

Tulane Resident and Fellow Congress
Meeting Minutes
February 17, 2022, 7pm

FOR CLARITY/TRANSPARENCY: These meeting minutes are not transcriptions. We are creating these minutes in order for there to be insight into the ongoing discussions of the TRFC. The summaries are not intended to be, nor are they capable of being, exhaustive. The commentary described below is not intended to reflect direct quotes and may not be comprehensively inclusive of all comments/questions/thoughts. Additionally, sensitive discussions/information may be omitted in the interest of respect for the persons coming to speak with us.

I. Call to Order

II. Old business

- a. Last meeting minutes approved
- b. Bylaws Update-Approved by TRFC for GMEC Review
- c. **ACGME Site Visit Results/Discussion**
 - i. Dr. Gladden preparing memo to discuss results that Tulane GME remains on probationary status without changes in accreditation status. Tulane GME remains accredited, and overall ACGME report indicates movement in right direction according to initial citations. GME is planning to do an upcoming Town Hall in addition to memo. Please be looking out for email notifications.
 - ii. Next ACGME site visit in August 2022.
 - iii. Question posed as to what TRFC can do to contribute to address ACGME concerns.
 1. Ideally residents and fellows will bring up concerns as they occur and TRFC representatives will help them figure out how to address the concern. Please visit TRFC website to find out who your TRFC representatives are and reach out with concerns or ideas that might improve educational experience and opportunities.
<https://medicine.tulane.edu/graduate-medical-education/resident-and-fellow-congress-trfc>
 2. Residents participating in GMEC subcommittees (does not have to be TRFC reps, any resident or fellow can participate)
 - a. GMEC Sub-committee Contacts:
 - b. EDI: Wendell Cole, wcole@tulane.edu
 - c. Wellness: Mandy Weidenhaft, mcrause@tulane.edu
 - d. Professionalism: David Yu
 3. TRFC Annual meeting to be held in May, according to by-laws must occur once annually. Timing allows for opportunity to recruit new leadership as it occurs in May prior elections of the following academic year's election of TRFC representatives in June. The annual meeting will communicate accomplishments of the TRFC for that academic year thus far and discuss future directions.

- iv. Concern for lack of substantive information available for TRFC reps to pass along to resident and fellow body due to lack of transparency and awaiting official statements. Need to re-visit with GMEC on amount of information being shared from ACGME site visit reports.

- 1. Please refer to GME website for available updates:

<https://medicine.tulane.edu/education/graduate-medical-education/accreditation-and-acgme-updates>

d. TRFC Objectives for Improving Communication with Resident and Fellow Body

- i. Discussion on ways to improve communication & TRFC accessibility:
 - 1. Idea presented for TRFC reps to have office hours in TMC resident lounge for residents and fellows to bring concerns to increase accessibility.
 - 2. Solution presented to post QR code in resident and fellow areas to submit comments and concerns to TRFC. Will seek GME support on logistics of how to set this up.
 - 3. Need addition of function to submit concerns on TRFC website.
 - 4. Need TRFC Tulane email address and logo.
 - 5. Idea presented for GME to hire a specific resident/fellow liaison that residents can bring concerns to directly.
- ii. Committee has previously discussed quarterly newsletter, but since minutes are now available on recently published TRFC website, this seems redundant, labor intensive, would be less informative, and would further contribute to email fatigue. TRFC representatives encouraged to make residents and fellows aware that minutes are available for their review. Pertinent resources are cited in minutes for concerns addressed in meetings. TRFC Website: <https://medicine.tulane.edu/graduate-medical-education/resident-and-fellow-congress-trfc>
- iii. Motion to form TRFC Social Media Committee/Resident Outreach Subcommittee) to communicate with Tulane residents and fellows via social media, office hours that would encourage more conversational interactions.
 - 1. Motion seconded.
- iv. Concern has been brought up from residents that they are unsure of what TRFC can help them address. TRFC at minimum functions as ears for concerns to be able to step concerns up to administration and direct them to the appropriate resources. Business discussed at TRFC meetings gets brought up at GMEC meetings and serves to bring up concerns and contribute to GMEC agenda items and make individual GMEC members of specific concerns.
 - 1. TRFC is meant to be a body that advocates for residents and communicates concerns to administration and mobilize trainees to achieve things to improve the resident and fellow experience.
 - 2. Examples of concerns raised and being addressed with GMEC:
 - a. Resident Salaries.

