

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEBRASKA  
COLLEGE OF MEDICINE

FACULTY COUNCIL MEETING  
MINUTES

January 12, 2024

7:30 a.m.

Members Present: Brad Britigan, Vimla Band, Surinder Batra, Sam Bierner, Matt DeVries, Chuck Enke, Rebekah Gundry, Jeff Harrison, Joe Khoury, Steve Lisco, Howard Liu, Matt Rizzo, Deb Romberger, Kari Simonsen, Carl Smith, Ashley Wysong, Sheila Ellis, Karen Gould, Beau Konigsberg, Trek Langenhan, Kim Latacha, Lyn Mack, Travis McCumber, Kody Moffatt, Olabisi Sheppard

Ad Hoc: Chandra Are, Kelly Caverzagie, Mike McGlade, Geoffrey Talmon

1. Welcome (Dr. Britigan)  
Dr. Britigan welcomed all to the January meeting
2. Minutes and Announcements (Dr. Britigan)  
December minutes were unanimously approved.
3. Old Business (e.g., follow-up's, updates)  
No updates
4. New Business
  - a) Topics brought forward by General Faculty Leadership  
No updates
  - b) Topics brought forward by Department Chair Leadership  
No updates
  - c) Topics brought forward by COM Administration  
No updates
5. Informational Items and Announcements (if needed)
  - Admissions and Student Affairs Wendy Grant, MD  
Update from Dr Britigan - Admissions committee meeting weekly to review applicants (up 5% from past years). Applicant pool is excellent. Final decisions on those interviewed by the end of Febr/early March.
  - Undergraduate Curriculum Geoff Talmon, MD  
M1s finishing up 2<sup>nd</sup> week of circulatory – they are one exam in.  
M2s off campus and dedicated to USMLE Step 1 study period.  
M3s approaching the last courtship of their phase 2 experience. Within the next week they will begin selecting their electives for phase 3.  
M4s winding down their interview season and turning focus to celebratory events.
  - Educational Strategy & Learning Environment Kelly Caverzagie, MD
    - a) COM Governance website (informational)  
College of Medicine website has been updated with regards to governance and governance documents.

b) General Faculty Submission Form (informational)

Within the COM website under Faculty Council is a link to a form for faculty to submit their comments, questions or issues for consideration that will be sent to Drs Caverzagie and Ellis. These in turn will be shared with the General Faculty.

c) DEI Committee Charter (attached) – will require a vote

Unanimously approved by Faculty Council

d) Faculty Grievance Charter (attached) – will require a vote

Unanimously approved by Faculty Council

Dr Caverzagie also mentioned that the application process for the Medical Student Summer Research Program has opened. New this year – Only available to students between M1 and M2.

- Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Shirley Delair, MD  
No update
- GME Update Chanda Are, MBBS  
Peak of interview season and everything is going well. Several programs have already finished their interviews.  
Step1 has gone pass/fail. Step 2 may go that way in the future.  
iEXCEL utilization data -  
iEXCEL is approximately 90,000 sq feet and 4 floors. It is used by every college (not just COM), plus people from the outside and almost always stretched to their limit. Every SIM center wants to be accredited. We applied to the American College of Surgeons in 2021 for accreditation and were successful. Every year we have to submit our usage data – for all.
- Research Howard Fox, MD, PhD  
No Update
- Clinical Affairs/Nebraska Medicine Steve Lisco, MD  
Ongoing discussions about masking throughout the organization. Children's Hospital and UNMC will have meetings on that. Nebraska Medicine will strongly recommend for all patient areas. At the last NGC meeting there was an update on physician insurance fund – dollars provided through a self-insured process to departments to help fund faculty who are on FMLA or MLOA. Goal is to have finalized by February.
- Pediatric Affairs/CSP/Children's Hospital Kari Simonsen, MD  
Children's continues to closely monitor respiratory viral season. As of this week not transitioning to universal masking approach but encouraging diligence in clinical spaces.
- COM Business  
Dr Britigan is in the process of putting together the search committees for anesthesiology and radiology.  
Tenure update – a few days ago one of the members of the unicameral introduced a bill that would basically ban the University from providing tenure to any faculty member. The bill reads (or is interpreted) that would be both prospective and would revoke tenure from current faculty members. It has eleven co-sponsors so it needs to be taken seriously. The University has mobilized a lot of its governmental affairs activities around this since it is a threat to long-standing tradition at universities across the country. In order to accomplish this, it would require a change in what has been delegated by the state government to the board of regents. Specifically, there is prior policy and legislation that basically delegates to the board of regents all responsibility for faculty appointments, including granting of tenure. This would pull that back. The University is working on what its response to this will be. This has implications in terms of recruitment, retention, research programs, quality of faculty that we would be able to recruit and retain for education as well as an economic impact if it should move forward. It's unclear if there is sufficient interest among other members of the unicameral to move this forward out of committee

and for future consideration. It is clearly being taken very seriously. Based on communication from Central Administration (Varner Hall) all official comments from anyone within the university system needs to go through the president's office (they want one voice on this). If any members of the faculty, Chairs, Deans, etc. are asked their opinion on this, particularly by media, they are to be referred to the president's office for comment. That's not to say when this comes forward that individuals cannot comment, it just needs to be as an individual citizen of Nebraska – not using any UNMC email, equipment, etc. to make that comment. This is a short session of the unicameral – 60 days rather than 90 – it may make this a challenge to even get before the whole body. The University is trying to decide what it's most appropriate response will be.

6. Adjourn

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Bradley Britigan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Bradley Britigan  
Dean, COM