

Minutes of the December 7, 2021 UF Gainesville COM Faculty Council Meeting (held via Zoom)

Officers Present:

President – Ashley Ghiaseddin
President Elect – Martin Rosenthal
Vice President – Sonia Deshmukh Mehta

Past President – Albert Robinson, III
Secretary – Paramita Chakrabarty
Treasurer – Eric Jeng

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
Robert Hatch - CHFM
Addie Walker– Dermatology
Meredith Thompson – Emergency Medicine
Kelly Gurka – Epidemiology
Ramzi Salloum– Health Outcomes & Bio Informatics
Lizi Wu – Molec. Genetics & Microbiology
Ashley Ghiaseddin – Neurological Surgery

Gabriel Bonnell - Neurology
Paramita Chakrabarty – Neuroscience
Robert Egerman – Obstetrics & Gynecology
Ekaterina Lobanova – Ophthalmology
Si Chen – Otolaryngology
Marie Rivera-Zengotita– Pathology
Mike Davis – Pediatrics
Jonathan Bird – Pharmacology & Therapeutics
Carolyn Geis – Phys Med & Rehabilitation
Erica Dale – Physiology
Mariam Rahmani – Psychiatry
Steven Swarts – Radiation Oncology
Priya Sharma – Radiology
Ryan Thomas – Surgery
Romano DeMarco – Urology

Department Representatives Absent:

Kiran Lukose – Medicine
Petar Breitinger – PA School
Luis Pulido – Orthopaedics & Rehab.

Guest Speakers:

Charles Wood, Ph.D., Chair, Department of Physiology & Functional Genomics, Interim Chair, Department of Aging & Geriatric Research
Julia Close, M.D., Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Education and Designated Institutional Official UF COM, and Professor of Medicine, Division of Hematology & Oncology

Ex-Officio members:

Mark Segal, M.D., Ph.D., Senior Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs & Professional Development, UF College of Medicine

Minutes:

1. President Ashley Ghiaseddin called the meeting to order at 5:03pm.
2. The November 2021 Faculty Council meeting minutes were approved.
3. Committee Reports:
 - President's Report and Executive Committee Report (November 2021) - Ashley Ghiaseddin, M.D.
 - Dr. Azra Bihorac, Senior Associate Dean for Research, announced the availability of 'Emerging Research Scholarship' PhD positions. 10 PhD positions have been allocated to recruit PhD students in the area of AI and data sciences (open to all faculty based on funding availability).
 - Gary Wimsett, J.D., Assistant VP for Conflicts of Interest (COI), discussed the centralized review of the Office for Outside Activity Disclosures. He also discussed UFOLIO, university-wide COI and disclosure guidance.
 - Dr. Jose Abisambra, Assistant Dean for the Office of Diversity & Health Equity, discussed the results of a survey sent to all graduate students in November of 2020. The outcomes of that survey will be used to generate a new survey that will focus on

- mental health, financial burden, recruitment and retention of graduate students.
 - Dr. Lisa Merlo, Director of the COM Wellness Program, discussed professional fulfillment using the Stanford Model, improving communication with faculty across the COM, and improving the culture of wellness and efficiency of practice within each department/division.
 - The AMA-AAMC Advancement of Health Equity Guide was discussed.
 - Aaron Saguil, MD, MPH, FAAFP, was named Chair of the Department of Community Health & Family Medicine, effective June 6, 2022.
 - There are currently Interim Chairs in the Departments of Aging & Geriatric Research (Dr. Charles Wood), Anatomy & Cell Biology (Dr. Maria Zajac-Kaye), and Psychiatry (Dr. Carol Mathews).
 - There are active searches for the Chair of Biochemistry (on-campus interviews are complete), the Chair of Pediatrics (first round of interviews with applicants are in progress), and the Chair of Emergency Medicine (Search Committee Chair is Dr. Tim Morey).
 - The number of COVID cases has remained stable in Florida over the last month.
- Curriculum Committee Report (November 2021) – Meredith Thompson, M.D.
 - A Medical Student Research Travel Support Policy was presented and approved. Funding will be available to support travel costs for one trip per student, not to exceed \$500 per academic year. In order to apply for this funding, students must be first author on the paper or abstract they'll be presenting. The conference has to be in the United States and students must be in good academic standing. Students are required to submit a paragraph justifying the value of the experience. The students can expect to receive a response to their application within about two weeks.
 - There was a presentation from the Sub-Internship Task Force that discussed making Sub-Internships inpatient only. Additional information is forthcoming.
 - Dr. Joseph Fantone provided LCME updates.
- Compensation Committee Report – Al Robinson, III, M.D., Ashley Ghiaseddin, M.D.
 - The Compensation Plan Committee has not met recently. Phase I of the Compensation Plan is complete and Phase II is beginning, with an anticipated rollout date of July of 2022. The Phase II Committee Chairs will be Dr. Jen Bizon and Dr. Sonal Tuli, and the Finance Team will be Scott Sumner, CFO, and Tammy Williams, COO. Mr. Sumner and Ms. Williams plan to attend the February 2022 Faculty Council meeting to provide updates on the Compensation Plan.
- Research Task Force Report – Ekaterina Lobanova, Ph.D.
 - The Research Task Force (RTF) will be meeting with Dr. Azra Bihorac, the new Senior Associate Dean for Research, on December 16 at 3:00pm via Zoom. Those who would like to attend this meeting can contact Melissa Liverman for the Zoom link. Topics to be discussed during this meeting include current goals, access to electronic books, IT issues, Bolster Bucks, Science Strolls, as well as strategies to identify the needs and concerns of research faculty.
- AAMC CFAS – Marie Rivera-Zengotita, M.D.
 - The annual AAMC Learn, Serve, Lead meeting was held virtually in November of 2021. The topics were mainly centered around healthcare equity, gene editing technology, mental health, and racial injustice issues.

