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

September 8, 2008

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order by the president, Dr. Len Lothstein, at 12:04 PM on September 8, 2008, in the Hyman building, Room 101.

Attendance

The following members were present:

Louisa Balazs, MD, PhD, Martin A. Croce, MD, Maggie DeBon, PhD, Allen S. Edmonson, MD, Elizabeth Fitzpatrick, PhD, Waleed Gaber, PhD, Elias A. Giraldo, MD, Leonard Lothstein, PhD, E. Haavi Morreim, PhD, William R. Morris, MD, Linda K. Myers, MD, A.P. Naren, PhD, Renate Rosenthal, PhD, Claudette Shephard, MD, Sprabery, Laura, MD, Thad Wilson, PhD

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

Steve Schwab, MD, Polly Hofmann, PhD

Approval of minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as written. Minutes had previously been distributed by electronic means.

Business

Pres. Lothstein introduced the new DFAC representative from the Dept. of Medicine, Dr. Laura Spraberry.

Pres. Lothstein began by reviewing a revised version of the Chair Survey form, as modified by Renate Rosenthal and Thad Wilson. Discussion during the meeting proposed several changes, and Pres. Lothstein then suggested that DFAC members could then review an amended form to be sent by email, then return any further comments to him. Once the form is approved, the next challenge will be to determine how to enable faculty to complete the form electronically. The faculty senate is also working on such an evaluation, though it appears the College of Medicine will be using its own form.

Dr. Polly Hofmann indicated that she has worked with departments regarding proposed updates in the Promotion and Tenure process, and will soon hold workshops to help faculty learn what is needed. A significant goal of these changes and discussions is to de-mystify the P&T process for the faculty. The workshops will help faculty to understand more clearly and precisely what is needed, with the help of the chairs, to make the best and most complete package for applying for
tenure and/or promotion. Slides from these workshops will be put online, to broaden access to the information.

Specifically, the workshops will be:
Sept 30, noon, Student Activity Center Room 215; and
Sept 25, 4 PM, Student Activity Center Room 204

The workshops' Powerpoints will be available online at:
http://www.utmem.edu/Medicine/Acad_Affairs/Fac_Adm/index.php?doc=Promotion_Tenure/index.htm

Dr. Hofmann also observed that standard practices of the promotion and tenure process have now been written down and can be found in the "Insider’s Guide for Promotion." This document is online at:
http://www.utmem.edu/Medicine/Acad_Affairs/Fac_Adm/index.php?doc=Promotion_Tenure/index.htm

She then highlighted portions of the P&T process, explaining that negative recommendations from the P&T committee go initially just to the chairs and dean, not to the faculty member. In many cases it is possible for the chair to supplement information and fix any documentation problems, thus obviating the need to alarm a faculty member needlessly where problems can be resolved at that early point. Discussion noted that, on the other hand, some faculty may prefer being notified at the earliest time so that they, in addition to the chair, can be involved in efforts to remedy any deficiencies. For the future, it may be appropriate to consider encouraging chairs to notify and involve faculty members who have gotten a negative recommendation.

Once the P&T recommendations go to the dean, any negative recommendations are often accompanied by letters from department chairs, appealing the recommendation. The dean then reviews both committees' decision processes--the P&T committee and the department committee. In the event these committees disagree, the dean then specifies which committee's views will prevail as he makes the final decision to send to the Chancellor.

Dean Schwab then discussed several items.

He hopes to have the budget finished within three weeks, and it is expected that it will meet the 7% reduction target--and will do so without having to use all of the indirect monies. It is hoped that some if not most of the current decisions targeting indirect funding will be rescinded.
Multiple RIF (reduction in force) targets were considered, without having to take any reductions in force for this year.

This year required a 7% reduction, and for next year, the governor has indicated that at least another 3% cut will likely be demanded. At UT, the only revenue growth has been from the clinical practice group and from research grants. State funding is flat and now diminishing. As a result of these financial constraints, UT has not signed any TennCare deals this year thus far.
Dean Schwab indicated that for a TennCare contract to be formed, the intermediaries must come to terms with both the hospitals and the physicians. For the physicians' side, Dr. Schwab stated that UT can not afford to accept inadequate compensation from TennCare intermediaries at the same time it faces such significant cuts in state funding--hence there is currently something of an impasse in negotiations. UT must secure a fair rate of compensation, he indicated, meaning that UT physicians should be paid at least as well as physicians in other parts of the state and, indeed,
in other parts of Memphis. Thus, the Dean indicated, UT is maintaining a tough negotiating stance, to ensure its own future and to insist upon fairness.

Dr. Schwab did not have any update regarding variable compensation, at this point.

Finally, Dean Schwab brought up the current and rather strict VA regulations specifying that VA staff, while in service at the VA, are not permitted to draw salary from UT for jobs being done at VA. This was followed by brief discussion.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the committee will be held on October 6, 2008, at 12:00 Noon in the Hyman building, Room 101.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:15 PM.

Respectfully submitted,

E. Haavi Morreim, PhD
Secretary