

**Interfaculty Council Meeting Minutes  
FY 2020 – November 18, 2020 – Webex**

**Present:** Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, Dr. Cameron Jeter, Dr. Elda Ramirez, Dr. Jennifer Bailey, Dr. Nicholas De Lay, Dr. Joseph Alcorn, Dr. Catherine Ambrose, Dr. Elaheh Ashtari, Dr. Meena Bhattacharjee, Dr. Linh Bui, Dr. Nachum Dafny, Dr. Carmen Dessauer, Dr. Rhashedah Ekeoduru, Dr. Nahid Rianon, Dr. Bethany Williams, Dr. Licong Cui, Dr. Luca Giancardo, Dr. Kirk Roberts, Dr. Debora Simmons, Dr. Daniel Harrington, Dr. Kurt Kasper, Dr. Dharini van der Hoeven, Dr. Michele White, Dr. Sandra Branson, Dr. Vaunette Fay, Dr. Carole Mackavey, Dr. Seth Stephens, Dr. Cecilia Ganduglia-Cazaban, Dr. Craig Hanis, Dr. Ross Shegog, Dr. Michael Swartz, Dr. Kulvinder Bajwa, Dr. Nate Carlin, Ms. Ankita Podichetty, and Dr. Pauline Monsegue-Bailey

**Guests:** Mr. Michael Tramonte

**Ex-Officio Attendees:** Dr. Kevin Morano and Dr. Gurur Biliciler-Denktaş

**Administrative Personnel:** Ms. Terrie Schade-Lugo

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**I. CALL TO ORDER | APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** ***Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, IFC Chair FY 2021***

Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, IFC Chair FY 2021, called the meeting to order at 11:34 AM.

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes for October 21, 2020. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved, as presented.

**II. NEW BUSINESS** ***Mr. Michael Tramonte, Sr. Vice President  
Finance & Business Services and Chief Financial Officer***

Mr. Michael Tramonte visited with the membership concerning the financial status of UTHealth during the COVID-19 pandemic. He reiterated what has been conveyed concerning how at the start of the pandemic, there were great concerns in the area of banked vacation hours. He advised that the UTHealth employees rose to the call by using their vacation hours, and a portion of the employees were signed up through the Texas Workforce Commission to participate in the furlough program entitled the one day a week program. These programs drastically pulled our financials back in line. During the visit, Mr. Tramonte held an open discussion that included such items as:

- Working remotely:
  - with children at home attending school virtually as well as daycare centers being closed, working remotely has been the only viable option of keeping business operations going;
  - eye-opening opportunities and savings potential available in moving leased space offices into owned space by having several different offices working remotely -meetings are being conducted;
  - the mental health concerns with only working remotely are being considered;
  - mentorship not totally feasible with only working remotely; and
  - funding was not provided to upgrade or help remote workers' electronic requirements but is now being thoroughly discussed.
- President Colasurdo's request to assist the staff with an across-the-board bonus will be received in December 2020.
  - While nothing has been decided yet, discussions are being conducted concerning trying to do something for the A&P and faculty.

**III. ANNOUNCEMENTS** ***Dr. Kevin A. Morano  
Associate VP for Faculty Affairs & Development, UTHealth***

Dr. Morano stressed that we should all be exceedingly thankful to Mr. Tramonte and his team. We would not have believed in June 2020 that we would be giving out bonuses to the staff in December; we would have been worried that we might not have staff in December. The entire financial group has done a fantastic job, and our negotiations with the hospital partners were successful.

Dr. Morano provided the following reminders and announcements:

- The membership was reminded that the Burks Scholarship applications are due December 1, 2020.
- The President's Scholar Awards deadline for nominations is December 1, 2020. The funding is still in place for this award process. We are looking forward to having our best talent from all schools nominated to be recognized. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we could not hold the luncheon to celebrate the 2019 awardees. We hope to have the event in 2021; however, we will recognize the leaders in the award areas if it is canceled.
- When Dr. Morano assumed the added position of Associate VP of Faculty Affairs and Development, one of his goals was to make sure that all schools had a faculty affairs leadership position. He shared that he was very pleased to advise the School of Public Health has a new Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs, Development, and Diversity. Her name is Dr. Melissa Valerio-Shewmaker, and she is located at the Brownsville Regional Campus. He advised that she is already doing a fantastic job working with faculty and working with Dr. Morano on a few cases. All schools had a person in this position, briefly, until Dr. Fowler at Cizik School of Nursing decided to retire. CSON is actively in a search to fill Dr. Fowler's role. It is important to have a person at the schools to discuss possible problems with a chair, gain career advice, and obtain promotion and tenure guidance.
- Dr. Morano advised that in October 2020, he was able to finalize another goal concerning part-time faculty. We have approximately 2200 faculty at UTHHealth, and a little over 300 faculty are part-time. By practice but not really by policy, if you were a part-time clinical faculty, you were required by the institution to add the word 'clinical' in front of your title. If you were non-clinical, you were required to add the word 'adjunct' in front of your title. So if you were a 90% faculty at the School of Dentistry and are non-clinical holding a research or primarily teaching position, you would be called Adjunct Associate or full Professor. We dug through the Regents' Rules and found out that this practice is not required, and we stopped it. All Deans and Associate Deans have been notified. Part-time is anything less than 100%. So, we no longer use that title modifier for faculty. The title modified will be used for all volunteer faculty (i.e., without salary appointments). This title change makes it easier to tell the difference between a paid and non-paid faculty.
- There are three upcoming events that are being sponsored by the MMS Women Faculty Forum.
  - Excellence Awards – Nominations by others at McGovern Medical School. We have three categories - Research, Clinical Service, and Rising Star. The Rising Star Excellence Award is for assistant professors in any discipline who are showing great promise. In the past, this was normally a nice social event with food and drinks where each awardee would share a short talk that describes their journey and what they are doing here as their primary interests. This year it is being held on December 2 via Webex. (Announcement is attached and made a part of these minutes.)
  - "Picture a Scientist" – This is a small studio documentary of three different women scientists (clinical, geologist, and basic researcher.) It follows them on their career journeys and the challenges they experienced in STEM fields. Details are being worked out, and when the info is available, we are sharing the viewing university-wide. The program will be viewed on the Vimeo platform, so all may view it over a four or five day period during the second week of January. At the end of the week, there will be a Webex moderated discussion and breakout rooms. Watch for the information. (Flyer is attached and made a part of these minutes.)
  - For the second year, we will be hosting "The International Day of Women and Girls in Science Symposium" on February 11, 2021, from 4-6 PM via Webex. Our plenary speaker will be Dr. Nancy Hopkins, one of the scientists featured in the "Picture A Scientist" studio documentary. We will have three other speakers that will also be sharing their details. (Flyer is attached and made a part of these minutes.)

#### IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### Campus Reports:

##### **Cizik School of Nursing**

*Dr. Sandra Branson*

##### **Announcements**

- Assistant Professor Allison Edwards, DrPH, MS, RN, CNE, received a Hall of Fame award from The University of Texas Medical Branch (UTMB) and was elected vice president of the Texas Board of Nursing (TxBON).
- Associate Dean and chair of the Department of Undergraduate Studies Teng-Yuan "Erica" Yu, PhD, RN, received the UTHealth's 2020 President's Award.
- Associate Professor Maja Djukic, PhD, RN, FAAN, has been named the John P. McGovern Distinguished Professor in Nursing at the Cizik School of Nursing of UTHealth.
- Assistant Professor Linda Cole, DNP, RN, CCNS, CPHQ, CNE, was selected for Fellowship in the Clinical Nurse Specialist Institute (CNSI). She will be inducted during the March 2021 virtual conference of the National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists.
- Associate Professor and Assistant Dean for Research Hyochol "Brian" Ahn, PhD, MSN, ANP-BC, FAAN, has been named the Isla Carroll Turner Chair in Gerontological Nursing at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth effective November 1.
- Associate Professor Bridgette R. Pullis, PhD, RN, CHPN coordinated the 6th Annual Give Vets a Smile event with UTHealth School of Dentistry, which provided more than 65 U.S. military veterans free urgent, palliative, therapeutic, and/or preventive dental care during the sixth annual "Give Vets a Smile" event Nov. 6 at UTHealth School of Dentistry at Houston.
- DNP student Lisa Anderson, MSN, RN, will use her Texas Nurse Practitioners Policy Fellowship to develop a policy brief advocating expansion of nurse practitioners' prescriptive-writing authority to Schedule II drugs.

##### **Operations**

- The CSON continues to work in a hybrid model for the fall, with didactic courses being primarily online with simulation and clinical placement in our acute care and community settings.
- The CSON continues to work on the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) spring evaluation visit.
- The bookstore on the second floor of the Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth will shut down effective November 20. All inventory will be transferred to the UTHealth Bookstore in the basement of the McGovern Medical School at 6431 Fannin St.