- Faculty Senate Report – Ashley Ghiaseddin, M.D.
 - Dr. Dave Bloom, UF Faculty Senate Chair, recently sent an email providing updates on the Faculty Senate Ad Hoc Committee on Academic Freedom. The committee released a fact-finding report that was sent out as a Google Drive document. This committee was solely responsible for fact-finding and made no recommendations to address these issues. However, the Faculty Senate will review the report before making their recommendations.
- Wellness Task Force Report – Priya Sharma, M.D.
 - The Wellness Task Force met last month and discussed with Dr. Segal about ways to show support and appreciation for faculty. It was determined that UF does not have as many faculty awards as other universities with similar-sized programs. There was discussion about establishing college-wide and/or departmental awards for clinical, educational and research service.

4. Old Business:

- Dr. Ghiaseddin reminded everyone about the request for volunteers to constitute a new Clinical/Research Achievements Recognition Committee. These awards could be part of the Faculty Appreciation Day or Faculty Appreciation Week. Dr. Segal suggested a few awards such as Physician of the Year Award, Rising Star Clinical Faculty Award, and the Best Consulting Physician Award. These awards would be earmarked for a diverse group of faculty as well as different academic ranks. Members of the Wellness Committee would assist with this initiative. Please email Dr. Ghiaseddin (ashley.ghiaseddin@neurosurgery.ufl.edu) or Melissa Liverman (liverman@ufl.edu) if you are interested in joining this committee.
- Dr. Ghiaseddin emailed a draft of the 360 Quadrant Evaluation to the Council that would potentially be used for periodic evaluation of individuals holding leadership positions at COM. Dr. Ghiaseddin asked council representatives to review the document over the winter break for discussion at the January meeting.

5. New Business:

- A call for nominations for the 2022 Lifetime Achievement Awards will be sent out in January.
- The committee discussed moving the January 2022 Faculty Council meeting from January 4 to January 11. The date will be announced by the end of the week.

6. Proposed merger of the departments of Aging & Geriatric Research and Physiology & Functional Genomics – Charles Wood, Ph.D.

- Dr. Charles Wood is Chair of the Department of Physiology & Functional Genomics and has also been Interim Chair of the Department of Aging & Geriatric Research since December of 2020. Dr. Wood is proposing a merger of these two departments.
- Dr. Wood noted the following advantages of combining the departments:
 - The combined department will perform synergistic and complementary research on biological function at cellular/molecular levels with a focus on aging. There will be added value as faculty in these departments could collaborate on animal model, and human clinical research data.
 - Faculty in the Department of Aging will have greater access to the academic community within the COM.
 - Faculty in the Department of Physiology will have greater access to human research.
 - The COM will benefit because of a formal inclusion of clinical researchers in the BMS

PhD Program.

- In November of 2021, faculty in both departments voted on the issue of departmental merger. The results were: Yes: 21, No: 1, Absent: 4.

Following Dr. Woods presentation, the Faculty Council representatives who were present at today's meeting voted unanimously to support the merger of these two departments. The next step will be to obtain a Letter of Support from the COM Dean to upload into the University system. It will be considered by Graduate Council, the UF Faculty Senate, and the Provost for final approval.

