

---

**Minutes of Faculty Council Meeting 285  
Tuesday, June 23, 2020  
1:00 to 2:00 p.m.  
via Microsoft Teams**

Present: J. Ahmad, V. Arora, Z. Austin, M. Battistella, R. Bendayan, R. Bonin, G. Bradley-Ridout, T. Brown, A. Cameron, K. Cameron, J. Carter, T. Chalikian, I. Crandall, D. Croteau, N. Crown, F. Cretu, C. De Angelis, L. Dolovich, S. Drodge, D. Dubins (Chair), M. Erclik, P. Grootendorst, S. Guilcher, C. Harvey-Kane, J. Henderson, C. Ho, A. Huynh, J. Kellar, L. Kotra, A. Lee, M. Luu, A. Malek, R. Macgregor, L. McCarthy, S. Pang, K. Richards, M. Rocchi, D. Sibbald, L. Singh, M. So, N. Steenhof, A. Taddio, C. Tan, K. Tan, M. Tomas, B. Thrush, A. Trent, J. Uetrecht, J. Wells, P. Wells, S. Wu, L. Chung (Recording Secretary)

Regrets: H. Boon, L. Dupuis, O. Fernandes, M. James, D. Kwan, A. Mills, M. Piquette-Miller, A. Swanson, T. Young

Guests: A. Milochik, S. Parna

---

**1.0 Approval of Minutes, April 23, 2020**

**MOVED:** Z. Austin; **SECONDED:** D. Croteau; **THAT**, the minutes of the meeting held on April 23, 2020, be approved.

**CARRIED**

**2.0 Report of the Striking Committee**

The Chair relinquished the chair to Z. Austin to present the report of the Striking Committee.

**ITEMS FOR APPROVAL:**

Updated membership lists for Council and the Standing Committees of Council for 2020-2021 were distributed electronically. These committees will take effect as of July 1, 2020.

**MOVED:** D. Dubins; **SECONDED:** P. Grootendorst, **THAT**, the membership list for Council be approved.

**CARRIED**

**MOVED:** P. Grootendorst; **SECONDED:** C. De Angelis, **THAT**, the membership lists for the Standing Committees of Council be approved.

**CARRIED**

Z. Austin relinquished the chair back to the Chair of Faculty Council.

**3.0 Report of the Recruitment and Admissions Committee**

The Recruitment and Admissions Committee met on May 28, 2020.

The PharmD Admissions Subcommittee met on April 27, 2020, where discussion occurred related to proposed changes, the specific rationale, and recommendations for changes to the admissions process and requirements. These recommendations were approved at the PharmD Program Committee on May 4, 2020, and were subsequently presented and discussed at the May 28, 2020, meeting of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee. All recommendations were approved.

Faculty and staff were invited to attend presentations by Altus Assessments, related to their online situational judgment test, CASPer®, on April 15, and by Kira Talent, related to their online video-based interview system, on April 21. These were also discussed briefly at the faculty and staff meeting on April 20, 2020.

## ITEMS FOR APPROVAL

### *Removal of the Pharmacy College Admissions Test (PCAT) as a PharmD Program Admission Requirement*

#### Rationale:

- PCAT is a standardized test; this type of test is associated with potential issues that impact its accessibility, reliability and validity. PCAT disadvantages individuals who come from diverse socioeconomic, cultural and geographical backgrounds, who could otherwise be highly ranked applicants.
- Our own research and other studies in Pharmacy indicate PCAT is strongly correlated with the GPA, and does not add value to predicting performance in the Pharmacy program or on licensure exams.
- All but one other Canadian school (Manitoba) do NOT require PCAT. Thus, it is an added step and barrier to apply to U of T. The high cost for applicants is also a barrier.

It was also noted that the use of the PCAT in the U.S.A. was declining.

**MOVED:** J. Kellar; **SECONDED:** Z. Austin, **THAT**, the decision of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee be upheld in removing the Pharmacy College Admissions Test as a PharmD program admission requirement.

