

Tulane Resident and Fellow Congress
Meeting Minutes
October 13th, 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.

1) Call to Order

2) Guest: Dr. Murina to discuss Leave Policy

3) TRFC Subcommittee Updates:

- a) **GMEC TRFC Representatives** (Chairs: President & Co-VPs)
- b) **Communications & Membership** (Chair: Secretary, Sarah Lewis)
- c) **Finance** (Chair: Treasurer, David Thompson)
 - i) **Budget Update**
 - ii) *To elect to contribute \$2.50 or \$5 monthly to TRFC Budget, complete this form ([TRFC Payroll Deduction Form.docx](#)) and email to HWeisler@tulane.edu.*
 - iii) **Resident Salary Recommendations & Benefit updates** – *Salary increase not what expected, overall 2% increase, no cost-of-living adjustment. Interns were paid a flat rate stipend in June to ameliorate extended period before first paycheck. Trying to find other ways to supplement trainee income such as structured opportunities for moonlighting, housing stipend, advocating for paid board exams taken during training.*
- d) **Event and Programming Coordination** (Chair: Danae Brierre; Elora Apantaku, Zil Shah, Jayde Price, Reed Ghio)
- e) **Clinical Site Advocacy Committee** (Kiondra Fisher, Zil Shah, Dani Takai-Castioni)
- f) **Advocacy & Community Outreach** (Chair: Oyinlola Oshinowo; Kiondra Fischer, Danae Brierre)
- g) **EDI: Represent TRFC on GMEC EDI Subcommittee** (Jemimah Chen, Elora Apantaku, Ricky Salinas)
- h) **Wellness: Represent TRFC on GMEC Wellness Subcommittee** (Co-chairs: Danae Brierre, Michael Ghio)
 - i) Ideas: Comfort Cart like at CHNOLA, Mini-massage day in the hospital.

4) New Business

- a) **Clarification on Tulane Parental Leave Policy for residents and fellows:** *Leave policy is included in trainee contracts for your reference.*
 - i) **Is there a separate policy for residents?** Yes.
 - Contacted Bunnie Sylve, Leave Coordinator, bsylve2@tulane.edu, who is responsible for affirming eligibility for medical leave options and to place them on medical or pregnancy leave when eligible. Referred to **Sue Pollock** (spollac@tulane.edu) for further info specific to trainees.
 - Tulane paid Parental Leave policy [[Parental Leave | Human Resources \(tulane.edu\)](#)] is a staff employee benefit and it excludes medical residents.

- See page 47-48 [TULANE UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE RESIDENT POLICIES](#)


ii) **Has the leave policy been updated since the release of ABMS Policy on Parental, Caregiver and Medical Leave During Training went into effect 7/1/21? Yes.**

- [Parental, Caregiver and Medical Leave During Training \(abms.org\)](#) Effective 7/1/2021. GMEC reviewed and approved a revised Policy on Vacation and Leave on 6/8/2022 -- <https://medicine.tulane.edu/graduate-medical-education/resident-and-fellow-congress-trfc> Policies were revised effective July 1, 2022 and are posted on the GME website at <https://medicine.tulane.edu/graduate-medical-education/resident-and-fellow-congress-trfc>
- **Other discrepancies from old policy were clarified:**
 - Clearly state how much time in training is required for candidates to become eligible for Initial Certification (**ABMS Policy item #1**).
 - Clearly state when time away from training for purposes of parental, caregiver and medical leave will require an extension of training in order to become eligible for Initial Certification (**ABMS Policy item #5**).
 - Include foster parents and surrogates (**ABMS Policy item #3**):
 - **Revised policy 6/8/2022:** "Parental leave is available to a resident for the birth and care of a child, including birth via surrogate, the adoption of a child or placement of a child with the resident for foster care. Parental leave applies to biological, adoptive, and domestic-partner parents."
 - Include specific statement on testing accommodations for trainees who require extension of training (**ABMS Policy item #8**). *Can Department-specific contract changes be made to include a specific statement on testing accommodations for trainees who require extension of training?*
 - **Policy on Accommodations for Disabilities revised 12/15/2021:** "The School of Medicine follows Tulane's disability and accommodation policies that ensure reasonable accommodations for qualifying individuals. The policies, which extend to residents and fellows (each a "resident"), as well as other individuals, are available online at: <https://equity.tulane.edu/report-claim/policies> within Tulane's Equal Opportunity/Anti-Discrimination Policies.
Consistent with the Equal Opportunity/Anti-Discrimination Policies, the School of Medicine's policy is to reasonably accommodate qualified individuals with disabilities when accommodation is necessary to allow an individual to compete for a position, perform the essential functions of a position (including a resident or fellow position), and/or enjoy equal benefits and privileges of employment, where the accommodation would not impose an undue hardship on Tulane."
 - **Can Department-specific contract changes be made to specify amount of leave time that would require extension of training?**
 - **See Policy on Vacation and Leave revised 6/8/2022:** "The aggregate amount of leave time a resident may take *without the need for additional time in training* is determined by the Program Director considering program and specialty board requirements but may not exceed the maximum time away from training permitted by a program's specialty board or specialty board rules."

