

**Interfaculty Council Meeting Minutes**  
**FY 2021 – May 19, 2021 – Webex**

**Present:** Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, Dr. Cameron Jeter, Dr. Elda Ramirez, Dr. Jennifer Bailey, Dr. Nicholas De Lay, Dr. Joseph Alcorn, Dr. Catherine Ambrose, Dr. Sayed Hashmi for Dr. Carmen Dessauer, Dr. Meena Bhattacharjee, Dr. Linh Bui, Dr. Nachum Dafny, Dr. Carmen Dessauer, Dr. Rhashedah Ekeoduru, Dr. Kulvinder Bajwa for Dr. Bethany Williams, Dr. Licong Cui, Dr. Luca Giancardo, Dr. Kirk Roberts, Dr. Debora Simmons, Dr. Daniel Harrington, Dr. Kurt Kasper, Dr. Alan Myers for Dr. Dharini van der Hoeven, Dr. Michele White, Dr. Carole Mackavey, Dr. Seth Stephens, Dr. Cecilia Ganduglia-Cazaban, Dr. Ross Shegog, Dr. Michael Swartz, and Dr. Pauline Monsegue-Bailey

**Absent:** Dr. Carmen Dessauer, Dr. Nahid Rianon, Dr. Sandra Branson, Dr. Craig Hanis, Dharini van der Hoeven, Ms. Ankita Podichetty

**Guests:** Dr. Mandy Hill and Dr. Suur Biliciler

**Ex-Officio Attendees:** Dr. Kevin Morano and Dr. Gurur Biliciler-Denktaş

**Administrative Personnel:** Ms. Terrie Schade-Lugo

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**I. CALL TO ORDER | APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES** *Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, IFC Chair FY 2021*

Dr. Tiffany Champagne-Langabeer, IFC Chair FY 2021, called the meeting to order at 11:32 AM. After the presentation by Dr. Hill, the members were polled for any objections or corrections to the minutes for April 21, 2021. Upon motion made and seconded, the minutes were unanimously approved, as presented.

**II. NEW BUSINESS** *Drs. Mandy Hill and Suur Biliciler*  
*Co-Chairs of the Women Faculty Forum at McGovern Medical School*

Dr. Mandy Hill addressed the IFC membership concerning the Mission of the Women Faculty Forum (WFF) at McGovern Medical School (MMS) at UTHealth. She discussed the annual, upcoming, and past events. She advised that the support provided by the Office of Administration and Faculty Affairs under the leadership of Dr. Kevin Morano, Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs, has greatly increased their success. The membership briefly discussed how a university-wide group could be created and supported. Dr. Morano advised that if the schools wanted to start something like the WFF, administrative support, funding, and an engaged membership were required. He further suggested that if you wanted to pursue the discussion to consult with the Associate Dean for Faculty Affairs at each school, except for CSON, they are still interviewing candidates to fill the vacancy caused by the retirement of their Associate Dean.

The presentation provided by Dr. Hill is attached and made a part of these minutes.

**III. ANNOUNCEMENTS** *Dr. Kevin A. Morano*  
*Associate VP for Faculty Affairs & Development, UTHealth*

- Dr. Morano discussed the mass email provided by the President's Office that officially relaxed the guidance on spacing and masking requirements. Unless employed in a health care setting (i.e., in direct contact with patients in the hospital or clinics), there is no need as a UTHealth employee to maintain six-foot spacing or maintain wearing a mask in private or common areas -inside and outside. Of course, it is still up to each individual as to whether you wish to continue spacing and masking. A brief discussion on classroom settings, hybrid classes/meetings, students return, staff return, and the expectation of on-site and remote working guidance being issued soon. Dr. Morano stressed that what one area or school is doing may differ from another, and the dean at each school will ultimately provide their school's guidance.
- At the April IFC meeting, Dr. Morano advised that we successfully secured the LabArchives electronic notebook software package for UTHealth, and two webinar training sessions had been conducted. He reminded everyone that it is an electronic laboratory notebook, an inventory module, and a scheduler. He provided a screenshot of the adoption rate over the last twelve months. Our total number of users is approximately 180, and we expect to reach at least 1000 users. He asked the membership if anyone has heard any resistance to

trying it out. Many responded that they are very pleased with it, and other departments are just starting to get into the program and are not using it yet. For more information, please review the information on the website <https://uth.edu/research/labarchives/about>.