**CARRIED**

### *Removal of the Multiple Mini Interviews (MMI) as a PharmD Program Admission Requirement*

#### Rationale:

- The MMI has provided an effective face-to-face assessment of non-academic attributes in our admissions for the past 10 years. However, other reliable and cost-effective assessments of these attributes, via online virtual platforms, have been developed.
- One such platform is CASPer®, by Altus Assessments. Published evidence supports the use of this online, asynchronous, situational judgement test, as a reliable and valid predictor of non-academic attributes in health science students and graduates.
- The pandemic situation this year required a quick change from the MMI to an online platform, and CASPer® was able to provide a relatively smooth solution. We now have first-hand positive experience in support of its continued use in our program.
- The MMI logistics are complex and demanding of personnel time and resources each year.

**MOVED:** J. Kellar; **SECONDED:** R. Bendayan, **THAT**, the decision of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee be upheld in removing the Multiple Mini Interviews as a PharmD program admission requirement.

**CARRIED**

### *Addition of an Online Situational Judgement Test (CASPer®) as a PharmD Program Admission Requirement*

#### Rationale:

- CASPer® (<https://takeCASPer.com>) is an online situational judgement test developed by McMaster Medical School, and now is used by a majority of medical schools in Canada and also by many other health science programs (*i.e.*, Nursing, Dentistry, PT, OT) around the world. Four other Canadian pharmacy schools now require CASPer®.
- The test is designed to measure a selection of non-academic attributes identified by health science programs and accreditation bodies. The following attributes are measured by CASPer®: communication, collaboration, empathy, equity, ethics, motivation, problem solving, professionalism, resilience, self-awareness. (Underline indicates attributes assessed in our MMI.) Evidence has shown that there is a moderate correlation between MMI and CASPer®, supporting the latter as a reasonable replacement.
- CASPer® does not provide a traditional assessment of oral and written communication skills (*e.g.*, which includes conventions of language). However, oral and written communication would be assessed through another online platform, Kira Talent, as outlined below.

- The test is relatively inexpensive to applicants and thus improves accessibility to our program. (Compare the expense of writing PCAT and travel costs to attend the MMI in Toronto.) There is no cost to the Faculty to require this test. Altus Assessments designs, implements, grades each test and then issues scores to our Admissions office at no cost.
- The test is taken online at the applicant's location of choice and thus not affected by current or future travel or physical distancing restrictions.
- Security measures are in place to minimize inappropriate test-taking by applicants.
- The test is offered several times per year: applicants would complete the test by January 31 of the application year. Scores will be available to inform our selection of applicants who will be invited to engage in the Kira Talent interview as outlined in the next motion.

When the Faculty moved to the MMIs, one of the *quid pro quo* was that much of the content in the teaching and assessment of communication skills was dropped. A question was raised as to whether the Faculty will consider including something more explicit in the teaching and assessment of communication skills, since this is no longer captured using the MMIs, when undergoing curriculum reform.

It was noted that there will be research opportunities before and after all of the changes are implemented.

**MOVED:** J. Kellar; **SECONDED:** D. Croteau, **THAT**, the decision of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee be upheld in adding an online situational judgement test as a PharmD program admission requirement.

**CARRIED**

*Addition of an Online Interview Test (Kira Talent), for a Subset of Applicants, as a PharmD Program Admission Requirement*

Rationale:

- A subset would be selected on the basis of a minimum CASPer® score and minimum GPA, to create a maximum total Kira Talent (<https://www.kiratalent.com>) interview cohort of approximately 400-500 candidates.
- Kira Talent works closely with each Faculty to identify desired attributes to be assessed in the interview. Based on these core attributes, questions will be co-developed by Kira Talent and the Faculty to create an appropriate bank. They are then formatted into the online set of questions presented to the applicants.
- Applicants could take the interview online at a location of their choice. Similar to CASPer®, there are security checks designed by the company to help identify breaches.
- Customized welcome and closing videos can be created as part of each interview, and would enable faculty, alumni, staff and students to be recorded to ask various questions. These features would allow us to be more open, personable, and authentic to applicants.
- Kira Talent is designed for each Faculty to identify and train (with Kira's support) the raters of the interview questions. This is a useful aspect to engage our faculty, staff, alumni, preceptors, and senior students to help in rating and selecting the class. Raters score assigned applicants asynchronously, from any online location, within a deadline to complete the scoring.
- Kira Talent would enable assessment of writing skills. For example, some interview questions will require a verbal video reply, while others can require a timed typed response. Applicants would also have the ability to upload documents for a specified question. In addition to real-time writing, we can request that applicants upload a pre-prepared written document; *e.g.*, narrative of their intention to practice pharmacy.
- The annual cost to the Faculty for Kira Talent is similar or less than the cost the Faculty incurs related to the MMI. There is no cost to the applicants.
- Online admission methods will enable and encourage more applicants to apply to our program due to reduced cost and ease of use.

Rationale for using both CASPer® and Kira Talent:

- It is recommended that both CASPer® and Kira Talent be added to our admissions program for assessment of non-academic attributes.

- Best practice in assessment blueprinting supports measuring important constructs multiple times to improve reliability and validity. CASPer® and Kira Talent would be complementary on some non-academic attributes, and unique in testing other attributes.
- By using both CASPer® and Kira Talent we would have a more robust, diverse method of assessing applicants from potentially wider geographical areas, for the same or less cost than with MMI.

**MOVED:** J. Kellar; **SECONDED:** C. De Angelis, **THAT**, the decision of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee be upheld in requiring an online interview test for a subset of applicants as a PharmD program admission requirement.

**CARRIED**

*Minimum Grade Point Average (GPA) Requirement Remain at 70%*

**Rationale:**

- The 70% cut has been effective in the past to serve as a minimum level for academic ability.
- Having the 70% cut provides the opportunity for a diverse range of applicants, some of whom may gain admittance with strong non-academic attributes and a relatively low GPA.
- Admissions best practice supports that GPA cuts not be overly restrictive, as you could unintentionally lose strong candidates from diverse backgrounds before proceeding to other components of the admission assessment process.

*Pre-Requisites for Admission Be Updated to Align with Other University of Toronto Health Science Programs in the Domains of Biology, Chemistry, Math, and Humanities/Social Sciences*

**Rationale:**

- The current prerequisites need to be updated to be less restrictive in course specificity.
- It has been difficult for students to acquire all courses efficiently; additional courses increase pre-pharmacy tuition and may deter applicants from considering U of T Pharmacy.
- Our applicant numbers have steadily declined over the years, hence we need to ensure we are competitive with other pharmacy and health science programs, since we are seeking many of the same applicants.
- Pre-requisite domains of knowledge are important, yet they should not create numerous barriers. Reducing the total number of courses and broadening the scope of courses which can meet a requirement will make our program more accessible to a diverse applicant pool.
- Several medical schools have reduced pre-requisites over the years with no negative impact on the quality of the graduates (e.g., McMaster, U of T). In some cases, foundational learning modules were added to support students. Similarly, our Faculty can create specific foundational modules if a need is identified.

*Pre-requisites for Implementation in the 2020-21 Application Cycle for Admission to the PharmD Program*

The following proposed pre-requisite courses to be considered for admission while maintaining a minimum of 8 full course equivalents (FCE) were discussed and confirmed by the Admissions Subcommittee on June 4, 2020, and presented to the PharmD Program Committee June 8, 2020:

- 1.0 FCE in Biology, decreased from 2.5 FCE
- 1.5 FCE in Chemistry, decreased from 2.5 FCE
- 1.0 FCE in Mathematics, decreased from 1.5 FCE
- 1.0 FCE in Humanities, decreased from 1.5 FCE
- 3.5 FCE in other university level courses

It was recommended that at least one academic year (September to April) be completed with a full course load of 5.0 FCE to prepare applicants for the challenging course load in the Pharmacy program.