7. Graduate Medical Education Updates – Julia Close, M.D.

- Dr. Close is the Associate Dean of Graduate Medical Education (GME) and Designated Institutional Official for UF COM. She provided an overview of the GME program at UF.
 - There are currently 1000 residents and fellows spread over 3 campuses in Gainesville, Pensacola and Orlando. 83 of the programs are ACGME accredited while 40 are not.
 - There is expansion into the Villages and Leesburg that demonstrates the growth in the regional setting, which is concurrent with the growth of the UF hospitals.
 - The salaries for the residents in the Central Florida programs will be covered by CMS Medicare lines, as these hospitals have never had residents before. In order to get CMS funding, the programs and hospitals must be new. After 5 years, the cap is set and cap sharing can occur.
 - COVID has caused significant disruption to the GME programs over the past year. The UF COM program declared an emergency status with ACGME in August and September of 2020 due to a significant surge in COVID cases. The programs were not required to provide didactic education at that time and residents/fellows could be shifted to other programs, which is what was done in the COM. Residents and fellows deserve a lot of credit for supporting the hospital through COVID.
 - Interview season for the program was virtual last year and this year. Second Looks are being allowed, however, the hospital does not want tours to occur. If programs bring applicants in, they can show them around Gainesville and have them meet with residents, but having large groups of students in the hospital is just not the right thing to do at this time.
 - Benefits have been expanded for Housestaff to include an additional 20 days of leave per year for FMLA-related conditions, short-term disability, and a stipend for new interns to cover the week they work prior to starting their intern year. This year they have an increased amount of funds for Gatorbites to use for food at a variety of places, and expanded lounge offerings. They now have the same access to UF classes under the EEP programs as employees do, and they are provided with a small annual stipend to offset incidental costs associated with their education.
 - The Housestaff Council is a self-governing body required by the ACGME that provides recommendations on what the GME office can do to better support our residents. The GME office provides administrative support to the council. They have an Executive Committee which they vote on annually that meets with Dr. Close.
 - The GME office is being reorganized to focus on struggling programs and prepare for site visits. The new Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) Officer for GME is Dr. Sherise Rogers. An announcement will be made soon about an upcoming poster session for UME/GME faculty for DEI efforts. A workshop will also be held related to evaluation and assessment with concepts related to DEI.

- Dr. Close addressed the following question related to evaluations of Housestaff: “If Housestaff evaluations of faculty are anonymous, why are faculty evaluations of Housestaff not anonymous?” She stated that this is not something that can be altered. Effective feedback is specific, timely and meaningful. At any one time, a faculty member may have multiple reviewers, but Housestaff (especially while inpatient) may have only 1-2 reviewers. If a resident works with one attending for a month, there’s no way for them to get timely feedback if we have to wait for five evaluations in order to keep that anonymous. There’s also a power differential between faculty and Housestaff. Evaluations are an integral part of Housestaff advancement and (when needed) discipline, so there is a limited amount of time to work with Housestaff to ensure they are ready to have independent practice. Dr. Close discussed concerns about retaliatory evaluations and stated that those are rare and should not inhibit giving effective and timely feedback. If there is a concern that retaliation has occurred, it should be documented in the Chair’s letter accompanying the promotion packet.

President Ashley Ghiaseddin adjourned the meeting at 6:16pm.

Announcements:

- Save the date: UF COM Strategic Plan Town Hall 12/10/21 7am-8am. Available Livestream and at three locations. Register and submit questions at med.ufl.edu/townhall
- Save the date: A walk through Wilmot Gardens and UF COM history with Dr. Alice Rhoton-Vlasak. Date: December 17, 2021; Time: 12PM; Location: 2023 Mowry Road Gainesville, FL 32610
- Introducing Tammy Williams, M.H.A. chief of operations and administration (COO), and Scott Sumner, M.B.A. as chief of finance and administration (CFO)
- Seeking nominations for new members for Society of Teaching Scholars (STS) at the University of Florida, College of Medicine
- UF Health Shands earns a Vizient four-star rating and ranks 19th in the nation.
- For the latest on UF Health Covid status, visit: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/>. Effective immediately, in light of new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, students, faculty, staff, vendors and visitors are expected to wear a mask at all times when inside any UF facility. Pfizer, Moderna and Johnson & Johnson (J&J quantities will be limited) COVID-19 booster vaccines for UF Health faculty and staff are available on a walk-up basis at the UF Health pharmacies. To comply with the federal executive order, all employees who work under the UF Health umbrella — including faculty and staff of all six health colleges and clinical faculty and staff in our hospitals and physician practices, regardless of their work location — must be fully vaccinated for COVID-19 by Dec. 8, 2021, or have an approved religious or medical accommodation on file.
- Check out the Faculty Lounge- artwork from fellow faculty is now on display. Please come and enjoy a quiet spot to work between meetings & appointments. A small selection of beverages is available.

The next Faculty Council Meeting will be held Tuesday, January 4, 2022 @ 5PM.

Minutes recorded by Melissa Liverman, Administrative Assistant, and edited by Dr. Paramita Chakrabarty and Dr. Ashley Ghiaseddin.