

UNIVERSITY COUNCIL
PLANNING AND PRIORITIES COMMITTEE
REPORT FOR INFORMATION

PRESENTED BY: Dirk de Boer, chair, planning and priorities committee

DATE OF MEETING: May 18, 2017

SUBJECT: **Report on Input Received in Response to the Policy for Medical Faculty**

COUNCIL ACTION: For information only

CONTEXT AND BACKGROUND:

At the April 23, 2017, Council meeting, the planning and priorities committee presented the draft Policy for Medical Faculty to Council as a request for input. The purpose of the policy is to move to a new model of faculty engagement of the community physicians who teach in the college's MD program. The *The Way Forward: Implementation Plan for the College of Medicine* indicated that a new model of engagement was deemed essential by the program's accrediting bodies if the college was to regain full accreditation.

Comments on the draft policy document were requested by April 30, 2017, to be sent to Dirk de Boer, committee chair. This report summarizes and reports back to Council on the input received.

DISCUSSION SUMMARY:

Ten written responses were received in response to the request for input, with most of these submitted by members of Council. Several responses collated the concerns raised by colleagues in the member's department or college and were submitted on their behalf. The responses were thoughtful, detailed, and often referred to the variability of appointment processes followed at other Canadian universities for community physicians.

Objections centred primarily on the elimination of the "clinical" designation to refer to the faculty who teach and supervise MD students and medical residents. This designation was considered important to distinguish medical faculty, who are not employees of the university, from tenured and tenure-track faculty, who are university employees. The need for a differential designation for medical faculty was mentioned in almost all responses.

Additional concerns focused on the use of the rank of assistant, associate, or full professor to describe the levels of promotion of the medical faculty, or MD faculty as they are commonly known. Assigning MD faculty with titles equivalent to tenure-track faculty was viewed as blurring the distinction between those committed to teaching, research, scholarship, governance, and community engagement on a full-time basis, and those who make important academic contributions, but on a different scale.

Numerous examples were given of practitioners and in-service professionals who also provide essential services to the university supervising student work placements and providing clinical instruction in the professional health sciences. Many responses pointed out that these individuals are not afforded the same opportunities to contract with the university and be made university faculty members at the rank of assistant, associate and full professor, and yet many university programs would not exist without their contributions.

The planning and priorities committee considered the feedback received in response to the request for input at its meeting on May 3, 2017. Michael Atkinson, interim provost and vice-president academic, informed members that the draft policy was being revised in response to the concerns raised. The planning and priorities committee was not able to view the changes at the meeting, but did hear a summary of the changes planned. Members had no concerns with any of the changes.

At the meeting, the committee also discussed the changing nature of university appointments relative to standards for promotions and tenure. Various colleges and departments, for example, now have a separate set of standards that applies to academic programming (AP) appointments.

A copy of the draft policy received by Council at the April 23 Council meeting is attached, showing the revisions in mark-up throughout. The Board of Governors will be asked to approve the policy at the Board meeting on June 21, 2017.

The procedures manual for medical faculty and the College of Medicine standards are distinct from the policy document but serve to realize the policy. Clicking on the link to the procedures in the policy document will provide Council members with the most current form of the draft procedures. A new version of the procedures is expected to be posted May 16, 2017.

The procedures manual will be approved by the College of Medicine once the policy is approved. Changes to the College of Medicine standards for promotion and tenure will be undertaken by the College of Medicine college review committee and will be submitted for approval by the university review committee.

ATTACHMENTS:

Policy for Medical Faculty, revised version dated May 9, 2017 with changes showing in markup.

Policy for Medical Faculty

Responsibility: Dean, College of Medicine; Vice-Dean Faculty Engagement, College of Medicine

Authorization:

Approval Date:

Amended:

Purpose:

The purpose of this policy is to provide institutional recognition and formally define the academic relationship medical faculty have with the university and establish a framework for the governance of medical faculty relations with the university. The Dean, College of Medicine, has or may delegate responsibility for implementing this policy, as well as developing and maintaining its associated procedures.

Scope of this Policy:

This policy applies to all medical faculty, regardless of external clinical income source. It does not apply to faculty **members** in scope of the USFA.

Definitions:

Medical faculty

With a few minor exceptions as outlined in the Procedures Manual for Medical Faculty, medical faculty are defined as licensed Saskatchewan physicians (MD or equivalent), or Clinical PhDs, holding clinical appointments in their respective health regions¹ as well as academic appointments in departments or divisions within the College of Medicine, University of Saskatchewan.

Clinical/academic setting

A *clinical/academic setting* is defined as a clinical site or academic environment or combined clinical-academic setting in which academic work is undertaken by medical faculty.