A question was asked if instructors would need to adjust the academic rigour in courses to compensate for the lack of knowledge that would have been covered in the pre-requisite courses. In response to this, the Faculty

may consider offering online foundational modules for students if they feel they are lacking fundamental knowledge in the science and humanities.

**MOVED:** J. Kellar; **SECONDED:** J. Carter, **THAT**, the decision of the Faculty Wide Recruitment and Admissions Committee be upheld in that the specified pre-requisite courses be changed from 8.0 to 4.5 full course equivalent (FCE) with a minimum of 8.0 FCE completed overall.

**CARRIED**

#### **4.0 Report of the Committee on Academic Standing**

Since its last report to Council this Committee has met four times. The minutes of the last meeting on May 26, 2020, have yet to be approved by the Committee. The present report also includes the results of an electronic vote held between June 10 and 15, 2020, as well as items for information from a meeting on February 11, 2020; items for approval from the meeting on February 11 were presented at the meeting of Council on April 23, 2020.

##### **ITEMS FOR APPROVAL**

#### **4.1 ELECTRONIC VOTE OF JUNE 10-15, 2020**

##### **PharmD Program Committee**

###### *Amended Award Record—Dean's Admission Scholarships*

This scholarship is awarded to up to ten candidates for admission to the undergraduate program with the highest admission index scores. It is renewed in Years 2, 3 and 4 provided that full-time status is maintained and that an Annual GPA of at least 3.50 is achieved with a passing grade in every course. The amendment reduces the value of each award from \$10,000 per year to \$5,000 per year. The amendment is being made at the request of the donor

**MOVED:** J. Wells; **SECONDED:** R Bendayan, **THAT**, the decision of the Committee on Academic Standing be upheld in that the value of a Dean's Admission Scholarship be reduced from \$10,000 per year to \$5,000 per year, with no change in the other conditions of the award.

**CARRIED**

##### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

#### **4.2 MEETING OF FEBRUARY 11, 2020**

##### **PharmD Program**

###### *Report of the Board of Examiners, Fourth Year*

Grades for Advanced Pharmacy Practice Experience (APPE) rotations in Blocks 4–7 (*i.e.*, August 19, 2019 to January 17, 2020) were approved.

*Combined PharmD–MBA Program*— Results for two students enrolled in the combined PharmD-MBA program were approved. One of these students completed the requirements of the PharmD program in the fall 2019 term and was eligible to graduate in June 2020.

##### **PharmD for Pharmacists Program**

###### *Report of the Board of Examiners*

Grades for APPE rotations in Blocks 4–7 (*i.e.*, August 19, 2019 to January 17, 2020) were approved.

*Graduation Statistics*—Six students had completed all requirements of the program and were eligible to graduate with the degree of PharmD. They had requested that their degrees be conferred *in absentia* in March 2020. The distribution among different cohorts was as follows: 2016–01, one student; 2016–09, two students, one of whom is graduating with Honours, 2017–01, one student; 2017–09, two students.

#### 4.3 MEETING OF MARCH 17, 2020

##### **PharmD Program**

##### ***Report of the Board of Examiners, Fourth Year***

The failed grade for the APPE rotation in Block 8 (*i.e.*, January 20 to February 21, 2020) was approved.

#### 4.4 MEETING OF APRIL 2, 2020

##### **Declaration of Academic Disruption**

The Committee was advised that, following consultation with the Provost and Vice-Provost, the Faculty requested and was granted a declaration of academic disruption for students in the fourth year of the PharmD program. The academic year thereby was deemed to be complete, effective immediately, and Block 10 rotations were cancelled.

The decision was based on a review of the curriculum and an assessment of the amount of experiential education that already had been completed. The Faculty was confident in its decision, having determined that students had the competencies required to graduate.

##### ***Report of the Board of Examiners, Fourth Year***

Grades for APPE rotations in Block 8 (*i.e.*, January 20 to February 21, 2020) and in three weeks of Block 9 (*i.e.*, February 24 to March 13, 2020) were approved.

