

## Minutes of the December 1, 2020 UF Gainesville COM Faculty Council Meeting (held via Zoom)

### Officers Present:

President – Albert Robinson, III  
President Elect – Ashley Ghiaseddin  
Past President – Emily Weber LeBrun

Vice President – Sonia Deshmukh Mehta  
Secretary – Jean Cibula  
Treasurer – Steven Swarts

### Department Representatives Present:

Shinichi Someya – Aging & Geriatric Res.  
Rene Opavsky – Anatomy & Cell Biology  
Matthew Andoniadis – Anesthesiology  
Mingyi Xie – Biochem. & Molec. Biology  
Ji-Hyun Lee – Biostatistics  
Ku-Lang Chang – CHFM  
Addie Walker – Dermatology  
Meredith Thompson – Emergency Medicine  
Kelly Gurka – Epidemiology  
Jiang Bian – Health Outcomes & Bio Informatics  
Lizi Wu – Molec. Genetics & Microbiology  
Priya Sharma – Radiology

Ashley Ghiaseddin – Neurological Surgery  
Paramita Chakrabarty – Neuroscience  
Ekaterina Lobanova – Ophthalmology  
Natalie Silver – Otolaryngology  
Petar Breitinger – PA School  
Mike Davis – Pediatrics  
Daniel Wesson – Pharmacology & Therapeutics  
Erica Dale – Physiology  
Mariam Rahmani – Psychiatry  
Steven Swarts – Radiation Oncology  
Romano De Marco – Urology

### Department Representatives Absent:

Kiran Lukose – Medicine  
Anna Khanna – Neurology  
Kathleen Green – Obstetrics & Gynecology  
Hernan Prieto – Orthopaedics & Rehab.

Marie Rivera-Zengotita – Pathology  
Ryan Thomas – Surgery

### Additional Attendees:

Peggy Wallace, Ph.D., Past FC President

**Invited Speakers:** Mark Scarborough, M.D. and Jeffrey Martens, Ph.D., Co-Chairs, College of Medicine Compensation Committee  
Lisa Merlo Greene, Ph.D., Director, UF College of Medicine Wellness Program

**Ex-Officio members:** Mark Segal, M.D., Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs & Professional Development  
Ellen Zimmermann, M.D., Associate Dean for Faculty Development  
Jessica Williams, UF COM 4<sup>th</sup> year student, non-voting member on the UF Faculty Senate AY 20-21

### Minutes:

1. President Albert Robinson, III called the meeting to order at 5:01pm.
2. The November 2020 Faculty Council meeting minutes were approved.
3. Mark Scarborough, M.D. and Jeffrey Martens, Ph.D., Co-Chairs, College of Medicine Compensation Committee
  - There are approximately 25 faculty members on the COM Compensation Committee that represent all facets of the college (Clinical, Basic Science, Administrative, Financial and Faculty Council). Dr. Mark Scarborough and Dr. Jeffrey Martens are Co-Chairs of the committee. There are Clinical and Academic (Research and Training) Working Subgroups within the committee.
  - The existing COM Compensation Plan is was put in place approximately 10 years ago and does not necessarily align desired activities with compensation. It does not include basic elements of contemporary plan design and is not demonstrably effective in reliably incentivizing key outcomes. It is not consistently applied across the COM and is not

economically sustainable nor consistently competitive.

- The committee received a charge from the Interim Dean at their first meeting on October 6, 2020, and reviewed the existing plan. During the three subsequent meetings, they have discussed foundational principles, discussed what mission-critical functions should be recognized in the model as adjustments to clinical FTE (cFTE), and continued to identify the critical unfunded roles across the organization they are willing to serve as adjustments to cFTE.
- The foundation principles of the new Compensation Plan are as follows:
  - Competitive compensation
  - Individual and group incentives
  - Alignment with Enterprise Objectives
  - Operationally feasible and simple
  - Financially sustainable
- Dr. Colleen Koch will begin her new role as COM Dean on January 10, 2021 and will be fundamentally involved in the implementation of the new compensation plan. Implementing changes will be done carefully over time and may involve staged implementation of different plan elements, as well as partial introduction of certain aspects over several years. The compensation plan transition must include the flexibility for different departments to adapt the general plan principles to their unique circumstances.

#### 4. Addressing UF COM Faculty Stress and Well-being in the Age of COVID-19 - Lisa Merlo Greene, Ph.D., Director, UF College of Medicine Wellness Programs

- Dr. Merlo Greene sent an anonymous survey to faculty in September of 2020 to address faculty stress and well-being in the age of COVID-19. There were 142 responses from faculty from 20 departments.
- The objectives of the survey were to:
  - Identify specific pain points that need to be addressed to better support faculty
  - Elicit stakeholder feedback regarding proposed solutions
  - Make recommendations based on faculty input and best practices
- Results of the survey indicated that over 60% of faculty currently feel at least “somewhat high” levels of stress.
- The major areas of concern indicated by faculty include:
  - Workload
  - Family/caregiving
  - Communication issues
  - Lack of support
  - Health and safety
  - Personnel issues
  - Emotional response to pandemic
  - Miscellaneous
  - Unreasonable pressures/expectations at work
  - Compensation and benefits
  - Disrespectful treatment of faculty
  - Inefficiency and lack of organization/coordination
  - Research issues
  - Loneliness/isolation
  - Sociopolitical issues

- The key recommendations from faculty to improve the culture of wellness include:
  - Increase flexibility for faculty to complete their jobs
  - Promote excellent leadership by direct supervisors
  - Include faculty stakeholders in decision-making
  - Increase recognition of faculty effort
  - Re-evaluate expectations for individual faculty members
  - Explore mechanisms to restore staff support
  - Support faculty with children
  - Improve communication strategies
  - Evaluate creative options regarding compensation and benefits
  - Miscellaneous
- Dr. Robinson suggested creating a subcommittee within the Faculty Council to help address faculty wellness issues.
- Dr. Merlo Greene may send out the survey again in January of 2021 that includes the results from the initial survey and requests additional recommendations.
- Comments and questions can be sent to Dr. Merlo Greene at: [imerlo@ufl.edu](mailto:imerlo@ufl.edu).