Academic Freedom

Academic freedom is defined as the freedom to examine, question, teach and learn, and the right to investigate, speculate and comment without reference to prescribed doctrine, as well as the right to criticize the University and society at large. Academic freedom does not require neutrality on the part of the individual, but makes commitment possible. Academic freedom carries with it the duty to use that freedom in a manner consistent with the scholarly obligation to base teaching and research on an honest search for knowledge.

¹ With provincial health region restructuring, jurisdictional authority for clinical appointments may rest with a provincial health authority or other legislated body

Policy:

Medical faculty provide important services to their communities and patients in their clinical practices. They also deliver essential academic services to the university **through their academic appointments**.

While medical faculty are not employees of the university and are distinct from their faculty **member** colleagues ~~in other colleges~~, the academic contributions of medical faculty are as important to the academic mission of the university as those made by any other faculty **members**.

Medical faculty are **legitimate academic appointees and hold** legitimate university academic appointments **conferred** with **the** academic rights, freedoms and responsibilities similar to those held by all university faculty **members**. This **policy recognizes** that medical faculty, **through their academic appointments**, are engaged in valued academic work and have accepted the university's role in academic governance and protection of academic freedom in clinical/academic settings. Normally such settings, if primarily clinical, have university – health region affiliation agreements in place, but this policy does not require the existence of such affiliation agreements.²

Notwithstanding their academic appointments, medical faculty are subject to the limitations outlined by The University of Saskatchewan Act with respect to the statutory definition of faculty member. In recognition of their non-employment status, medical faculty are not members of the General Academic Assembly and are not eligible to serve on University Council.

This policy recognizes and confirms that the **academic** appointments of medical faculty and payment for their services, whether clinical or academic, are two distinct and separate matters. The specific academic services provided by a medical faculty appointee and the payment for those services are contractually negotiated with the individual medical faculty appointees. The medical faculty appointment and this policy do not address payment of medical faculty, or matters of clinical governance.

This policy confirms that medical faculty appointees in good standing have a right to academic freedom. Without limiting the previous definition, the university's fundamental role in protecting the academic freedom of medical faculty appointees includes Department Heads acting as advocates on behalf of medical faculty when issues of academic freedom arise in the academic/clinical setting. The Dean or his/her delegate(s), as described in procedures associated with this policy, will promptly investigate all allegations of breach of academic freedom.

This policy affirms the establishment of a College of Medicine administrative and governance committee, the Academic-Clinical Relations Committee (ACRC).

² With provincial health region restructuring, historic affiliation agreements with health regions may be replaced by an equivalent agreement with the provincial health authority or other duly authorized organization(s).

Responsibilities:

~~The university community is responsible for recognizing medical faculty appointees as academic colleagues and partners in the university's academic mission. All university faculty and university administrative staff will facilitate collegial interactions with medical faculty. University administrators will work, as necessary, to create, revise or adapt other university rules, policies and procedures affecting medical faculty to achieve consistency with the spirit and intent of this policy.~~

The university community **recognizes** medical faculty appointees as academic colleagues and partners in **supporting, advancing, and respecting the** university's academic mission, **vision and values**. **In support of the** intent of this policy, university **officials and** administrators will strive to **facilitate meaningful collegial participation of** medical faculty through review and revision of university **policies, practices and** procedures affecting medical faculty, when appropriate and relevant.

While the university confirms that medical faculty have academic freedom with respect to all academic activities and scholarly pursuits, it is recognized that medical faculty also remain subject to applicable ethical and clinical standards, guidelines, laws, regulations, rules and procedures governing the practice of medicine, whether site-specific, institutional, local, regional, provincial, or national. In addition, medical faculty have reciprocal obligations and responsibilities to the university and must comply with required academic guidelines as well as all applicable university policies, rules and procedures.

The Dean, College of Medicine, has or may delegate responsibility for implementing and disseminating this policy and for ensuring the ACRC develops and maintains necessary associated procedures. The ACRC will provide administrative and procedural oversight for the procedures governing the relations between medical faculty and the university. The college is authorized to determine the committee's membership, roles and responsibilities.

Procedures:

The [*Procedures Manual for Medical Faculty*](#) contains procedures governing the academic relationship medical faculty appointees have with the university and the college. The ACRC is responsible for the maintenance and administration of the procedures, as described in detail in the *Procedure Manual*, which can be found here: ([website for Procedures Manual](#)). **Changes to the Procedures, as these apply to appointments, titles, performance expectations, and career advancement must be approved by the Provost's Office and made available to members of council.**

Contact:

Name: Vice Dean Faculty Engagement

Unit: College of Medicine, U of S

Email: medicine.facultyaffairs@usask.ca

Phone: 306-966-1378