#### IV. UNFINISHED BUSINESS

##### Campus Reports:

##### **Cizik School of Nursing**

*Dr. Sandra Branson*

##### **Announcements**

- **Susan D. Ruppert, PhD, RN, FNP-C, ANP-BC**, has added the prestigious Minnie Stevens Piper Professor award to the long list of honors she has received in her more than three decades at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth. She is the school's associate dean for graduate studies as well as a PARTNERS Endowed Professor in Nursing.
- **Stacey Crane, PhD, RN, CPON**, and **Deniz Dishman, PhD, DNAP, MSN, CRNA**, are among an elite group of nurses across the Lone Star State who were honored this week with "20 for 2020 Awards" from the Texas Nurses Foundation and the Texas Nurses Association (TNA).
- **Chukwudi C. Ekwemalor PhD, MBA, MSN, RN, PMHPNP-BC** was honored by the paper as one of Houston's Top 150 nurses, and undergraduate Lance Edwards was one of only three students to receive a scholarship through the Salute to Nurses program.
- **Carole L. Mackavey, DNP, RN, FNP-C**, became the track coordinator for Nursing Education on May 1.
- **LaDawna Goering, DNP, RN, ANP-BC, ADM**, became the Adult/Gerontology Primary Care Nurse Practitioner (NP) track on May 1.
- **Dr. Nitha Mathew Joseph** received a national award for Nursing Excellence in Nurse Educator category from the Federation of Malayalee Associations of America.
- **Dr. Kathleen Siders** was awarded a grant from STTI Zeta Pi for a study titled "Post Masters Certificate-Seeking Nursing Students' Outcomes on Advanced HESI Examinations."
- A generous gift from Pedro "Pete" Mora, founder of Fajita Pete's, will provide scholarship support for students earning a Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree through the Pacesetter program at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth.
- Keynote speaker Deborah Norville extolled the benefits of gratitude at the 2021 PARTNERS Spring Luncheon, which raised funds to support student scholarships and faculty research at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth.
- A joint workshop was held on April 9<sup>th</sup> between the School of Dentistry and Cizik School of Nursing - 23 faculty members made 22 presentations, followed by breakout sessions for small group discussion.

##### **Operations**

- **Hybrid Model.** The CSON continues to work in a hybrid model for the fall/spring, with didactic courses primarily online with simulation and clinical placement in our acute care and community settings. BSN and FNP students practiced a new intraprofessional collaboration via simulation.
- **COVID-19 Vaccines.** Students and faculty from the CSON are volunteering to provide COVID-19 vaccinations.
- **COVID-19 Testing.** Nurses at Cizik School of Nursing at UTHealth's nurse-led clinic, UT Health Services, continue as the university's COVID-19 testing operation site. The employee health clinic operates a drive-thru testing center every morning, serving the nearly 9,300 employees at UTHealth.
- **Open positions.** Cizik Nursing Research Director, Director – MSN Program, Director – DNP Program, Associate Dean for Practice and Community Engagement, Director – Corporate Occupational Health and UT Health Services Clinic, Associate Dean of Faculty Development, and a variety of undergraduate and graduate faculty positions.

### Publications and Presentations

- **Dr. Susan Alderman** presented “Hidden Costs for Sites and Sponsors: What costs do sites and sponsors incur that are not in study budgets and not ‘the cost of doing business?’” Presented at the Model Agreements & Guidelines International Clinical Research Conference – Spring 2021 on April 28, 2021.
- Melnyk, H.; **Djukic, M.**; Merriman, J.; Dickson, V. (2020). An integrative review: Women’s psychosocial vulnerability in relation to paid work after a breast cancer diagnosis. *Journal of Advanced Nursing*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.14730>
- Hallas, D.; Haber, J.; Biesecker, B.; Hartnett, E.; Toft Klar, R.; **Djukic, M.**; Fletcher, J. (2021). Design and outcomes of a nurse practitioner preceptor development program. *Journal of the American Association of Nurse Practitioners*. Doi.10.1097/JXX.0000000000000570. Published ahead of print.<https://doi.org/10.1097/jxx.0000000000000570>
- **Djukic, M.**; Jun, J.; & Fletcher, J. (2021). An examination of the factors associated with implementation of evidence-based management practices for improving nurse work environments. *Worldviews on Evidence-Based Nursing. Special Issue on Implementation Science, 18(2)*, 129-137.<https://doi.org/10.1111/wvn.12497>
- Leslie Norman, Brandy Wells, **Allison P. Edwards**. From policy to practice: A DNP student perspective. *Nursing Forum*. 24 April 2021. [doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12582](https://doi.org/10.1111/nuf.12582)

### Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences

**Dr. Nicholas De Lay**

#### GSBS 2020 Paul E. Darlington Mentor Award given to Louise D. McCullough, MD, PhD

- The Paul E. Darlington Mentor Award is given to a faculty member who has made an exemplary impact as a mentor. Dr. McCullough, this year’s recipient, is professor and Roy M. and Phyllis Gough Huffington Distinguished Chair in the Department of Neurology at McGovern Medical School.

#### Workshop on Industry Resumes for Biomedical Scientists

- Wednesday, May 26th, from 3 to 4 PM, there will be a webinar on strategic approaches for creating an effective and compelling industry resume.

#### GSBS Summer Biomedical Academy

- GSBS is hosting a virtual Summer Biomedical Academy July 12-23, every other day from 1- 4 PM.
  - High school Juniors and Seniors can apply to participate in this program, which will allow students to interact with students and faculty at MD Anderson Cancer Center and UTHealth to learn more about diverse fields of biomedical science and careers in biomedical sciences.
    - More information can be found here: <https://gsbs.uth.edu/current-students/community-outreach/biomedical-academy>

### McGovern Medical School

**Dr. Catherine Ambrose**

- The McGovern Faculty Senate task force on faculty mentoring, headed by Dr. Nahid Rianon, is continuing to meet with Dr. Morano to develop a faculty mentoring program
- At recent Faculty Senate meetings:
  - UTP went live with the EPIC EMR conversion on May 8. The FS will be getting an update at our meeting tomorrow from Dr. Fatuyi.
  - The Summer Research Program has been revised to only include McGovern medical students for summer 2021. The program will begin May 24 and run through July 23.
  - Graduation was held on May 2nd at Minute Maid Park, with limited family members invited.
  - The search for a new Dean is progressing. There are finalists who are being interviewed, and the faculty senate will get an update from Dr. Blackburn at the June meeting.
  - Many research labs are utilizing the new ELN system, LabArchives, which has been recently made available.
  - The FS recently had an update from our Admissions Committee. This past year all interviews were virtual. We received 6170 applications and interviewed 1145 applicants. The incoming class includes 229 Texas residents, 139 females, 100 males, and 3 military members. The class follows our history of increasing

diversity as it includes 16 African Americans, 80 Asians, 92 Caucasians, 41 Hispanic, 5 unreported, and 5 multiple ethnicities. We remain in the top 10 most affordable medical schools across the country.

#### **School of Biomedical Informatics (SBMI):**

***Dr. Kirk Roberts***

- James “Jim” Turley, PhD, RN, one of the founding members of SBMI, died tragically on April 18, 2021, after being struck by a vehicle while bicycling in Houston. Dr. Turley was a renowned informatics leader and played an instrumental role in shaping SBMI. He also gave back to the school by starting the *James Turley Endowed Scholarship for Global Health* in 2018. Dr. Turley had previously served on the faculty of the School of Nursing.
- PhD student Surabhi Datta won 2nd place in the student paper competition at the annual summit of AMIA, the primary professional society for biomedical informatics. There were roughly 100 student papers submitted to the conference.
- SBMI has re-worked its faculty awards to reflect the wide array of ways its faculty contribute to the School and the wider informatics community. The new awards include three teaching awards (excellence, innovation, and scholarship), research impact, leadership, innovation, mentoring, and an outstanding faculty award.

