**McGovern Medical School at UTHealth Houston Faculty Senate**

**Thursday, April 17, 2024 at 4:30 PM**

**Zoom Meeting**

**1. Call to Order**

The meeting was called to order at 4:30 pm with a quorum of members present.

**2. Housekeeping**

Dr. Fox reviewed the Faculty Senate rules and responsibilities. Attendance rules (attend a minimum of 60% of the monthly meetings) were reviewed. Dial-in attendees must email Valerie Guerrero with their call-in number for proper identification. If you anticipate an absence, reach out to Valerie Guerrero to excuse it. Please remain muted unless speaking, and the chat will be monitored for questions.

**3. Approval of Minutes – February 2024**

Approved at 4:32pm. No objections

**4. Reports**

a. Faculty Affairs Update Faculty Affairs Update – Dr. Nahid Rianon, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs.

Dr. Rianon reminded faculty of the upcoming Promotion & Tenure Seminar scheduled for May 21, 2025, from 12:00–1:30 PM via Zoom. The seminar will cover eligibility, application procedures, and the review process. She also reiterated that promotion and tenure recommendations for FY26 are due September 1, 2025.

**5. New Business**

a. Nominations for 2025-2026 Faculty Senate Secretary, Chair-Elect, and Secretary-Elect Needed – Dr. Erin Fox, Chair MMS Faculty Senate.

Dr. Fox announced the call for nominations for the following Faculty Senate positions:

1. Replacement Secretary-Elect (through August 31, 2025), who will then serve as Secretary from September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026. The current opening for Replacement Secretary-Elect is a 15-month term running from June 2025 through August 2026.
2. Secretary-Elect (September 1, 2025 through August 31, 2026. The Secretary-Elect role is a two-year commitment (as Secretary-Elect and then for a year as Secretary).
3. Chair-Elect (term beginning September 1, 2025). By convention, the Chair-Elect for 2025–2026 should hold a PhD. The Chair-Elect role represents a three-year commitment: serving sequentially as Chair-Elect, Chair, and Past-Chair.

Elections will be held electronically beginning May 15, 2025 and will remain open for two weeks. Winners will be announced to the Senate on June 2, 2025. Senators may nominate themselves or others by submitting names to Dr. Erin Fox (Erin.E.Fox@uth.tmc.edu) and Valerie Guerrero (Valerie.Z.Guerrero@uth.tmc.edu) by Monday, May 12, 2025.

b. Committee on Committees nominations – Dr. Summer Ott, Past-Chair MMS Faculty Senate.

Dr. Ott announced the nominees for the three open positions on the MMS Committee on Committees (COC). Five senators are on the ballot to fill these positions. Two elected members receiving the most votes will serve full three-year terms beginning in AY2026. The candidate with the third highest vote count will serve a partial term beginning in AY2025. The Committee on Committees advises the Dean on the structure and membership of standing committees and makes annual recommendations on committee assignments. The nominees are: Dr. Alireza Akhbardeh, Professor, Diagnostic and Interventional Imaging, Dr. Matthew Baker, Assistant Professor, Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Dr. Anju Bhardwaj, Assistant Professor, Advanced Cardiopulmonary Therapies & Transplantation (ACTAT), Kathryn A. Leal, MS, CGC, Assistant Professor, Pediatrics and Dr. Lilit A. Sargsyan, Assistant Professor, Internal Medicine.

c. UTHealth Houston Update – Dr. Kevin Morano, Senior Vice President, Academic and Faculty Affairs, UTHealth Houston.

Dr. Morano presented institutional updates, including recent leadership changes, progress on the UTHealth Houston presidential search, and a discussion about budget uncertainty. Interim President Dr LaTanya Love is meeting regularly with Memorial Hermann CEO Dr. Callender and Harris Health CEO Dr. Porsa. The Presidential Search Committee has met and has scheduled meetings to discuss and interview candidates. If the search is similar to the last UT System search for a health science center president, it may take about 7 months and hopefully a candidate will be hired by 9/1/2025. Cynthia Huehlefeld is the new Interim COO of UT Physicians. Dr. Morano reports that funding at UTHealth Houston is on solid footing, but the future is uncertain and therefore leadership is taking a cautious approach to FY26 budgets. There have been no lay-offs and UTHealth Houston is continuing to hire. There is a pause on hiring non-clinical and non-research funded staff. A reduced federal F&A rate is being budgeted for FY26.

d. Curriculum Committee Annual Report – Dr. Chase Findley, Curriculum Committee Chair.

Dr. Findley provided a summary of the Curriculum Committee’s oversight responsibilities and highlighted key updates from the 2024–2025 academic year, including notification protocols for LCME and planned enhancements to the medical curriculum. He acknowledged Dr. Phil Orlander for his service as the former chair. Upcoming initiatives include evaluations of program integration and discussions on possible curricular modifications.

**6. Announcements**

a. The Institute of Perioperative Medicine will host its inaugural retreat from 8:30 a.m. until 8 p.m., April 18 at the TMC3 Collaborative Building.

To register: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSem2eD22JapWnhogFeX1A2hd\_i-TleBugFkQ6GYxD0RXJXJww/viewform

b. Join the McGovern Center for Humanities and Ethics in celebrating the 20th Anniversary of the Center, at 6p.m., Thursday, April 24 in the Fifth Floor Gallery.

To RSVP: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIp

**7. Adjournment: 5:30 pm**

Next meeting: May 15, 2025 at 4:30 PM