

September 2, 2008, the Medical School at the University of Minnesota

MINUTES University of Minnesota Medical School Faculty Advisory Council

September 2, 2008

The meeting of the Medical School Faculty Advisory Council (FAC) was held on Tuesday, September 2, 2008 at 4:00 p.m. in Room B646 Mayo Memorial Building and 146 School of Medicine Duluth (via ITV). Carol Lange, Chair of the FAC presided.

Members Present: Drs. Aviva Abosch, Sharon Allen, Vivian Bardwell, Gregory Beilman, Susan Berry, Peter Bitterman, Paul Bohjanen, James Boulger, Linda Burns, James Carey, Esam El-Fakahany, Kalpna Gupta, Gwen Halaas, Karla Hemesath, Gerhard Johnson, Stephen Katz, Carol Lange, Tucker LeBien, James Nixon, James Pacala, Christopher Pennell, Yoji Shimizu, Brian Sick, Carol Wells, Tom Yacovella, and Jo-Anne Young.

Dean's Office Staff Present: Dean Deborah Powell, Drs. Charles Moldow, Roberta Sonnino, and Ms. Patricia Mulcahy.

Guest: Dr. Denis Clohisy

Welcome and Introductions

Dr. Lange called the meeting to order at 4:04 p.m. and made the following announcements:

- The October 2008 FAC meeting has been cancelled. The next meeting of the FAC will take place on November 4, 2008.
- The AHC Finance and Planning Committee is seeking two Medical School faculty members to serve as representatives. This group meets twice monthly, and is tasked with advising the Senior Vice President for the Health Sciences with the development of legislative requests and to review the implementation of the annual budget. If you would like to volunteer or nominate a colleague, please contact Jeni Skar.

Introductions followed the announcements.

Conflict of Interest Task Force

Dean Powell and Dr. Denis Clohisy, Department Head for Orthopaedic Surgery, presented the Executive Summary and Consolidated Report on the Conflict of Interest Task Force. This group was comprised of faculty and medical students, and was tasked with analyzing relationships with industry in all parts of the tripartite mission of education, research, and clinical care.

The Task Force divided into three subgroups (education, clinical care, and research) and took the following actions:

1. Reviewed current existing policies
2. Reviewed what has been published on these issues
3. Reviewed and considered what would be most useful for the Medical School

The Consolidated Report includes a series of recommendations to the Dean. The Dean recognized that there is mutual benefit involved with these relationships with industry, but emphasized that we need to learn how to manage these relationships in a way that reduces the financial interests of industry and still increases the best interest of the patient. Any policies that would be approved would apply to the entire Medical School, both basic and clinical science departments.

Dr. Clohisy mentioned that one possible approach is to create foundations for industrial funding. Industry could fund unrestricted grants to foundations, which would be allocated by the foundations with a peer-reviewed process for funding.

Dr. Gregory Beilman raised the concern that restrictions would cause a decrease in patients enrolled in clinical trials. Dr. Beilman mentioned that it is already difficult to recruit patients for clinical trials, and further restrictions would make this more difficult. This would be true for all clinical investigators. He pointed out that it would be impossible to run clinical trials if there were no "interest" associated with the parties involved. A lack of benefit for the participating parties could mean that new therapies that improve the health of patients may not be pursued.

The Dean recognized Dr. Beilman's concern, and noted that there will be a limit to the altruism achieved in these policies. It is impossible to completely eliminate "interest", but thinks we can do a better job of creating limitations to the extent of relationships with industry. She mentioned that while the Association of American Medical Colleges has written COI guidelines for education, no guidelines were written for research and clinical care. Dean Powell also noted that a very difficult task will be to

manage CME courses, which are commonly funded with industry support.

There will be financial fall out with these policies once approved. Dean Powell acknowledges that the Medical School will need to determine which financial shortfalls can be made up and which the School can live without. The policies, once finalized by the School, will need to go to the Board of Regents for final approval. The Medical School would be the first college at the University to develop such policies.

The Dean clarified that these are not final policies. She encouraged the FAC to discuss these recommendations with their colleagues, and provide feedback via email.

Medical School Policy for Faculty Review

Dr. Roberta Sonnino, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, introduced a draft faculty review process and policy. This includes the annual faculty review process, non-triggered reviews (“periodic”), and triggered reviews (“special”). This policy would state that every faculty member, regardless of rank or track, would receive an annual review.

The intent of this policy is to ensure that an annual review occurs for each faculty member and standardizes the process. The periodic and special reviews have been written with the intent of recognizing faculty for their accomplishments, possible opportunities for compensation for their accomplishments, retooling for faculty who have redistributed their work loads, and creating performance improvement plans for faculty who are struggling. These reviews have been written in direct compliance with the University policies for Post Tenure Review.

Dr. Esam El-Fakahany mentioned that these reviews are often too subjective and asked if metrics could be created to help assess in a more objective way. Dr. Sonnino informed the FAC that while departments can choose to create their own metrics to help with evaluation, standard matrices would not be created for the entire School because it is so heterogeneous. The Departments are responsible for the criteria for reviews (via the Departmental 7.12 Statement) and are also responsible for ensuring that all of their faculty are fairly assessed. Dr. Sonnino also mentioned that while the Department Head must sign and approve the annual review of each faculty member, the review can be conducted by Division Directors, Center Directors, etc., with the Department Head’s permission. This would mean there could be multiple signatures on the forms, and also mean that a process will need to be created to assign responsibility for each faculty member’s review.

Dr. Sonnino requested the FAC review and discuss these drafts, and return feedback to her via email.

The meeting was adjourned at 5:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Jeni Skar
Staff to the FAC

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Last modified on Friday Sep 12, 2008

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