- iii. **If parental leave spans 2 academic years, can unused vacation/sick time roll over to the following year to relieve financial burden on residents during unfunded parental leave?** Still unknown.
- iv. **Can parental leave start before physically giving birth or adopting/fostering?** *Yes, residents may choose to use his or her parental leave anytime from one month prior to the birth/adoption of the child up until six months after the birth/adoption of the child.*
- v. **Are trainees eligible for pregnancy leave in addition to parental leave?** NO
Pregnancy Leave | Human Resources (tulane.edu)
- vi. **Are trainees eligible for pregnancy leave in addition to parental leave?** *NO*
[Pregnancy Leave | Human Resources \(tulane.edu\)](#)
 - i. This is University policy, which does not apply to residents/fellows. GME Policy, approved 8/8/2021, states: "The six (6) weeks of paid medical, parental, or caregiver leave shall be approved in advance, paid at 100% percent of the resident's salary, and may be taken at any time during a resident's program."
 - ii. When related to pregnancy and the employee or medical resident is ineligible for FMLA, they are entitled to a Non-FMLA leave for pregnancy related illnesses and to recover from the birth. In these cases, employees are protected under State Pregnancy Leave laws. [Maternity and Parental Leave Laws in Louisiana | DisabilitySecrets](#)
- vii. **Is it required to use sick and vacation time prior to the 6-week parental leave period?**
 - i. Yes., however remains unclear in what order for parental leave.
- viii. **Can Department-specific contract changes be made to include a specific statement on testing accommodation for trainees who require extension of training?**
 - i. Departmental contracts are different for attendings & other Tulane employees (university employees). Parental leave should be the same regardless of department and trainee status as we are considered house staff. We want to ensure this in accordance with national standards.
 - ii. It is still unclear how required 6 weeks of paid parental leave +/- or sick/vacation time +/- or FMLA time should be implemented or funded on a national level and current guidance has not provided adequate support or funding for institutional GME programs to effectively implement these standards. We need more advocacy and funding on a state and national level for GME funding and additional residency & fellowship positions to solve this longstanding problem.
 - How to get involved locally:
 - <https://masela.org/About-us>
 - <https://www.opms.org/>
 - <https://lsms.org/>
 - <http://jpms.org/>
- b) **Childcare resources for trainees:** – a list was made by medical students during Ida. Would an extra stipend to offset the cost of childcare be wanted? Dr. Guidry was working on this.
- c) **Limited Vegetarian options in Resident Room at TUMC:** Reusable water bottle machine is coming. Sparkling water might be coming. Wellness champs working on a poll for most common food/drink items requested. Should provided focus on having vegetarian options.

5) Old Business

- a) **Pumping availability:** *The Clinical site sub-committee might want to work on this for pumping areas and where they are, not sure about locations at every site.*

- i) [Lactation Rooms.docx](#)
 - b) **Resident & Fellow workspace at TMC** – TRFC leadership has reached out to CMO at TMC for advice and advocacy. In a previous meeting, the suggestion proposed to repurpose unused space in the hospital for trainee workspace with computers and printers for completing clinical duties.
 - i) Internal Medicine using old 4th floor MICU for internal medicine workspace but might not be permanent and not adequate.
 - ii) Specialties in need of workspace identified as needing trainee workspace: Adult Infectious Disease Fellows, Consultation-Liaison Psychiatry in the Emergency Department.
 - c) **Update on downtown gym:** Free for trainees until August 2023!
<https://campusrecreation.tulane.edu/tu-fitness-center>
 - d) **Please update your contact information & sign up for subcommittees:**  [TRFC Contact List.xlsx](#)
- 6) **Open floor for new business** (*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.*)
- a) **Changes to Scrub Availability at UMC:** Dr. Robin McGoey's office working on solutions.
 - b) LSU has built new housing exclusively for medical students, faculty, staff, and employees of the medical community (LSU and Tulane campuses and hospitals), built through a partnership with the LSU Health Foundation.
 - c) TUMC-LCMC Merger: Please submit questions. here: <https://forms.gle/BbCKpUdg9K9Si86P6>
Documentation of these questions, concerns, possible solutions are very important and appreciated. Please also be mindful that this is intended to be presented to stakeholders, so professional language is important.

7) **Adjourn**

- 8) **Attendance:** *Reminder that Program Representatives shall be expected to attend meetings on a regular basis. Representatives must attend at least one meeting per quarter and if attendance is not met, the TRFC Board will reach out to programs with lapsed participation to seek further representation.*
- a) **TRFC Representatives present:**
 1. Leslie Miller (President)
 2. Kiondra Fisher (VP)
 3. Hogan Hudgins (VP)
 4. Sarah Lewis (Secretary)
 5. David Thompson (Treasurer)
 - 6.

Upcoming Events:

- **TRFC Open Forums** (via zoom): *Open to all residents and fellows. No administrative leadership present. Dates: Thursdays 6-7 pm CST on 12/8/22, 3/9/23, 6/8/23* (link in Outlook calendar invite)
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Resource List:

- **Mental Health Resources:** Find resources via Tulane Companion App: Wellness (top right list menu)>Support > Trainee > Psychotherapy and Psychiatry in New Orleans.
 - Compilation of Mental Health & Wellness Resources for Medical Professionals: https://docs.google.com/document/d/18kawS_YixGrXrNRo_rAsW0VcdGjU66b4tYznJh6PvU/edit?usp=sharing
 - [Employee Assistance Program | Human Resources \(tulane.edu\)](#)
- **TRFC Website:** <https://medicine.tulane.edu/graduate-medical-education/resident-and-fellow-congress-trfc>
 - Please visit our website to find out who your TRFC reps are and reach out to them with any questions or concerns. If you are interested in leadership, please consider running for TRFC next year!
- **Professionalism Reporting System:** <https://medicine.tulane.edu/student-affairs/professionalismenvironment-learning-program>
- **Professionalism Task Force website:** <https://medicine.tulane.edu/student-affairs/professionalismenvironment-learning-program/professionalism-task-force>
- **GME website:** <https://medicine.tulane.edu/education/graduate-medical-education>
- **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. Representative: Louis Bundy 1-866-843-5640
 - [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)
 - www.tiaa-cref.org/letstalk1