

**Interfaculty Council Meeting Minutes**  
**FY 2021 – January 20, 2021 – 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. Rashedah Ekeoduru, Dr. Nahid Rianon, Dr. Kulvinder Bajwa for 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, Ms. Ankita Podichetty, and Dr. Pauline Monsegue-Bailey

**Absent:** Dr. Bethany Williams

**Guests:** Dr. Robin Dickey

**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 and polled the members for any objections or corrections to the minutes for November 18, 2020. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved, as presented.

**II. NEW BUSINESS** *Dr. Robin Dickey, Senior Faculty Assistance Specialist, and Academic Ombuds, UTHealth*

Dr. Robin Dickey provided an overview of the Office of Academic Ombuds function, scope, and types of cases commonly presented by visitors. Relevant statistical information regarding the types of visitors (faculty and students) was also provided. The IFC membership participated in an open discussion regarding the ongoing development and future focus of the Office of Academic Ombuds in Fiscal Year 2021.

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

- Dr. Morano provided information from a recent institution sponsored viewing of "Picture A Scientist." This small studio documentary followed three different women scientists and their experiences in their careers. After the viewing, the MMS hosted a Webex event with a panel, questions and answers session, and breakout sessions. We collected many ideas in the breakout sessions to move forward that will probably be steering the Women Faculty Forum's programming for the next few years.
- The next event is scheduled for February 11, 2021, where the MMS Women Faculty Forum is again hosting "The International Day of Women and Girls in Science Symposium. It is a virtual event, and the plenary speaker will be Dr. Nancy Hopkins -one of the scientists featured in the "Picture A Scientist" studio documentary. We have three other speakers that will also be sharing their experiences. This university-wide event will be publicized with the Webex information to attend. The experiences faced by women are not just in science; they are in medicine, nursing, dentistry, and public health, etc. Dr. Morano made a plea to the IFC membership to encourage the men in our institution to attend from all schools.
- The question that is most frequently asked of Dr. Morano is when we will be asking staff and employees, in general, to return to work full-time. The short answer is no answer. At this time, we are coming out of our third surge of COVID. There are strong indicators of a fourth surge likely to begin in a few weeks. Each surge starts with a larger population that is much larger than the last surge. If you are on campus, please follow the precautions of being masked, washing your hands often, and using appropriate distancing. If you need assistance with any accommodations, please make that known to your

supervisors. Due to the pandemic, we are still granting tenure extensions, if that is something needed. We will be granting the tenure extensions up until this coming September 2021.

- On Monday, January 18, 2021, we had an update from Mr. Andrew Casas concerning the vaccination status. The following information was provided. A few weeks ago, 17,000 surveys were sent out concerning getting the vaccine. There were only 8,400 yes responses, and 5,300 have received the vaccine so far. Assuming that approximately 1,000 UT physicians received the vaccine through our partner hospitals, e.g., Memorial Hermann or LBJ Hospital, and probably did not respond to the survey. Starting the week of January 25, 2021, people will be receiving their second vaccine dosage by UT Physicians. While we are doing very well, we do not know why the rest of our UTHealth family is not getting vaccinated. Our numbers look fantastic, with only five people having experienced mild reactions out of the 5,300 who have received the first dose. It is safe, and it is now very efficient. The second dosage will be administered at the Cooley Center. The UTHealth School of Dentistry is not validating parking, but the time required is being managed so that everyone can get in and out very quickly. The plan is to have 20 stations going to do up to 2,000 per day. It will be quite an operation. Some may have heard over the weekend that the state has switched gears on its vaccination centers. As of Saturday, UTHealth has been designated a vaccination hub. We expect to receive tens of thousands of doses to carry out the task of administering to our employees and our clinical population -our patients. We are not a hub for the general public at this time. Our patient population numbers close to a quarter of a million. Our task is to vaccinate 250,000. Starting with the 1A and 1B groups, we know that approximately 40,000 falls into the 1B group alone. The 1B group includes the elderly, high risk, and over 65 years of age group. We will move these through first and then wait for the state for further directions. If any employees now have decided they want to get the vaccination, they need to contact through the FAQ, and they will be moved through to the front to get it as fast as possible.
  - Questions concerned whether any discussions are happening regarding what the plan ahead looks like after everyone has had two vaccine dosages. Would we be able to change the distancing, having in-person meetings, etc.?
  - Will the scheduling change in receiving the second vaccination since the venue changed? The guess is to keep your pre-planned schedule for the second dosage at the Cooley Center.
  - One faculty member advised that she received an invitation to get an appointment as a 'patient' of UT Physicians.
  - It seems physicians are doing good getting the vaccination but staff, etc., seem to be more reluctant. We are publicizing that it is safe and encouraging everyone to consider getting vaccinated. If our goal is that it is safe and we need to consider vaccination, possibly UT Health Services needs an Ambassador to assist with answering questions, etc., to provide information to these individuals, so they do not wait too long.

#### IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### Campus Reports:

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

*Dr. Sandra Branson*

##### **Announcements**

- **Elda Ramirez**, PhD, RN, ENP-C, has been named to the newly created position of Assistant Dean for Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth, effective December 1, 2020.
- **Cathy Rozmus**, PhD, RN is one of the newest inductees of the University of Texas Kenneth I. Shine, MD, Academy of Health Science Education
- **Jennifer Beauchamp**, PhD, RN, FAAN, received the 2020 Founders' Award for Genomic Nursing Research from the International Society of Nurses in Genetics.

- **Mary Ellen Ross**, DrPH, MSN, RN, GCNS-BC, was among recipients of the Distinguished Educator in Gerontological Nursing Award and Recognition this year during the National Hartford Center of Gerontological Nursing Excellence Leadership Conference.
- **Deborah McCrea**, EdD, RN, FNP-BC, has been appointed to the Emergency Nurses Association's Emergency Medical Services Advisory Council.
- **Jennifer Beauchamp**, PhD, RN, FAAN, received the Genomic Nursing Research Award at the 2020 ISONG World Congress.
- CSON's annual magazine was rebranded as *Cizik Nursing* and was published [online](#).
- 58 students were inducted into the Zeta Pi Chapter of the Sigma Theta Tau International Honor Society of Nursing
- New board members were elected to the CSON Classified Staff Organization.

### Operations

- The Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth will host an accreditation site evaluation by the Commission of Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) on March 1-3, 2021. CCNE will be evaluating the Baccalaureate (BSN), Master's (MSN), Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP), and Post-Graduate APRN Certificate programs.
- Fall pinning was virtual and was held on December 18, 2020.
- The CSON continues to work in a hybrid model for the fall/spring, with didactic courses primarily online with simulation and clinical placement in our acute care and community settings.
- Students and faculty from the CSON are volunteering at MHH to provide COVID-19 vaccinations.
- Nurses at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth's nurse-led clinic, UT Health Services, continues as the university's COVID-19 testing operation site. The employee health clinic operates a drive-thru testing center every morning, serving the nearly 9,300 employees at UTHealth.
- Open positions: Associate Dean for Faculty Development, Pacesetter Program Director, MSN Program Director, Cizik Nursing Research Institute Director and Endowed Distinguished Chair, Chronic Disease Endowed Distinguished Chair, Assistant Professor on Research Track, and a variety of undergraduate and graduate faculty positions.

### Research

- **Sandy Branson**, PhD, MSN, RN and **Barbara Hekel**, PhD, MS, MPH, RN are Co-Investigators on a [research study](#): Assessing Undergraduate Nursing Student SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine Intentions and Perspectives: A National Survey.
- **Sandy Branson**, PhD, MSN, RN and **Barbara Hekel**, PhD, MS, MPH, RN are Investigators on a research study: [Assessing Licensed Nurses SARS-CoV-2 Vaccine Intentions and Perspectives in the State of Texas](#)
- **Daphne Hernandez**, PhD, MEd, FAAHB, is recruiting Latino immigrant parents and their U.S.-born teenage/young adult sons/daughters in a [research study](#).

### Publications and Presentations

- Brand, M. C., Shippey, H., Hagan, J., **Hanneman, S. K.**, Levy, B., Range, S., Wongsuwan, N., Zodin, A., Walden, M. (In press.). Comparison of psychological and physiological stress in NICU nurses: Effects of unit design and shift. *Advances in Neonatal Care*.
- Pérez-Aldana, CA, Lewinski, AA, **Johnson, CM**, Vorderstrasse, AA, Myneni, S. Social Network Analysis of Support Exchanges on a Virtual Environment for Diabetes Self-Management Education and Support. *JMIR Diabetes* (2020) (In press)
- Walden A, Garvin L, Smerek M, **Johnson C.** (2020). User-centered design principles in the development of clinical research tools. *Clinical Trials: 17(6): 703-711*. PMID: 32815381 . doi:10.1177/1740774520946314
- **Wang H**, Li X, Lai LA, Brentnall TA, Dawson DW, Kelly KA, Chen R, Pan S. X-aptamers targeting Thy-1 membrane glycoprotein in pancreatic ductal adenocarcinoma. *Biochimie*, 2020 (Accepted).