- b. Resident Stipends.
 - c. Interns getting paid for orientation.
 - d. Need for access to statisticians.
 - e. Concerns regarding budget transparency for programs.
 - f. TRFC budget.
 - g. TRFC bylaws revision.
 - h. Need for improvement in the reporting system - need for policies and enforcement.
 - i. Need for improvement in regard to EDI - need for policies.
 - j. Availability of mental health resources for residents and fellows.
(*Find resources via Tulane Companion App: Support > Trainee > Psychotherapy and Psychiatry in New Orleans*)
3. Concerns brought to TRFC that Tulane GME could address can be brought to GMEC. For concerns brought to TRFC that might be better addressed through another pathway, TRFC can help direct individuals to specific resources at site they are experiencing issues.
 4. Individual TRFC representatives should communicate with their programs on business discussed at meetings and bring individual concerns to TRFC and GME.
- v. Continued concerns brought up about submitted professionalism complaints not being addressed or being disregarded due to being submitted by a resident rather than attendings. TRFC GME representatives will bring up to GMEC at next GMEC meeting.
 1. Reporting System: <https://medicine.tulane.edu/student-affairs/professionalismenvironment-learning-program>
 2. Please refer to Professionalism Task Force website for further information: <https://medicine.tulane.edu/student-affairs/professionalismenvironment-learning-program/professionalism-task-force>

e. President-elect Results:

- i. President Elect for 2022-2023 will Dr. Leslie R. Miller (Triple Board PGY3).

f. Resident stipend update

- i. GME is discussing adjusting resident salaries for inflation and cost of living.
- ii. GME working on incoming interns being paid for orientation time and paychecks be dispersed in June in response to previous concerns brought by TRFC.
- iii. There are a set number of Full Time Employment positions determined by federal government limiting number of residents. Tulane disperses paychecks and this reimbursed by hospital sites. Our impression is that salaries are determined by regional averages rather than local cost of living.

- iv. Tulane Retirement Plans are available, but Tulane does not match contributions. TIAA customer service representatives have been helpful to individual residents in setting up retirement plans.

[https://hr.tulane.edu/benefits/retirement#:~:text=Tulane%20currently%20offers%20four%20retirement,c\)%20tax%2Dexempt%20organizations.](https://hr.tulane.edu/benefits/retirement#:~:text=Tulane%20currently%20offers%20four%20retirement,c)%20tax%2Dexempt%20organizations.)

g. Budget Update/Ideas

- i. Individual program budgets are separate from larger Tulane budgets and GME does not have authority over those budgets. GME has advised to reach out to program chairs for questions or concerns about budget amounts, allocation, or requests.
 - 1. Concern brought up that lack of clarity of program budgets inhibit planning of events without knowing budgets. It may be helpful to identify program administrators that handle budget to address their questions to.
 - 2. TRFC representatives encouraged to reach out to their program chairs to gather information to bring to GMEC.
 - 3. Plan to request GMEC to provide contacts for individual programs that residents can address individual program budget questions to.
- ii. Lack of clarity on individual programs budgets has been a limit to Budget Subcommittee discussions on how to equitably dispense TRFC funds.
- iii. Annually TRFC budget is sourced by \$5,000 from residents that DOES roll over and \$5,000 from the university that DOES NOT roll over. Resident contributed funds remain in the following year's budget if not spent.
- iv. TRFC budget currently about \$20,000, ideas on how to spend:
 - 1. Contribute to individual program wellness budgets.
 - 2. Annual Mardi Gras event.
 - 3. Funding for food, etc. for TRFC Office Hours.
 - 4. Sponsoring smaller events in resident lounges.
 - 5. Furniture for Tulane Hospital resident Lounge.
 - 6. Large event after TRFC Annual Meeting outdoors given COVID concerns.

h. Update of EDI grand rounds with Bennetta Horne- Plan on post Mardi Gras/March Grand Rounds

III. New Business

- a. **VA Snack room/meal concerns update:** There has been success with reaching out to VA GME office. Encourage residents to reach out to clinical site GME offices for specific site concerns. No meal cards at VA, considering possibility of meal cards that could be picked up by residents, but that would reduce budget for stocking resident room. Please reach out to residents and gather preferences.
 - i. Crystal Cruz (crystal.cruz2@va.gov and extension 67518) is still the VA GME Program Specialist.
 - ii. Dr. Grundy is also available to address VA concerns with.

iii. If VA snack room is empty, call *6-5711

IV. Open floor for new business

a. *Open floor is an opportunity for committee members to present items for new business to be addressed at the next TRFC meeting. This is an excellent opportunity for TRFC Representatives to bring resident and fellow concerns to the committee and add them to the agenda.*

b. Reminder of tentative dates for committee tasks:

- i. Nominations for 2022-2023 TRFC Representatives: April-June 2022
- ii. TRFC Annual Meeting (All Residents & Fellows): May 2022
 1. Annual meeting should have Zoom option if held in-person.
- iii. Elections for 2022-2023 TRFC Representatives: June 2022

V. Adjourn

VI. Attendance (43 members):

1. Andy Pham (TRFC President)
2. Mary Jenkins (TRFC Co- VP)
3. Megan Lerner (TRFC Co- VP)
4. Leslie Miller (TRFC Secretary)
5. Blake Winston (TRFC Treasurer)
6. Mei Yang
7. Michael Ghio
8. Shanan Immel
9. Mark Rocco
10. Domonique Cross
11. Ricky Salinas
12. Austin Hansen
13. Stephanie Goddard
14. Nina Hein
15. Megan Lerner
16. Claire Mickey
17. Elora Apantaku
18. Jemimah Chen
19. Robert Limbaugh
20. Danae Brierre
21. Sumedha Purkayastha