#### **School of Dentistry**

***Dr. Michele White***

- Formal request to IFC to lobby university administration to support a single extra year of funding for recipients of small (1-2 year) NIH awards
- UTSD Clinic Calibration Sessions May 13 – May 14
- UTSD ASDA’s Mock Interview Day May 15
- May 23 – Commencement with SCON, SPH; Dr. John Zerwas as commencement speaker
- June 1 – First day of Summer clinic
- Behind the Smile Event TBD

#### **School of Public Health**

***Dr. Ross Shegog***

##### Faculty Council continuing and new items (selected):

- Faculty council chairs confirmed: Chair: Ross Shegog; incoming Chair Shreela Sharma (active Sept. 2021)
- Faculty development: Release of faculty handbook resources guide with sections Faculty Affairs & Development; HOOP procedures; Research, Library & Graduate communication center; Teaching; Public Health Practice; Information Technology; Admin & Operations; Accreditation & Reporting; UTHealth Public Affairs, Media Relations, and Development Office; Safety and emergency communications.
- Adjustments for COVID-19 ... opening in Fall and encouraged to return in the Summer.
- AAR and peer review ongoing –
  - Instructions for Faculty on Different Tracks for AAR and Peer Review
  - Quantifying Service and Public Health Practice/Engagement Activities on AAR
  - List Publications for Calendar Years instead of Two Academic Years on AAR

##### Upcoming public health campus events (selected):

- The Brownsville campus continues to celebrate its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary with speakers and featured stories.
- 2021 Teaching award recipients: Dr. Baojiang Chen, Dr. Anna Wilkinson and Travis Teague, MPH, CPH. Recipients are nominated and voted on by the student body
- Faculty awards:
  - **Award for Excellence in Academic Advising** (Nominated by and selected by students). Anna Wilkinson, PhD, Associate Professor Epidemiology, Human Genetics and Environmental Sciences
  - **Award for Excellence in Teaching** Andrew Springer, PhD, Associate Professor Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences & Michael Swartz, PhD, Associate Professor Biostatistics and Data Science
  - **Award for Excellence in Community Service** Paula Cuccaro, PhD, Assistant Professor Health Promotion and Behavioral Sciences & Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, Assistant Professor Epidemiology, Human Genetics and Environmental Sciences
  - **Research Mentor-Mentee Award** David Lairson, PhD, Professor Ashish Deshmukh, PhD, Assistant Professor Management, Policy and Community Health

- COVID-19 response and resources by the Southwest Center for Occupational and Environmental Health (SWCOEH) Resources are available on their COVID-19 bilingual English and Spanish website. Since March 2020, faculty, staff, and students have provided near 6,300 hours of COVID-19 outreach and training to a professionals and organizations across federal Public Health Region 6 and the U.S, on keeping workers and customers safe, returning to work, or use of personal protective equipment. The SWCOEH has also provided numerous consultations to work organizations and news interviews. Visit the [SWCOEH](#) website for research, training resources, and other materials.
- 29<sup>th</sup> Annual James Steele Lecture featuring Dr. Carol J. Baker presenting “Developing Vaccines to Emergent Pathogens: “Lessons From Group B Streptococcal Perinatal Disease.”

Media exposure (selected in May):

- **Catherine Troisi, PhD**, was quoted in the [Texas Tribune](#) about the importance of receiving both doses of the vaccine to help protect against variant strains. The article was also shared by [Chron.com](#) and [Houston Public Media](#).
- **George Deltos, MD, PhD**, was interviewed by [CNA \(Channel News Asia\)](#) about lifting the mask mandate for COVID-19 in Texas and Mississippi (2:54 mark).
- **Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, MPH**, spoke to FOX 4 News in Dallas about Pfizer’s request for full approval of its COVID-19 vaccine from the U.S. Food and Drug Administration. Her interview ran during the [5](#) and [9 p.m.](#) broadcasts and was shared [online](#). Katelyn Jetelina, PhD, MPH, was interviewed by [KHOU-TV Channel 11](#) about the U.S. Centers for Disease Control’s approval of expanding the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine emergency use authorization for adolescents ages 12-15.
- **Eric Boerwinkle, PhD**, was quoted in the [Houston Chronicle](#) about the role faith leaders can play in encouraging people to be vaccinated against COVID-19.
- **Catherine Troisi, PhD**, spoke to the [Houston Chronicle](#) about why herd immunity is impossible to reach until children are vaccinated. The story was also shared by [MySanAntonio.com](#).
- **James Langabeer, PhD**, spoke to [WalletHub](#) about opioid use in different states and how state leaders can combat this problem.
- **The Texas Epidemic Public Health Institute** at UTHealth was mentioned in a [CBSAustin.com](#) article about the creation of a national guard style public health institute led by experts at UTHealth School of Public Health recommended by state lawmakers.

