

FELLOWSHIP EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of Meeting –Wednesday, November 19, 2025

8:00 AM to 9:30 AM – Via Zoom

Present:

Dr. Ahmed Al-Awamer, Dr. Ahmed AlOthman, Tara Asgharzadeh, Dr. Lindsay Baker (guest), Dr. Mohamad Baker Berjaoui, Sarah Bakhit, Pilar Barrios, Dr. Jennifer Croke, Dr. Meredith Giuliani, Dr. Ada Hsieh, Janine Hubbard, Dr. Cheryl Jaigobin, Dr. Nora Letechipia, Veronica Marrone, Dr. Daniel Mueller, Dr. Anna Marie Mulligan, Dr. Richard Pittini, Dr. L. Venkat Raghavan, Dr. Laura Simone (Chair), Violetta Sochka, and Neily Yaghini.

Regrets:

Caroline Abrahams, Dr. Najma Ahmed, Dr. Adelle Atkinson, Savannah Clancey, Dr. Kevin Higgins, Dr. Mojgan Hodaie, Dr. Melissa Hynes, Dr. David Hwang, Dr. Karl Iglar, Dr. Vaibhav Kamble, Laura Leigh Murgaski, Dr. Sara Naimimohasses, Dr. Navdeep Nijhawan, Brigitte O’Leary, Dr. Mini Pakkal, Dr. Linda Probyn, Rafal Ramzi, Shannon Spencer, Kiki Vona and Dr. Doreen Yee.

1. Opening Remarks and Updates – Dr. Laura Simone, Chair

Dr. Simone welcomed members and acknowledges the traditional lands on which the University of Toronto operate. Dr. Simone shared positive feedback from Fellows’ Welcome Receptions at both SickKids and UHN, aim to maintain engagement and value in these events for fellows.

Upcoming Events:

- **All Fellowship Directors’ Meeting:** Friday, December 12th, 2025 (virtual, 3:00 -5:00 PM)
- **Fellow Leadership Development Day:** Tuesday, April 21st, 2026 (full-day event)

Upcoming Policy Revisions:

- Two documents require updates:
 - *Role of the University in Clinical Fellowship Education* (2018),
 - *Clinical Fellowship Offer Letters: Guidelines & Exemplars* (2017)
- Dedicated working session during next FEAC meeting on Wednesday, January 21st, 2026. PGME and UofT legal counsel to prepare first draft for review.

Dimitrios Oreopoulos International Transitions Fund:

The committee discussed revisions to the scoring rubric to ensure fairness, inclusivity, and recognition of financial realities for applicants. **Key updates included:**

- Removal of “Clarity & Articulation”
 - This criterion was removed as it may have posed a disadvantage for ESL applicants.
- Introduction of “Demonstrated Understanding & Need”
 - Emphasizes applicants’ financial and logistical considerations.
 - Recognizes upfront costs such as plane tickets, first and last month’s rent, registration fees, licensure, and other professional requirements.

- Committee discussed clarifying applicability for candidates' family members, daycare, and other living expenses to prevent discrimination and ensure equitable assessment across candidates from lower-income countries.

A subcommittee of five members was selected to assist with rubric revision and adjudication. **Adjudicators:** Dr. Laura Simone, Dr. Anna Marie Mulligan, Sarah Bakhit, Pilar Barrios, Veronica Marrone and Shannon Spencer

Action Item: Revise Scoring Rubric based on feedback and circulate for final review

Post-Meeting Update: Veronica Marrone circulated the revised rubric to the committee on December 3, 2025 for feedback, final approval was received. The fund application officially opened on Friday, December 12, 2025 and is set to close on Wednesday, January 28, 2026.

2. Approval of September Minutes – Dr. Laura Simone

The September 2025 minutes were approved (motion: Dr. J. Croke; second: Dr. D. Mueller).

3. Introduction of the New PEAP Appeal Process – Janine Hubbard *(on behalf of Dr. Julie Johnstone)* [Guideline for Appealing an Unsuccessful Assessment Verification Program or PreEntry Assessment Program](#)

Janine introduced a formal appeal process for unsuccessful PEAP assessments, emphasizing **procedural fairness, consistent feedback and clear timelines**. Appeals apply **only to procedural errors**, not on re-evaluation of clinical judgement and are guided by PGME guidelines.

Key Details:

- **Appeals may be submitted on procedural grounds only**, such as significant errors in the process or insufficient feedback provided during the PEAP period.
- **Fellows must receive consistent and timely feedback throughout the assessment period**; discovering performance concerns only at the final (typically 12-weeks) review is considered insufficient.
 - Supervisors are encouraged to provide at least three formal written assessments during the fellowship period. Only final assessments are submitted to the Fellowship Office and PGME for review.
- Learners are encouraged to connect with the Office of Learner Affairs (OLA) early, especially if concerns arise throughout the PEAP.

Process:

- **Candidates must notify PGME of their intention to appeal within two business days**; clinical duties cease upon notification. PGME informs CPSO.
- PGME notifies the program. Candidates submit written documentation within 10 business days, including grounds, explanation of process issues, desired outcome, and supporting evidence.
- The program has 10 business days to respond with relevant assessment documentation and a detailed response.
- **The Associate Dean or designate issues a final decision** within five business days of the candidate's reply. PGME shares all submissions and responses with the candidate.

4. External Funding for Clinical Fellowships – Janine Hubbard

Janine highlighted the **importance of ensuring all clinical fellows receive appropriate remuneration**. The committee discussed recent cases where externally funded fellows were unpaid despite providing valid funding letters prior to appointment.

Key Points:

- Externally funded fellows (i.e., supported by external institutions or private companies) must have their remuneration guaranteed.
- There needs to be an entity responsible to guarantee the fellow's payment.
- This does not include sponsored fellows from countries with formal training agreements.

Discussion:

- Risks identified with delayed payments and committee members emphasized that ensuring fellows are compensated is critical.
- Departments supported the approach, noting flexibility in implementation: the entity distributing funds could be the hospital or practice plan depending on what works best locally.

Next Steps:

PGME will follow up with departments to clarify expectations and will prepare communications regarding external funding remuneration requirements.

4. Centre for Faculty Development: Opportunities for Clinical Fellows – Dr. Lindsay Baker

Dr. Baker presented opportunities for fellows through [Centre for Faculty Development \(CFD\)](#). CFD is an extra-departmental unit at UofT, in partnership with Temerty Faculty of Medicine and Unity Health Toronto. The centre supports participant growth across diverse roles, including faculty development for educational roles and continuing professional development (CPD) for clinical roles.

Key Benefits:

- [Fellows can access two free workshops per year](#)
- Member-exclusive events and Communities of Practice
- Access to MicroModules & discounted rates on foundational programs

Next Steps:

- Create promotional materials for fellows and supervisors through PGME Post.
- Schedule information sessions and integrate into onboarding for fellows.

5. Review and Update the FEAC Terms of Reference – Dr. Laura Simone and Veronica Marrone

Dr. Simone and V Marrone outlined proposed updates to the FEAC Terms of Reference including:

- Clarifying membership roles and term lengths for transparency and continuity.
- Adding appeal-process responsibilities and removing certificate preparation.
- Ensure alignment with PGME standards to maintain diversity and inclusivity.

Next Steps: Circulate clean version for final review and seek final approval at the next FEAC meeting on January 21st, 2026.

Meeting Adjourned