##### **Grants**

- Associate Professor Maja Djukic, PhD, RN, FAAN, received a \$50,000 award provided by PARTNERS (Providing Advancement Resources To Nursing Education, Research and Students) and the nursing school. It will fund a study titled Examining disparities in quality and safety education associated with a nursing degree type: A secondary analysis of the 2018 National Sample Survey of Registered Nurses

##### **Publications and Presentations**

- Associate Dean & Department Chair of Graduate Studies Susan D Ruppert, PhD, RN, FNP-C, ANP-BC, FCCM, FNAP, FAANP, FAAN was a presenter on the invitational national Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) Workshop on Writing Self-Studies webinar series. She addressed Standard I on November 2, Standard III on November 5, and Standard IV on November 6, 2020.
- Dr. Lori Hull-Grommesh presented "Creation and Standardization of Advanced Practice Provider's Delineation of Privileges at the Facility and System Level" at the 2020 ANCC Virtual Summit, October 7-8, 2020.
- Associate Professor Rebecca L Casarez, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, and colleagues published a study on prevention strategies for neonatal skin injury in the neonatal intensive care unit in the *Journal of Neonatal Nursing*.
- Associate Professor Rebecca L Casarez, PhD, RN, PMHCNS-BC, was an invited speaker and presented a podium presentation about the use of virtual reality in mental health disorders at the Grand Rounds at the McGovern Medical School, Louis A. Faillace, M.D. Department of Psychiatric and Behavioral Science.

### **Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences**

*Dr. Nicholas De Lay*

#### **GSBS Leadership**

- Brenda Gaughan, a program manager in the Office of Academic Affairs at GSBS, will retire in December after 36 years of combined service to GSBS and UTHealth. More can be information about Brenda's service to GSBS and UTHealth can be found at <https://gsbs.uth.edu/about/news/gsbs-news-details.htm?id=e38a4cc8-a351-485b-87ff-dac167d44cb6>

#### **Covid-19**

- GSBS Student Virtual Conference Awards are available to defray up to \$200 in costs associated with registering and attending virtual conferences. More information can be found here: [https://gsbs.uth.edu/current-students/awards-and-fundingopportunities/Travel%20Award%20\(criteria%20and%20app\)-Virtual%20Mtg-Fillable%20form.FINAL.pdf](https://gsbs.uth.edu/current-students/awards-and-fundingopportunities/Travel%20Award%20(criteria%20and%20app)-Virtual%20Mtg-Fillable%20form.FINAL.pdf)

#### **GSBS Spring semester registration**

- Registration for graduate students for 2021 Spring semester courses begins on Nov. 18th.

### **McGovern Medical School**

*Dr. Catherine Ambrose*

- The McGovern Faculty Senate task force on faculty mentoring meets monthly with Dr. Morano to develop a faculty mentoring program. The MMS Faculty Senate task force is headed by Nahid Rianon, MD. In addition, the Faculty Senate created a task force to look into Covid-19 precautionary measures at other institutions across the UT System and in the TMC to determine if we are providing enough guidance to our employees. This task force has met with members of the McGovern Medical School executive council, who will be presenting the information to the Dean to determine if additional steps should be taken.
- At the October Faculty Senate Meeting:
  - Dr. Michael Blackburn gave an update on research at UTHealth and MMS and also on the search for a new dean.
  - Dr. Kevin Morano gave an update, which included information about new faculty orientation sessions and a reminder about the Academic Ombuds Office resource for faculty and students.
  - Dr. Elaheh Ashtari presented the UTHealth Diversity and Inclusion (DE&I) Take Force Recommendation.
  - Drs. Logan Hostetter and Tarun Jain from the House Staff Association and Resident Senate gave an update on resident concerns and issues they are addressing, including representation from all clinical departments and access to lactation rooms across the hospital and clinics.
- A virtual Town Hall Meeting was held on Oct. 29 with Dr. Giuseppe N. Colasurdo, Dr. Richard Andrassy, Dr. Michael Blackburn, and Dr. LaTanya Love, who answered questions submitted anonymously in advance.

### **School of Biomedical Informatics (SBMI):**

*Dr. Kirk Roberts*

- SBMI and the School of Dentistry have introduced a new one-year dental informatics certificate program.
- Dr. Yang Gong, Associate Professor, was mentioned by the International Medical Informatics Association for publishing one of the best papers in human factors last year.
- Dean Jiajie Zhang was named a Fellow of the International Medical Informatics Association.
- In Covid related news, as part of the UTHealth Covid-19 Center of Excellence, SBMI is acting as a central point of contact for Covid related clinical data requests. This effort is being led by two of SBMI's Associate Deans, Drs. Elmer Bernstam and Robert Murphy. Dr. Roberts provided a shout-out to Dr. Luca Giancardo for all the work effort he has provided in this project.

