McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston Faculty Senate

Thursday September 21, 2023 l 4:30pm

Zoom Meeting

1. Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 4:31pm with a quorum of members present.

1. Transition of Chair – Dr. Georgene Hergenroeder and Dr. Summer Ott

Dr. Ott thanked Dr. Hergenroeder and Dr. Chiadika for their service to the Senate for the past year. She welcomed new members and reiterated the attendance rules (attend a minimum of 60% of the monthly meetings). It is important for online meetings that dial-in attendees email Valerie Guerrero with their call-in number so that each caller can be properly identified.

1. Approval of Minutes (August 2023)

There were no corrections to the minutes from the August 2023 meeting; so the minutes were accepted to the final record as written.

1. Reports
2. Faculty Affairs Update – Dr. Kevin Morano
   * Announcement of Dr. Nahid Rianon as new MMS Associate Dean of Faculty Affairs.
   * Since the last meeting, the Annual Funding Agreement (AFA) between Memorial Hermann and UTHealth Houston was signed. it was signed not just as an annual funding agreement, but with a guarantee of 5 years of funding. Separately, the affiliation agreement with Memorial Hermann was extended from 2029 to 2039.

* Update on promotion and tenure applications: In FY 24 we have 138 promotion and tenure applications, which is a >30% increase compared to last year.
* Texas Therapeutics Institute (part of the IMM) is moving into the new TMC 3 building on Monday.

Will also have IBT, Texas A&M and MD Anderson doing drug collaboration in that building.

* Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences (GSBS) has found a new permanent dean. The individual will be named at the 60th anniversary celebration in the Mitchell building.

B. Interfaculty Council Update – Dr. Summer Ott

* + - Transition of chair, now Dr. Bethany Williams
    - Theme for IFC moving forward is “Many Faces, one voice”
* Nominations for President’s Scholars Award are due October 6th
* Announcement for Minnie Stevens Piper Foundation-Piper Professor 2024 will be distributed to School Deans and Faculty Affairs representatives
* The University of Texas System Board of Regents has selected two UTHealth Houston educators to receive the Regents' Outstanding Teacher Award: Dr. Robert Spears, Dr. Jennifer Swails
* Faculty Affairs developed a Distinguished Speaker Series and will have an inaugural speaker-Dr. Jagat Narula, Executive Vice President and Chief Academic Officer, on September 27th at noon in the IMM Auditorium
* IFC aims to start creation of a collaborative calendar that includes activities/announcements across all 6 schools as well as a faculty collaboration site for projects etc.

1. New Business
2. University Plans/Guidance Regarding DEI Ruling – Dr. Latanya Love, Dean of Education

* UTHealth Houston is working on compliance with legal affairs for Senate Bill 17 and its restrictions of diversity statements and offices of diversity-

1. Primary contact is Liam McElhiny- [William.b.mcelhiny@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:William.b.mcelhiny@uth.tmc.edu)

* UTHealth Houston is currently in the process of eliminating all Diversity and Inclusion Chairs(vice-chairs) and the larger Office of Diversity and Inclusion. The goal is for eliminated chairs to transition to other leadership roles.
  1. Asia McCleary-Gaddy will join Office of Professionalism
* Accreditation and student organizations are exemptions from SB17. There are also some grant exemptions, and faculty can still provide oversight to activity of student organizations.
* There is a UT System guidance document that was recently released which provides more information.

1. 2023-2024 Prescription Plan Change – Patricia Hinojosa, Executive Director, Payroll & Benefits, Office of Employee Benefits, UTHealth Houston

* There has been a TRS change rate for 9/1/2023 with increased employer and employee contributions to 8.25%, from 8%. Optional retirement program has remained the same.
* Please reach out before retirement for ORP and TRS retirement processes; a number of documents and transitions must be completed before retirement.
* There are a number of changes to current prescription plan including:

1. UT connect was discontinued 8/31/23
2. Headway Behavioral Health;

Free benefit plan to fit you with a great therapist for your circumstances; website- <https://headway.co/m/bcbstx>

1. GLP-1 class drugs now not covered- e.g., Wegovy and Saxenda for obesity or weight loss diagnoses because of their high cost to the plan

* In 22 months of GLP-1 coverage, the cost to the system was 1.5 million and by May 2023 was 5 million. Of our network of 250k members, only 3,100 were prescribed the GLP-1 drugs for obesity or weight loss. A cost analysis showed that the insurance plan would have had to raise everyone’s premium 2.5%. Our insurance tried to meet and negotiate with the involved drug companies to no avail. There were also noted issues of compliance, as almost 46% did not use medication correctly or comply. At this time there are no known passed appeals or “grandfathered in” individuals for GLP-1 medications
  + - * + No restrictions of those who use GLP-1 for Diabetes, only for weight loss or obesity diagnosis code
* Additional reminders about UTFlex, our flexible spending account (FSA), as the maximum amount allowed went up to $3050 and Dependent Care Reimbursement up to $5k. Both are “use it or lose it plans” and members must use all money by Nov 15.
* Members should have received new UTSelect cards via mail
  + - 1. Issues with still saying 2022 on the card- could be error. This will be reviewed.
* No changes were made for dental, vision, life insurance or other plans
* Any changes to your benefits would be reflected on 9/18/23 paycheck
* Can always review benefits in myUTbenefits

Questions at [benefits@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:benefits@uth.tmc.edu) or 713-500-3935

Email [patricia.hinojosa@uth.tmc.edu](mailto:patricia.hinojosa@uth.tmc.edu)

1. Announcements
2. New MMS Deans Named:

Peggy Hsieh, MEd, PhD, as Assistant Dean for Educator Development

Nahid Rianon, MBBS, DrPh, as Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs

1. 2023 Learning Health Care Symposium - Celebrating 25 Years of Developing and Translating Evidence to Practice at UTHealth Houston.

Keynote speaker: Richard Platt, MD, MSc, Professor and Chair, Harvard Medical

School Department of Population Medicine, President, Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Institute.

8 AM –12:15 PM, Memorial Hermann Conference Center on Oct 3rd, 2023

<https://www.eeds.com/portal_live_events.aspx?ConferenceID=495483>

1. Call for nominations-President’s Scholar Awards for Excellence in Research, Teaching, and Clinical Service. Nominations due by 5pm, Friday, October 06, 2023. <https://www.uth.edu/ofad/psa/>
2. 2023 Dean’s Lecture-Jerome Adams, MD, MPH, the 20th U.S. Surgeon General and Coronavirus Task Force, Deans Lecture. October 11, 2023.

<https://med.uth.edu/blog/2023/09/12/deans-lecture-tofeature-former-us-surgeongeneral/?utm_source=newsletter&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Scoop_September-14-2023>

1. Adjournment at 5:19 pm

Next Meeting: October 19th, 2023 at 4:30 pm

Dr. Summer Ott- Chair

Dr. Erin Fox-Chair-Elect

Kathryn Leal, MS, CGC- Secretary

Dr. Matthew Baker-Secretary-Elect

Dr. Georgene Hergenroeder- Past Chair 2022-2023