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

September 11, 2006  

Call to Order  

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Art Geller, at 12:08 PM on September 11, 2006, in the Hyman building, Room 101.  

Attendance  

The following members were present:  

    Louisa Balazs, MD, PhD, George Cook, PhD, Art Geller, PhD, Leonard Lothstein, PhD,  
    E. Haavi Morreim, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Linda K. Myers, MD, Elias A. Giraldo, MD,  
    Mildred Randolf, DVM, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Christopher M.  
    Waters, PhD, Robert S. Waters, PhD, Thad Wilson, PhD  

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

    Bill Brescia, 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  

    Dr. Geller indicated that due to a variety of factors including time constraints and a very full schedule at the Alumni Meeting, we may need to cancel or postpone the Dean's Symposium.  

New Business  

    Pres. Geller noted that former DFAC president, Dr. Stan Kaplan, received an award recently alongside several other faculty, as reported on UT's website.  

    Dr. Bill Brescia, the new director of instructional technology services for the campus, joined the meeting to describe what he expects to be doing in the near future at UT. His focus will be on instruction, though problems with technology will also occupy some of his attention. He plans to work with faculty to improve teaching and learning--take each faculty person where (s)he is and help that person to accomplish whatever may be that member's teaching goals. He will also write some grant proposals for medical education. He is additionally doing a research project on nursing retention, whose implications for other professions appear to be potentially significant. He will also be available to review drafts of exam questions, to help faculty improve them. Another area will be to provide assistance for faculty who want to improve their lecturing and teaching skills. Dr. Brescia will also be involved in the upcoming faculty teaching academy.
Dr. George Cook reported on a question posed by Chancellor Owen, concerning senators on the faculty senate. Aside from Memphis-based members, there are supposed to be two senators from Knoxville and two from Chattanooga. In the past these senators joined Senate meetings by phone, but that no longer happens. The Chancellor wants to have a faculty senate, and more broadly a medical school, that is truly statewide. In the past, course directors from all clinical sites used to meet once a year in person, but these annual meetings were very expensive and time-consuming.

Dr. Geller reminded the DFAC of the meeting scheduled for September 19, in which UT's President Peterson will discuss the new strategic plan for the University of Tennessee.

Pres. Geller recommended that in the coming year, the DFAC may want to meet with various new people on campus, such as Dr. Cheryl Scheid, the new Vice Chancellor for Academic, Faculty and Student Affairs. She replaces Dr. Dino Palazolo and it is expected that she will have a significant role.

Dr. Geller also proposed meeting with the new executive dean, Dr. Steve Schwab--not only as DFAC, but as well to invite him to meet with the CoM faculty as a whole, to apprise the faculty of his plans regarding the College of Medicine and to entertain faculty questions and concerns. A meeting with the DFAC may be helpful in identifying what sort of input Dr. Schwab may want from the DFAC, and the ways in which the DFAC can be a vehicle for bringing faculty concerns to the administration. Another idea is to propose that Dr. Schwab periodically provide a brief writing for the DFAC website, as a way of communicating with CoM faculty.

Pres. Geller invited DFAC members to raise any concerns they may want raised with the new executive dean.

* One such might be disaster planning for campus. This would go beyond just the current efforts to plan for potential pandemic with avian influenza. One dimension of this concerns how classes might be continued in such situations--for instance, whether courses could be continued online in the event that direct classroom meetings became impossible. Another concerns contingency plans for power loss--for incubators, freezers, and a variety of special needs across the campus. Many buildings have no backup power. The issue of potential power loss (for whatever reason this may occur) is a major concern for the faculty, both in clinical and basic sciences. Such an event could destroy research projects and devastate the infrastructure of the academic endeavor.

* A second issue might concern the Med--the very public problems it has recently faced. There are implications for such issues as teaching students, to the extent that the STEEP principles emphasize learning to provide safe, high-quality care. The Med also has an important potential role in clinical research. One important source of challenges is the tension between its recognized centers of medical excellence and the political forces that influence day-to-day services, and the role of the University in day-to-day operations.

* A third issue will be to request information and greater clarity on Dr. Schwab's vision for UT CoM's future, plans for hiring department chairs and other vacant faculty positions, and related matters.

* A fourth area is the relationship with Methodist, and the varying connections between departments and the Methodist system.

Next Meeting
The next meeting of the committee will be held on October 2, 2006, at 12:00 Noon in the Hyman building, Room 101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:17 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, PhD
Secretary