

FELLOWSHIP EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE
Minutes of Meeting –Wednesday, May 14, 2025
8:00 AM to 9:30 AM – Via Zoom

Present:

Caroline Abrahams, Melissa Aldham (Guest), Pilar Barrios, Elicia Bryant (Guest), Samantha Chin, Dr. Jennifer Croke, Dr. Shaheen Darani (Guest), Dr. Meredith Giuliani, Jennifer Hall, Dr. Mojgan Hodaie, Janine Hubbard, Dr. Cheryl Jaigobin, Dr. Vaibhav Kamble, Dr. Melissa Kennedy, Veronica Marrone, Dr. David Muller, Dr. Anna Marie Mulligan, Dr. Avery Nathens (Guest) Paula Nixon, Dr. L. Venkat Raghavan, Dr. Laura Simone (Chair), Violetta Sochka, Shannon Spencer, Dr. Katina Tzanetos,

Regrets:

Dr. Mohammed Abufarhaneh, Dr. Adelle Atkinson, Dr. Ahmed Al-Awamer, Sarah Bakhit, Olivia Beasley, Valerie Hilderal, Ryan Lue, Dr. Gordon Martins, Dr. Laura Leigh Murgaski, Brigette O’Leary, Dr. Richard Pittini, Dr. Linda Probyn, Rafal Ramzi

1. Introduction of the Chair – Dr. Meredith Giuliani, Associate Dean PGME

Dr. Giuliani welcomed the new Chair of FEAC, **Dr. Laura Simone**, and noted that this was her inaugural meeting.

2. Introductory Remarks & Approval of January Minutes – Dr. Laura Simone, Chair

Dr. Simone introduced herself and shared her vision for the Committee. Members present briefly introduced themselves.

The **January 2025 minutes** were approved (motion: Dr. C. Jaigobin; second: Dr. D. Mueller).

3. Office of Learner Affairs (OLA) Module for Postgraduate Learners – Dr. Shaheen Darani

Dr. Darani provided an overview of the OLA and introduced the new learner-focused e-learning module developed in collaboration with PGME.

- **Purpose:** Increase awareness of OLA supports and services to encourage earlier learner engagement.
- **Format:** Online module on Quercus; approx. 15–20 minutes to complete.
- **Content:** Attestation of completion, knowledge testing, resource links, and feedback collection.
- **Integration:** Mandatory component of postgraduate learner onboarding.
- **Accreditation:** Supports accreditation requirements by ensuring learners are informed of OLA services.

OLA Contact: ola.reception@utoronto.ca

4. Fellowship Updates – Veronica Marrone

Fellow Leadership Event: *Leading in Healthcare -March 7, 2025*

- Attendees reported high satisfaction and achievement of leadership development goals.
- Non-attendance was linked to late communication and lack of supervisor support.

Considerations for future events:

- Adjust timing (Spring; avoid religious holidays).
- Improve communication: earlier invitations, supervisor engagement, calendar reminders (Google/Apple compatible).

All Fellowship Directors Meeting Announcement

- **Date:** Friday, June 6, 2025.
- **Time:** 1:30–4:00 p.m. (lunch: 1:00–1:30 p.m.).
- FEAC members encouraged to attend; agenda highlights shared.

5. Fellowship Funding & Remuneration – Dr. Giuliani & Dr. Simone

Dr. Simone reported that **over 1,500 fellows** will begin training in 2025–2026, all remunerated at **PGY-3 level on the PARO scale**. Thanks were extended to Dr. Granton, V. Marrone, and FEAC for their contributions.

Key Points:

- PGME **no longer permits self-funded, unfunded, or partially funded fellowships** (effective January 2025).
- Programs with boutique models must attest that fellows will receive PGY-3 level remuneration by **July 1, 2025**.
- Definitions clarified:
 - *Partially funded:* Program provides partial funds; fellow secures balance.
 - *Self-funded:* Fellow provides proof of personal funds.
 - *Unfunded:* Fellow participates without remuneration.
- **Equity rationale:** These models are not equitable. PGME continues to support programs transitioning to the new standard.
- **Remuneration increase:** As of **July 1, 2025**, PGY-3 rate will increase (see [PARO pay scale](#)).

Discussion:

- Externally funded fellows remain acceptable, but risks exist if payments are not reliably delivered. Programs should ensure funding flows through hospitals for proper disbursement.
- Fellows sponsored through formal country agreements with PGME are not considered “externally funded.”

6. Vulnerable Sector Screening (VSS) & Background Attestation – Janine Hubbard & Elicia Bryant

- **Requirement:** Level 3 VSS is mandatory for PGME registration.

- **Exception:** New international learners without a Canadian address complete a background attestation in POWER for their first academic year, with VSS required if training extends beyond one year.
- **Validity:** VSS valid for 5 years; annual POWER attestations required in the interim.
- **Timing:** Processing delays peak before July 1; learners should apply early.
- **Note:** Criminal charges may require review by PGME's Vulnerable Sector Expert Panel, as CPSO may request a support letter from the Associate Dean.
- **Clarification:** VSS is distinct from Level 2 Criminal Record and Judicial Matters Check (CRJMC).

Guidelines: [PGME VSS Requirements](#)

7. Faculty Enrollment in Fellowship Programs – Dr. Avery Nathens & Melissa Aldham

Dr. Nathens presented guidance on **Faculty enrolling as Fellows** and **Fellows obtaining Faculty appointments**.

Faculty enrolling in Clinical Fellowships:

- Must shift from full-time to full-time equivalent (FTE) appointment (with Chair/site Chief approval) or request academic leave.
- Part-time/adjunct Faculty may enroll without appointment changes.
- Must step down from Residency Program Committees (RPC) and Competency Committees to avoid conflicts of interest.
- Should ideally not hold Faculty and Fellow roles at the same site.
- Grievances must follow learner pathways.

Clinical Fellows seeking Faculty appointments:

- Most common as adjunct.
- Must step down from RPC/Competency Committees.
- Must follow appropriate grievance pathways.
- Should ideally hold appointments at different sites.
- Requires approval from practice plan leaders, site Chief, and Chair.
- These appointments should be part-time.

Discussion:

- Concern raised regarding dual roles at the same site (e.g., hospital login credentials, staff awareness, supervision accountability). Dr. Nathens agreed to address these issues in the document.
- The guidance will be shared with Clinical Chairs.

8. Closing Remarks for 2024-2025 – Dr. Laura Simone

Dr. Simone thanked members for their contributions and confirmed that the **2025–2026 FEAC meetings** will continue to be held on **Wednesdays, 8:00–9:30 a.m.** Details to follow.

Meeting Adjourned, end of FEAC meetings for 2024-2025.