- Love, M., **Beauchamp, J., Wood, G., & Wardell, D.** (in press). Resilience and associated psychological, social/cultural, behavioural, and biological factors in patients with cardiovascular disease: a systematic review. *European Journal of Cardiovascular Journal*.
- [MEDPAGETODAY ASCO Reading Room](#) (November 20, 2020) – "Module Takes PROs From Paper to Practice – Loretta Williams PhD, APRN, and **Meagan Whisenant, PhD, APRN**, On a Pragmatic Symptom Inventory for Lung Cancer"
- [MEDPAGETODAY ASCO Reading Room](#) (November 20, 2020) – "More Evidence of Importance of Incorporating PROs in Clinical Trials and Practice Overall – **Meagan Whisenant, PhD, APRN** - Crucial for Adequate, Comprehensive Treatment Planning for all Providers Treating NSCLC Patients"
- An article by **Omobola A. Oyeleye, EdD, JD, RN-BC**, was published [online](#) by American Nurse on Dec. 7, 2020, titled "Providing effective communication to patients who are deaf or hard of hearing."
- Walden, A., Garvin, L., Smerek, M., & **Johnson, C.** (2020). User-centered design principles in the development of clinical research tools. *Clinical Trials: 17(6): 703-711*. PMID: 32815381. doi:10.1177/1740774520946314
- **Dean Diane Santa Maria, DrPH, MSN, RN**, and **Elda Ramirez, PhD, RN, ENP-C**, discussed preparing nurses to work with underserved communities in a [short video](#) featured by the American Association of Colleges of Nurses.
- **Daphne Hernandez, PhD, MSED, FAAHB** was a guest on Houston Matter: [Is Another COVID-19 Surge On The Horizon?](#) on Monday, November 9, 2011 (23:00-30:44)
- **Cole, L., Boss, L., Fowler, D., & Cheatham, L.** (November, 2020). The Benefit of Simulation to Develop Confidence to Conduct Crucial Conversations in Graduate Nursing Leadership Learners. Association of Leadership Science in Nursing's International Conference; Podium Presenter; Conference held virtually.
- **Boss, L., Fowler, L., Cole, L. & Cheatham, L.** (November, 2020). The Use of Peer-Facilitated Simulation for Teaching Advanced Leadership Skills in a Graduate Nursing Program: A Pilot Study. Association of Leadership Science in Nursing's International Conference; Podium Presenter; Conference held virtually.
- **Cole, L.** (November, 2020). Faculty's Role in Developing Resilience in Emerging Nursing Leaders. Association of Leadership Science in Nursing's International Conference; Poster Presenter; Conference held virtually.

#### Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

*Dr. Nicholas De Lay*

#### Mentoring Works!

- To improve mentoring of graduate students, GSBS is now requiring that all Faculty participate in the Mentoring Works! workshop by December 2022. This workshop was developed from an evidence-based mentor training program created by the Wisconsin Center for Education Research at the Univ. of Wisconsin and consists of facilitated peer-to-peer discussions. More information can be found here: <http://campaign.r20.constantcontact.com/render?m=1110617542320&ca=8f7d1c59-7821-499d-81e1-a83c04e1d62c>

#### 2021 GSBS visitation for prospective students

- Interviews for prospective Ph.D. students has begun and are being conducted virtually on Jan. 15th, Jan. 29th, Feb. 12th, and Feb. 26th.

#### **Nominations are due for GSBS Best Dissertation Awards**

- GSBS is accepting nominations of outstanding students for the Alfred G. Knudson, Jr. and UTHealth Dissertation awards through Friday, January 22nd. To nominate a student, email Joy Lademora. Recommendation letters will be due by Feb. 24th.

#### **Becoming a Resilient Scientist Series.**

- GSBS is recruiting students for this series of six webinars followed by small group discussions, focusing on developing skills to cope with the stresses of life and deal with obstacles encountered along one's career path. More information can be found here:  
[https://uthmc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_3LdgF7yLsNEOpOB](https://uthmc.az1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_3LdgF7yLsNEOpOB)

#### **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 the McGovern Medical School executive council members, who will be presenting the information to the Dean to determine if additional steps should be taken.
- 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***

- Professor Lex Frieden was named the winner of the Katie Beckett Award. The award, given by ADvancing States (formerly the National Association on State Units on Aging and Disability), was given to Frieden for his lifelong work in advancing the rights of those with disabilities.
- Enrollment throughout the pandemic has been strong and continues to increase. PhD and DHI applications, both in quantity and quality, are significantly increased over past years.
- SBMI is working with MMS to include a biomedical informatics scholarly concentration for medical students. Enrollment may start as early as next month. Students will be required to complete project leading to a publication.
- Professor Hua Xu is one of the PIs of the data coordinating center for the NIH COVID-19 initiative RADx-rad. There are 40+ NIH-funded projects which the center will coordinate.