Dissertation / thesis presentations (selected)

Three dissertation defenses, three dissertation proposal defenses occurred in May.

**The UTHealth Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Council Update**

***Dr. Elaheh Ashtari***

- The DEI Bylaws were officially approved. The DEI will be added to HOOP 161 as an advisory council the Chair of the Council will be a member of the University Leadership Council.
- The Council is working on the standing committees within the Council.
- President Giuseppe Colasurdo received the National Diversity and Inclusion Council President’s Award for his commitment to diversity equity and inclusion.
- The Texas Medical Center is hosting a rally on May 21, 2021. Dr. Ashtari provided a flyer for distribution to the membership and is included and made a part of these minutes.

**V. MISCELLANEOUS**

**HOOP Meeting Update:**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer is a member of the UTHealth HOOP Committee as Chair of the IFC. At the May meeting, the committee discussed whether UTHealth would be mandating the vaccine because some Texas Medical Center hospitals are mandating it for all of their employees. It is not a requirement for our students and employees, and it does not appear that this will become a mandate but rather will be considered on a case-by-case basis as it is now. It may be discussed if anything changes, but this is the current situation at UTHealth. Dr. Morano advised

that UTHealth may try to find out the vaccination status of our students, especially those who participate in the hospitals.

**UTFAC Update:**

***Drs. Champagne-Langabeer and Elda Ramirez***

- There was a UT FAC Meeting that Drs. Champagne-Langabeer, Ramirez, and Biliciler-Denktaş attended. The committees met, and Chancellor Milliken attended and spoke on a new trend of micro-credentialing, which is very active in the legislature at this time. Micro-credentialing is not a new concept; it is a form of certification instead of a full degree or used to document taking a course to upgrade certain skillsets. UT System is moving toward micro-credentialing, and Dr. Champagne-Langabeer raised the point that currently, no one from a health science organization on the committee is part of the discussions.
- Dr. Ramirez updated the membership on a DEI survey that was circulated at all UTHealth schools. Once the formal report is finalized, it will be circulated. We did learn that all schools are doing very different things - many very positive things were identified, and a few weaknesses to work on were identified. The survey was a pilot survey, and we cleaned up any issues experienced and have now provided the survey to all fourteen academic and health-related institutions. Once the results are in, we will send a proposal to Chancellor Milliken to endorse DEI initiatives, have a state-based task force, and recommend a generic DEI education for all fourteen institutions. The State of Texas and UT System is behind many state institutions across the nation regarding DEI. So these efforts are being made to assist in pushing forward. Dr. Ramirez advised that as far as UTHealth is concerned, we are ahead of the other institutions.

**IFC Chair-Elect Nominations:**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer announced that we had received nominations, and two have accepted and are pursuing nomination. She opened the floor to nominate a colleague or self-nominate.

Terrie will work with the nominees on preparing their bios which will be included in the June 16 IFC Agenda meeting materials packet. The nominees will present themselves at the June IFC Meeting. We will have confidential voting directly after that meeting, and once all have responded, we will announce the Chair-Elect position to the membership.

**Subcommittee Final Reports:**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

Dr. Champagne-Langabeer explained that the subcommittees would be moved into their breakout session to finalize their subcommittee reports for presenting at the June IFC Meeting.

**VI. ADJOURNMENT**

***Dr. Champagne-Langabeer***

A motion was made and seconded to adjourn the meeting. The meeting adjourned at 12:45 PM, and all members were moved into their breakout subcommittee session.

Respectfully submitted by Terrie Schade-Lugo, CAP, on June 12, 2021.

Approved by Interfaculty Council on June 16, 2021.