### School of Dentistry

**Dr. Michele White**

- Successful *Give Vets a Smile* event providing approximately \$54K in needed dental services to Veterans, November 6, 2020.
- Generous donations to UTSD with naming rights for:
  - Advanced Prosthodontics Clinic – Victoria Q. Cisneros, DDS, MS
  - Houston Center for Biomaterials and Biomimetics – John M. Powers, PhD, and Family
- Crowdfunding opportunity for new UTSD Mobile Van
- Upcoming Events:
  - Special Event | Behind the Smile, November 18, 2020

**Special Event**

**Behind the Smile: Stories In & Out of Dentistry**  
Wednesday, Nov. 18, 2020  
6:00 p.m. CST, Streaming Live via Cisco WebEx

**For the UTSD Community**

**BEHIND THE SMILE**  
... gratitude unites us.

As we embark upon the final weeks of 2020, it is clear that our world has experienced strife, fear, and discord for a prolonged period of time. Yet, in the midst of adversity, stories of victory, strength, resilience, and resolve within ourselves, our communities, have surfaced. This year, **Behind the Smile** is committed to celebrating small successes that we encounter. Let's lift our spirits and remind ourselves that there will be a better tomorrow as long as we cultivate and foster love and inclusion. For these reasons, we've made "Gratitude" the theme of the next Behind the Smile event. Stories can be about anyone or anything that validates love, grace, pain, triumph, failure, vulnerability, and human resilience, it can all lead to a place of thanks. Regardless of rank, position, background, religion, or race, we've all faced influences designed to divide and defeat us, but in the end

**Kindly RSVP**

**Sign-Up!**

Registration is complimentary, your registration helps us track the success of our special programs! Plus you'll need the event password. :)

**Contact Us**

UTHealth School of Dentistry  
PACE Center  
7500 Cambridge St., Suite 6152  
Houston, TX 77054  
Ph: 713-486-4028  
Fax: 713-486-4037  
Email: PACE@uth.tmc.edu

[Learn More...](#)

- UTSD Faculty Assembly, December 18, 2020
- Give Kids a Smile, February 26, 2020

### School of Public Health

**Dr. Ross Shegog**

#### Faculty Council continuing and new items:

- Teaching requirements for Spring 2021 re. in-person classes.
- F1 student needs and requirements by Homeland Security.
- T&P day-long faculty meeting protocols (duration, voting practice) in light of COVID
- Statistical software review for student training.
- AAR and Peer Review updates (peer-review phase closed and chair reviews ongoing).
- Enhancement of faculty resilience guide for onboarding and steps for success for new and junior faculty and consumer-facing acknowledgement of mentoring on the UTSPH website.
- Faculty workload dashboard.

#### Upcoming public health campus events:

- UTHealth School of Public Health Student Association COVID-19 Relief Drive The UTHealth SPH Student Association (SPHSA) has organized a COVID-19 relief drive to gather donations for organizations that serve vulnerable Houston communities.
- Student evaluations have opened
- CATCH Global Foundation CEO and Austin Campus alumni Duncan Van Dusen published a new book entitled 'When Are We Going to Teach Health?'

**Media exposure (selected):**

- Catherine Troisi, PhD, was quoted by KTRK-TV Channel 13 about the importance of teleworking and how to stay safe when working remotely is not possible. The story was also posted on abc13.com. Troisi was quoted in the Victoria Advocate about pandemic fatigue and the importance of remaining vigilant with COVID-19 precautions as the holiday season approaches.
- Janelle Rios, PhD, was quoted in Environmental Factor about the importance of public health officials focusing on the science behind climate change and related health effects, including mental health when making decisions on public health policy

**Dissertation presentations:**

- Five dissertation and five proposal defenses are occurring in Nov. 2020.

**The UHealth Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Update**

***Dr. Elaheh Ashtari***

- The Task Force last met on October 30 and discussed President Trump's Executive Order (EO) on Divisive Language.
- UHealth's Senior Legal Officer Ms. Christal Delgado was at the meeting interpreting the legal language of the EO and then conducted a question and answer session with Task Force members.
- The Task Force will be transitioning into a standing council. Some of our initiatives are on hold due to the Executive Order while some remain active, so we will wait until January to launch new initiatives, presuming the EO will be revoked.

**V. MISCELLANEOUS**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

- Dr. Champagne-Langabeer explained that she would ask for Adjournment, and then the members were to be transferred to their subcommittee breakout session in Webex.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:40 PM.

Respectfully submitted by Terrie Schade-Lugo, CAP, on January 18, 2020.

Approved by Interfaculty Council on January 20, 2021.