*Virtual Rotations*—The Committee was advised that the Toronto Academic Health Science Network is developing guidelines for remote rotations and virtual patient care. Also, the Council of Health Sciences and the Academic Continuity Group each has a group working on this issue. The Ministry of Health has approved virtual care under some conditions, and the Faculty expects that virtual content will become an important part of the students' training.

##### ***Combined PharmD-MBA Program***

Grades for the student enrolled in Year 3/4 of the combined program for the 2019–2020 session were approved.

##### ***Graduation Statistics***

*PharmD Program*—Of the 232 students enrolled in Year 4 of the PharmD program in 2019–2020, 227 were eligible to graduate in June 2020. The number of students graduating 'With Honours' had not been determined as of the meeting of 2nd April.

*Combined PharmD–MBA Program*—One student in the combined PharmD–MBA program was eligible to graduate with the degree of PharmD in June 2020.

#### 4.5 MEETING OF MAY 12, 2020

##### **PharmD for Pharmacists Program**

Grades for courses in the winter term of 2020 and from APPE Blocks 8–10 (*i.e.*, January 20 to May 1, 2020)

were approved.

*Graduation Statistics*—Twenty-three students had completed all requirements of the programme and were eligible to graduate with the degree of PharmD. The distribution among different cohorts was as follows: 2015–09, one student; 2016–01, two students; 2016–09, 1 student; 2017–01, one student; 2017–09, three students, one of which is graduating with Honours; 2018–09, 2 students.

#### 4.6 MEETING OF MAY 26, 2020

##### **PharmD Program**

###### ***Report of the Board of Examiners, First Year***

Grades from the 2019–2020 academic year were reviewed and accepted by the Board of Examiners.

###### ***Report of the Board of Examiners, Second Year***

Grades from the 2019–2020 academic year were reviewed and accepted by the Board of Examiners.

###### ***Report of the Board of Examiners, Third Year***

Grades from the 2019–2020 academic year were reviewed and accepted by the Board of Examiners.

###### ***Combined PharmD–MBA Program***

One student was enrolled in Year 3/4 of the Combined PharmD–MBA Programme for the 2019–2020 session. The student successfully completed the requirements of Year 3 of the PharmD Program during the fall term of 2019 and is eligible to graduate in June 2020.

##### **Other Business**

The Committee on Academic Standing is charged with the oversight of awards within the Leslie Dan Faculty of Pharmacy. The Committee therefore discussed the implications for said awards of alleged academic misconduct on final assessments in April, particularly in the case of awards for achievement in a course or courses that might have been compromised. The Committee was advised that the acting director of the PharmD Program, who also serves as the chair of the Awards Sub-committee, plans to wait until the question of alleged academic misconduct in Year 1 has been resolved before selecting the recipients of those awards. In the meantime, the recipients of awards in Years 2 and 3 will be selected in the normal manner.

#### **5.0 Report of the Curriculum and Assessment Committee**

Since its last report to Council this Committee has met once.

##### **ITEMS FOR INFORMATION**

###### ***PharmD Program***

A proposal for course changes in PHM202H1 (Pharmacotherapy 3: Endocrinology, Nephrology, Urology) was approved.

A proposal for a new elective course, “Advanced Pharmacotherapy in Infectious Diseases” was approved.

###### ***PharmD for Pharmacists Program***

A proposal for a new course, PHM622H1 (Patient Medication Safety) was approved. This course will be

substantially similar to the current PHM322H1 (Patient/Medication Safety) course offered in the PharmD program but will be offered entirely online.

#### **6.0 Communication Office Update**

Updates on the Faculty's social media metrics will be forwarded to Council on behalf of the Communications office.

#### **7.0 Other Business**

There was no other business.

The Chair thanked all members of Faculty Council, Chairs of the Standing Committees of Council, the Chairs of the sub-committees, and the secretary of Council for their valuable contributions over the past year. All Council members will receive information about upcoming meetings.

The Chair wished everyone a safe and restful summer.

The meeting adjourned at 2:09 p.m.