#### 5. Committee Reports:

- President's Report – Albert Robinson, III, M.D.
  - Dr. Robinson followed-up on the email Dr. Tyndall sent on November 2, 2020 regarding standardized email signature blocks. He noted that this policy was implemented due to inappropriate use of signature lines in October of 2020. The policy, which was already in place for UF Health Shands, states that all UF employees' email signature blocks, in the health colleges under the UF Health umbrella, should use a standardized email signature in all internal or external communication. The email signature should conform to standards set for employee business cards and may include the employee's name, credentials, job title, department and contact information.
  - UF Health recently acquired the Nationwide Insurance Building (3300 SW Williston Road). The site will now be called UF Health Professional Park. In early 2021, 400 administrative employees from UF Health will be moved to the new site, with a total of 800 employees eventually moving over in phases. This will free up office space for faculty to utilize in the 1329 Building (1329 SW 16<sup>th</sup> Street).
  - The UF Health Shands Arts in Medicine (AIM) Program recently installed a temporary mural in the COM Faculty Lounge entitled "Winter on Paynes Prairie" to help celebrate the holiday season. They also provided self-guided creative exercises for faculty such as blackout poetry and coffee cup mandala art kits. This project is co-sponsored by the COM Faculty Council, the COM Office of Wellness, and the AIM Program to promote relaxation and well-being.
  - A call for nominations for the UF COM Lifetime Achievement Awards will go out in January of 2021. This award, from the UF COM Faculty Council, recognizes our most outstanding, active peers for providing extraordinary service to the UF COM, including recognition for the college through national reputation in their respective professions.
  - Dr. Marco Pahor stepped-down from his role as Chair of the Department of Aging & Geriatric Research, effective November 30, 2020.
  - The search for the UF COM Associate Dean for Student Affairs is ongoing and has been narrowed-down to two final internal candidates.

- COM Curriculum Committee (November 2020 meeting)– Meredith Thompson, M.D.
  - A new Global Health elective and a new two-week Transgender Health elective were approved.
  - Ideas for virtual experiences for the first and second-year preceptorships were discussed. Additional details are forthcoming.
  
- Finance Committee/EFAC – Steven Swarts, Ph.D.
  - Collections are still ahead, with a variance of +\$16M as of September. Expenses are tracking at budget or just above. There are about 71 days of working cash available on hand compared to 67 days in August. Total collections are currently at \$18M, which is also ahead of budget.
  
- Research Task Force (RTF) – Albert Robinson, III, M.D.
  - 17 applications were submitted for the Fall 2020 Bolster Bucks Funding Awards. 16 awards were distributed that ranged from \$300 - \$1500 ((4 awards were directly related to COVID; 2 awards were related to telemedicine). The total funding awarded was \$20,881.51. Examples of the awards that were funded include:
    - Laboratory expense – Hydrogel CXCL9 vaccination for the treatment of malignant brain tumors
    - COVID-related expense – Culture-based SARS-CoV-2 isolation to evaluate potential infectivity of clinical specimens from the gastrointestinal tract
    - Laboratory expense – Investigating the potential major role of vitamin D deficiency as a prognostic biomarker for COVID-19 related outcomes
    - Publication of two peer-reviewed manuscripts, one of which is COVID-19 related research accepted for publication

President Albert Robinson, III adjourned the meeting at 6:34pm.

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**Announcements:**

**College of Medicine Benefits Town Halls:** Discussions regarding upcoming benefits changes to UF leave and retirement will be held on December 3, 2020 from 12pm – 1pm and December 4, 2020 from 7am – 8am. Zoom link: <https://ufl.zoom.us/j/96230794887>. Meeting ID: 962 3079 4887. Please submit questions in advance to: [HR@comfs.ufl.edu](mailto:HR@comfs.ufl.edu). Sessions will be recorded for future playback.

**UF COM Ombuds:** To schedule an appointment with the UFCOM Ombuds for faculty, Dr. Keith Stone, email your request to [stonek@ufl.edu](mailto:stonek@ufl.edu), and simply include your name and contact information. To maintain confidentiality, use email only to schedule appointments. Additional details can be found online at: <https://ombuds.med.ufl.edu/>.

Check out the **Faculty Lounge** – artwork from fellow faculty is now on display. Please come and enjoy a quiet spot to work between meetings and appointments. A small selection of beverages is available.

Need help with pet care, housekeeping or childcare and need resource links? Check out **Care.com**. There are even resources for senior care, tutoring and other gigs.

The next Faculty Council Meeting will be held Tuesday, January 5, 2021 @ 5PM.

*Minutes recorded by Melissa Liverman, Administrative Assistant, and edited by Dr. Jean Cibula and Dr. Albert Robinson, III.*