UCONN SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE

Meeting Minutes
June 25, 2026

Time: 8:30 a.m.

Location: Online

[Microsoft Teams]

Attendance: Kourosh Parham (Chair), John Birk, Douglas Brugge, Jennifer Cavallari (Vice Chair), Kevin Claffey, Philip Kerr, Eric Mortensen (joined at 9:06 am- did not participate in any votes), Patrick Murphy

Call to Order
The meeting was called to order at 8:33 am by Chair Dr. Kourosh Parham.

1. **Approval of Minutes**

Vote: A motion to approve the May meeting minutes was presented by Dr. Birk, seconded by Dr. Murphy, and approved by majority with one abstention (Dr. Kerr).

2. **SOM Bylaws revisions**

   a. Proposed changes by Dean Liang

Dr. Parham presented the updated memo from Dr. Liang with two proposed School of Medicine bylaw amendments under Section III. A.1. Appointment (page 3/47) and Section III. A. 2. Dean Duties (page 3-4/47), amendments that are meant to better align the bylaws language with current practice and clarify the dean's reporting relationship with the Provost. The proposed language related to the dean's duties delineates who is responsible for clinical matters associated with faculty and productivity. The Executive Vice President's (EVP) position is defined in the University of Connecticut bylaws, rather than the School of Medicine bylaws. The proposed revisions clarify that conflicts will be resolved according to the University of Connecticut bylaws. In their discussion, the Oversight Committee (OC) sought clarification on the term "faculty practice," concluding the term is used consistently throughout the bylaws, specifically in the Clinical Council section, to refer to clinical faculty practice activities.

Vote: A motion to approve of the bylaw revisions noted above was presented by Dr. Brugge, seconded by Dr. Cavallari, and approved by majority with one abstention (Dr. Kerr).

   b. Proposed changes by Dean Liang/Dr. Nissen

OC next reviewed a proposed bylaw revision under Section III. C.2.c Membership (SAPC) (page 5/47). The proposed language expands criteria for membership on the Senior Appointment and Promotions Committee (SAPC), which will help address the increasing number of nominations for promotion brought before the committee. Through discussion, OC agreed that promotions ought to be reviewed by a reviewer of equal or higher rank, such that an associate professor is not reviewing promotions for full professor. This language is suggested in the dean's cover letter to the memo but not formalized in the proposed revision.

OC therefore suggests further edits to SOM bylaws Appendix B. II.A. Review Mechanisms (page 37/47) to include language as follows: "Alternate reviewers of associate professor rank will only be eligible to review promotion nominations commensurate to their rank level." This will be sent back to Dr. Liang to modify the proposal.

Vote: A motion was presented by Dr. Claffey, seconded by Dr. Birk, and unanimously approved, contingent upon the inclusion of clarifying language that defines the limitation of associate professor alternate reviewers of SAPC, such that they can only review promotions commensurate with their rank.

c. Proposed changes by the Public Issues Council

Initially discussed during the May OC meeting, there is a formal request to vote on proposed changes from the Public Issues Council but no formal memo has been received. The proposal will not move forward to other councils until a memo is received but OC will proceed with its review and discussion. Proposed revisions are to Section VI. D.1 Duties (page 13/47) to include the timely dissemination of its efforts and pertinent information to the public, and Section VI. D.3 Membership (page 13/47) to modify membership, such that (1) a center director may select a faculty representative designee, (2) that member representatives from affiliated hospitals, the community, and DPH Commissioner appointee may be faculty or non-faculty, and finally (3) an additional non-voting member be invited from the Office of Multicultural and Community Affairs, OICR, or any SOM diversity and equity offices or committees. Dr. Murphy, representative on the Public Issues Council, had no further comment for the discussion .

Vote: A motion was presented by Dr. Birk, seconded by Dr. Murphy, and unanimously approved.

3. Academic Affair Subcommittee of the Board of Directors

Dr. Parham reminded OC of the next AASBOD meeting, scheduled for Monday August 10, 2026 (10 a.m. – 12 p.m. via WebEx). The next Oversight Committee chair will need to provide information on OC activity report and agenda items by Thursday July 23, 2026 to Kelly Lester (klester@uchc.edu). Dr. Parham will work with the next elected chair to prepare that packet of information for the August AASBOD meeting.

4. Vote on the next Chair of the OC

Oversight Committee leadership succession was discussed during the May meeting and since then Dr. John Birk has agreed to serve as the next chair, effective July 1, 2026.

Following the OC vote, Dr. Birk noted the forthcoming Oversight Committee membership changes may vacate some liaison positions on other councils, which will be addressed at the July meeting. Dr. Birk will serve as the representative on Dean's Council; new members Rebecca Andrews and Dustin Walters may be called on to serve as OC representatives of the Research Council and Clinical Council. Dr. Parham clarified that the role of chair of OC involves 6% protected FTE; there is also the expectation for the chair to serve as a representative on the AMP committee with 2% additional protected FTE for that role as a reviewer. Leadership changes and a review of operating procedures within AMP are forthcoming.

Vote: A motion was presented by Dr. Cavallari, seconded by Dr. Brugge, and approved by majority with one abstention (Dr. Birk).

5. Standing Monthly Liaison Reports

a. Clinical Council – Dr. Birk

No report, meeting cancelled.

b. Dean's Council – Dr. Parham

Dr. Parham reported that the Dean's Council met on June 15, 2026. The main discussion focused on the Type 2 Center for Vascular Biology. Departmental reviews for Cell Biology and the Center for Vascular Biology recommended the consolidation of the two units under Cell Biology. To inform the Dean's Council discussion, Dr. Murphy, chair of the Center for Vascular Biology, presented on behalf of the Center and Dr. Liang presented an institutional perspective. Dr. Murphy recounted that the Dean's Council conversation centered around financial considerations, such that merging the two departments would result in administrative cost savings. At the time of the Center review, a reduction in grant support was noted and there were plans to regrow the Center through internal hiring. Since then, the federal administration changes and other stressors have rekindled discussions around consolidation. Faculty of the Center for Vascular Biology do not see considerable benefits to the consolidation.

The Dean's Council voted unanimously to merge the two units (with Dr. Liang abstaining). A timeline was not discussed. The merge with the Department of Cell Biology will result in the Center for Vascular Biology becoming a Type 1 center.

Anecdotally, Dr. Brugge shared that a different center affiliated with the Department of Public Health Sciences operates independently with their own budgets and administrative staff. Their faculty and director have appointments in Dr. Brugge's department. Dr. Claffey noted use-of-space and faculty hiring should be under Dr. Brugge's authority. According to the bylaws, Dr. Parham shared that Type 1 centers are integrating into departments, such that the department takes on administrative responsibilities, therefore making them not as independent as a Type 2 center. Dr. Mortensen added that Type 2 centers have historically not become departments despite the language in the bylaws.

c. Education Council – Dr. Cavallari

No report, an OC representative was unable to attend.

d. Public Issues Council – Dr. Murphy

Dr. Murphy reported that the Public Issues Council (PIC) met on June 22, 2026. The meeting involved a story on the impact of student loan limits, with an article by a subgroup composed of Chris Steele and Audrey Chapman. The subgroup is gathering quotes and plans to speak with UST leadership and Dr. Linda Barry for comment about the impact of loan borrowing on students entering the field. This is one of the first articles planned for the two-track process, where articles on the 'fast-track' will be sent to Lauren Woods to post on UConn Today. These articles will include faculty comments on topic issues without necessarily going through PIC.

Future topics for discussion include vaccination, AI in medicine, persistent disparities in access to care and issues that align with programmatic groups (i.e. shortage of primary care). As OC previously discussed, the June PIC meeting also included discussion around proposed bylaws changes and more rapid dissemination of news.

e. Research Council – Dr. Mortensen

Dr. Mortensen reported that the most recent Research Council meeting involved discussion centered around responding to the current federal proposal to have more political say over grants. Discussion also focused on the $14 million in state aid being given to researchers and various budget issues related to IDCs.

Dr. Brugge questioned the number of delayed or cancelled grants at UConn Health. Dr. Mortensen noted this was not explicitly discussed but he does get the impression that there is notable impact, more so at Storrs.

f. AMP Committee – Dr. Brugge

Dr. Brugge reported that the AMP Committee has not met in months but believes all salary adjustment letters were sent to faculty. Dr. Claffey notes there is an upcoming AMP meeting scheduled, for which a reminder will be sent.

Per Dr. Parham's request to clarify the AMP review process, Dr. Claffey shared that calendar year 2024 academic merit evaluations were applied to the retroactive payments recently distributed. The 2025 academic merit plan review that was just completed in March/April will be applied to the fiscal year 2027 payments, which will be distributed in a few weeks, along with another letter prior to payment. Dr. Claffey noted the retroactive payouts are very difficult to calculate and process, especially with retirements and pensions. Dr. Claffey has also had to clarify confusion caused by an earlier communication that misrepresented the percent increase faculty expected to receive. In the future, Dr. Claffey is planning process improvements with the help of a Research Finance colleague.

6. New Business

None.

7. Adjournment

With no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:44 am.

Next Regularly Scheduled Meeting
July 23, 2026