#### **School of Dentistry**

***Dr. Michele White***

- Contract between Harris Health and UTHealth Science Center School of Dentistry; UTSD to support and manage 6 dental clinics. Goal to provide educational experiences through UTSD predoctoral student rotations.
- City of Houston has reached out to UTSD for further collaboration.
- CPS of Houston has reached out to UTSD for further collaboration.

- Diversity and Inclusion week; excellent line up of events.
- Behind the Smile Event planned for Spring 2021.
- January 2021 Faculty Senate Meeting: discussed IFC Faculty Status, Rights, and Responsibilities Subcommittee charge regarding faculty resources. Awaiting definition of resource from Subcommittee.
- UTSD Faculty Assembly Feb. 25.

### **School of Public Health**

***Dr. Ross Shegog***

Faculty Council continuing and new items (selected):

- T&P online day-long faculty meeting protocols (duration, voting practice) in light of COVID.
- AAR and Peer Review completed (online AAR form enhancement regarding automatic data capture from SPA and UTStart).
- 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.

Upcoming public health campus events (selected):

A couple of new course offerings:

- *Computational Biology and Machine Learning* (Dr. Momiao Xiong). This will cover major current application of artificial intelligence and causal inference to computational biology and genetic epidemiology, including transmission dynamics and mechanism of COVID-19.
- *Shoe Leather Epidemiology* (Seminar) Public Health professionals present on topics on incident command structure (ICS), emergency preparedness, rapid assessments, survey skills, risk communication, public health law, geographic information systems, surveillance networks, mosquito and vector control, outbreak investigations, and case studies in the field. Presenters include faculty from UTHealth, Texas Department of State Health Services, Harris County Public Health, Houston Health Department, Immunization Partnership, Baylor College of Medicine, and more.

Media exposure (selected):

- Catherine Troisi, PhD, was interviewed by the [Houston Chronicle](#) (also [San Antonio Express-News](#) and [Laredo Morning Times](#)) about a new, more contagious strain of COVID-19 discovered in Texas last week.
- Dennis Andrulis, PhD, MPH, was quoted in a [Texas Tribune](#) article about the virus's disproportionate impact on minority communities and the importance of utilizing trusted venues such as community centers or churches for vaccine distribution within these neighborhoods.
- Jack Tsai, PhD, was included in a [Medscape](#) article about the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on those experiencing homelessness.
- Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, MPH, talked to [KTRK-TV Channel 13](#) about the latest updates on the next round of vaccines in development for the coronavirus.

Dissertation presentations

Three proposal defenses are occurring in Jan. 2021.

### **The UTHealth Diversity and Inclusion Task Force Update**

***Dr. Elaheh Ashtari***

- Task Force is currently working on electing a Chair, Chair-Elect, and executive officers to transition into a permanent UTHealth council. Nominations were submitted, and elections took place earlier this month. The next meeting is 1/25/21, and elected Chairs will be announced. The standing council name was also identified as the "UTHealth Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion Council."

**Additional Item Announced:**

- McGovern Medical School is hosting the *Out for Health Annual Conference 2021*, which takes place at different Texas medical schools and provides a space for students, clinicians, researchers, and community members to discuss queer health issues! We are hosting it virtually at McGovern on Saturday, 1/23/21! Registration is still open and FREE for students! Register here: <https://www.outforhealth.net/event-details/>.

## V. MISCELLANEOUS

### **Thomas F. Burks Scholarship for Academic Merit Update:**

***Dr. Daniel Harrington***

Dr. Harrington asked Dr. Dafny to speak with regard to his knowledge and relationship with Dr. Burks. Next, Dr. Harrington continued to explain what criteria the students are reviewed and how the committee deliberates regarding the awards. He announced the list of awardees, in no particular order, as follows:

- ♦ Tapsi Kumar, GSBS
- ♦ Caroline Starling, MMS
- ♦ Monica Coley, SBMI
- ♦ Amier Haidar, SPH
- ♦ Amanda Wenger, CSON
- ♦ Jillian Huffman, SOD

This was an unusual award year in that six nominations stood out from the other nominations. Because the six nominations just happened to have been representative of all six schools, Dr. Morano stepped forward to offer to assist with the funding to permit the six awards for FY 2021.

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer advised the membership that this information is confidential as the respective deans, other leadership, and students have not been notified.

## VI. ADJOURNMENT

***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.

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 February 12, 2021.

Approved by Interfaculty Council on February 17, 2021.