect publications at the end of two years rather than just one, and to simply set a ceiling, e.g. of $100,000, with applications for any amount below that, rather than specifying that a grant must be either $50,000 or $100,000. Dr. Hofmann offered to run the idea by the Dean to see what further changes he might want, to be able to offer full support. The DFAC embraced that idea.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on June 2, 2014, at 12:00 Noon in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:56 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary