Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Larry Reiter, at 12:10 PM on August 5, 2013, in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Terry Cooper, PhD, Denis DiAngelo, PhD, Scott Jackson, DVM, Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD, Linda K. Myers, MD, Kaushik Parthasarathi, PhD, Larry Reiter, PhD, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Claudette Shephard, MD

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

William Pulsinelli, MD, PhD, Susan Senogles, PhD, Polly Hofmann, PhD, George Cook, 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 opened the meeting by noting that in the upcoming September DFAC meeting he will propose a plan for the year, identifying specific goals on which the DFAC can be concentrating its efforts. He then turned to Dr. Morreim, who is chairing the DFAC subcommittee focused on crafting suitable revisions to the current Simplified Tool for measuring educational effort for basic science education of medical students, in addition to teaching graduate students and providing education for other colleges such as dentistry, pharmacy and nursing.

Dr. Cooper provided an overview of the subcommittee's current efforts by explaining the importance that there be an accurate, adequate metric for capturing and reporting educational effort. The movement toward requiring such accountability is nationwide—essentially a form of "mission-based management"—and has been accentuated by recent years' diminutions in available funding, e.g. as NIH research funds have been shrinking. The question, then, is not whether such accounting will occur, but rather how it can be done in a way that correctly and fully captures the effort that faculty actually expend in undertaking various kinds of teaching.

Several members of the subcommittee offered introductory remarks explaining the committee's focus – Drs. Cooper, Cook, Rosenthal, and Pulsinelli.
Dr. Cooper also observed the importance of doing this committee's task properly, from the outset. That is, how well something like this metric works will be a function of how well it is designed, from the beginning. The metric, essentially an "education-RVU," needs to quantify the teaching that faculty do, accounting for everything in a consistent and accurate way. Ultimately it will quite likely be used to identify faculty whose performance "needs improvement" (and perhaps those who "exceed expectations"), hence again the importance of accuracy and completeness in any such metric.

Dr. Cook noted that current efforts to quantify faculty effort are essentially a continuation of the "downsizing," "rightsizing," and "streamlining" efforts of the past. Dr. Rosenthal explained that the Simplified Tool presented to the DFAC last January does not yet capture the broad diversity of teaching activities that faculty now undertake for the education of M1 and M2 students, particularly given that the LCME has mandated a complete overhaul of UT's curriculum. Unlike the past emphasis on large-hall lectures, the concepts of adult learning that guide the new curriculum emphasize far greater one-on-one and small group learning. This, in turn, has necessitated a highly labor-intensive, complete revamping of the ways in which medicine is taught to our students. This revamping is not a one-time affair, but rather is ongoing, and the time commitments involved in it need to be recognized.

Using a brief handout, Dr. Pulsinelli showed how the Simplified Metric, which assumes that 480 "contact hours" per year constitutes 100% teaching effort, builds in preparation time roughly equivalent to 2.7 hours of preparation for each hour of contact time.

Specifically: If one begins with a 40-hour week for 52 weeks/year, then deducts the time allotted for 24 days of vacation plus 13 administrative days (but does not, per this model, deduct days for sick leave), the hours for a work year would be 1784. If 480 hours of teaching time are deducted from that 1784, the remaining 1304 hours would constitute preparation time (under the hypothetical assumption that one's effort were 100% devoted to teaching, and nothing else). This 1304 as the total time left for preparation, divided by 480 hours of student-faculty contact time, produces the figure of 2.7 hours of preparation time for each hour of contact time. Dr. Pulsinelli added that, under the revamped curriculum, contact hours for M1 students are about 760 (38 weeks), and for M2 students are about 560 (28 weeks because students then rotate onto the wards).

In light of the above, Dr. Morreim described the subcommittee's primary focus at this juncture. The "contact hour" will be more broadly defined, to encompass a wide variety of student-faculty interactions, not just large-hall lectures. Additionally, because each type of "contact hour" has its own very distinctive requirements for the effort that goes into that kind of teaching — before, during, and after the contact hour — each type must be expressly listed and accompanied by a reasonable number that will correctly capture faculty effort. Accordingly, the subcommittee's current efforts are directed toward:

[1] identifying all the types of contact hour that belong on the list; and

[2] figuring out a reasonable number of hours to associate with each type of contact hour.

Once this process has been roughed out by the subcommittee, the ensuing process will attempt to secure both input and buy-in from faculty colleagues across the departments. The DFAC will be invited to comment again on that draft, after which subcommittee members will take the draft to each department, explaining the reason for the metric as well as its particulars, and invite each department's faculty to offer their suggestions for improvement. The further-revised metric will
then be brought back to the DFAC for its additional input, whereupon it will be sent to administration.

DFAC discussion offered a number of ideas, including to ensure that teaching for graduate students and students from other colleges will be appropriately accounted for, as well as relevant types of teaching for M4s, e.g. any capstone course or other non-clinical teaching.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on September 9, 2013, at 12:00 Noon in the Coleman building, Room A101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:10 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, JD, PhD
Secretary