California University of Science and Medicine
School of Medicine

Faculty Affairs Newsletter

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News from the Office of Faculty Affairs



Greetings CUSM Faculty,

One of the highlights of working in Faculty Affairs is the opportunity to celebrate the accomplishments of our faculty. In this edition, we recognize Dr. Zohray Talib, Executive Vice Dean for Education, who delivered the keynote address at MedEdAfrica 2026, and Dr. Michael Neeki, Professor of Emergency Medicine, who was recognized for his work with the Colton Police Department.

We are also excited to announce that Faculty Affairs is partnering with Strategic Communications to coordinate faculty participation in graduation on Monday, May 17, 2027. You will find an RSVP form below. By starting the planning process early, we hope to make it easier for faculty to arrange their schedules and join us in celebrating our students. Don't worry if you need additional time to figure out your plans, we will be sharing the RSVP link again by email later in the Fall.

Last week, we held our Fall Faculty Assembly meeting, led by Dr. David Seigler, this year's Faculty Assembly and Faculty Executive Council Chair. Attendees heard updates on LCME changes affecting faculty committees and on our educational programs. If you were unable to attend this time, we hope you will join us for our Spring Faculty Assembly meeting, typically held

in April, with both in-person and online participation options. We also welcome your suggestions for topics and updates you would like to hear about at future meetings.

Finally, please continue sharing your news and accomplishments with us at **facultyaffairsoffice@cusm.edu**. We look forward to featuring more faculty highlights in our February newsletter!

Best wishes,
The Faculty Affairs Team

Visit our website **Send us an email**

University News

CUSM Celebrates the MD Class of 2030 at White Coat Ceremony

On July 17, 2026, California University of Science and Medicine (CUSM) celebrated an exciting milestone as the MD Class of 2030 took their first steps into the medical profession during the annual White Coat Ceremony. This tradition marked the beginning of the students' medical education and their commitment to a future dedicated to compassionate, patient-centered care.

During the ceremony, students received their white coats from Dr. Paul Lyons, President and Dean of CUSM, and Dr. Prem Reddy, CUSM's Founder and Chair of the Board.

The celebration concluded with the recitation of the Hippocratic Oath, led by Dr. Maegen Dupper, Associate Dean of Clinical Curriculum, symbolizing the students' shared commitment to ethical medical practice and lifelong service to their patients and communities.



MD Class of 2030 with CUSM faculty.

Faculty News

Celebrating Our Student Success in USMLE

All 115 first-time Step 2 Clinical Knowledge (CK) examinees included in CUSM's annual USMLE school report passed in academic year 2025-2026 (July 2025 to June 2026), compared with 98% nationally. The report lists a minimum passing score of 218 for that year, up from 214 in the two prior years. In the separate Step 1 report, 97% of 134 first-time examinees passed in calendar year 2025, compared with 93% nationally. Both national comparisons refer to first-time examinees from LCME-accredited medical schools.

While the success of our students reflects the teaching and mentoring contributions of all our faculty throughout the educational program, CUSM also provides specific exam support through the ACAD 7501 board preparation course. This course has been directed and delivered by Dr. Frank Scali, Associate Professor, for the past seven years. ACAD 7501 provides a structured pathway for students taking Step 1 and Step 2 CK preparation. The support team has recently expanded to include faculty advisors Dr. Hina Mohsin, Associate Professor, Dr. Rakesh Gorantla, Professor, and Dr. Jonas Addae, Professor, working alongside USMLE teaching assistants and dedicated coordinators.

Faculty advisors interpret readiness, guide exam timing, and work with students who need additional support. The ACAD 7501 orientation, provided in September, describes official NBME practice assessments and individualized advising within a continuing cycle of practice, review, targeted improvement, and reassessment. Teaching assistants support that work through weekly study planning, question-bank use, error review, and practice-assessment planning.

Faculty can direct students needing help with study planning or exam preparation to USMLE@cusm.edu.



CUSM USMLE Faculty Advisors and Teaching Assistants.

Dr. Talib Delivers Keynote at MedEdAfrica 2026 in Ethiopia

Dr. Zohray Talib, Professor and Executive Vice Dean for Education, had the honor of delivering an opening ceremony keynote at MedEdAfrica 2026 in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, titled "*The Future of Health Professions Education: Preparing for 2040*." The event brought together more than 1,000 participants from across the African continent, including nearly 200 medical school deans, faculty, and students.

During her keynote, Dr. Talib invited attendees to envision a student beginning medical school today and what her professional journey might look like in 2040 - a world reshaped by artificial intelligence, climate change, advances in science and technology, and healthcare systems increasingly shifting toward district and community-based care.

Dr. Talib emphasized the importance of preparing future healthcare professionals to adapt to an evolving healthcare landscape while preserving the essential human qualities of judgment, empathy, and trust. She also highlighted the value of collaboration among African institutions in shaping the future of health professions education, encouraging a shared vision that embraces innovation and prepares the next generation of healthcare professionals for 2040 and beyond.

Watch Dr. Talib's keynote presentation below.

Watch Keynote



Dr. Zohray Talib delivering the opening ceremony keynote at MedEdAfrica 2026.

Dr. Neeki Honored with the Virgil Earp Award

Dr. Michael Neeki, Professor and Emergency Medicine physician at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, was recognized by the Colton Police Department as the recipient of the Virgil Earp Award during its annual awards ceremony on September 3, 2026. The award honors individuals whose exceptional dedication, service, and contributions have made a significant and lasting impact on the Colton Police Department and the surrounding community.

For more than a decade, Dr. Neeki has served as a tactical physician for the Inland Valley SWAT team, providing critical medical expertise and support to law enforcement personnel. Through his work, he has delivered life-saving medical training to Colton police officers, helping strengthen their preparedness and ability to respond effectively during critical incidents. His leadership and commitment to collaboration have helped foster a lasting partnership between the medical and law enforcement communities, advancing public safety and emergency response efforts.

CUSM congratulates Dr. Neeki on this well-deserved recognition and celebrates his continued dedication to serving and protecting the community.



Dr. Michael Neeki pictured with his Virgil Earp Award at the Colton Police Department's annual awards ceremony.

Faculty Spotlights



Jonathan Townsend, Ed.D.
Associate Professor of Medical Education

Shawn Koh, MD
Associate Professor of Medical Education

AMA Coaching Summit

In August 2026, Associate Professors Drs. Shawn Koh and Jonathan Townsend presented at the American Medical Association's inaugural Coaching Summit: Empowering Learners Through Coaching.

Their presentation, titled “Teaching Faculty Advisors Coaching Skills to Develop Pre-Clerkship Master Adaptive Learners,” highlighted the importance of equipping faculty advisors with coaching skills to support medical students in developing as adaptive learners.



Rubiel Urbina-Lopez, MD
Assistant Professor of Medical Education

Master's in Health Professions Education (MHPE)

Congratulations to Dr. Rubiel Urbina-Lopez, Assistant Professor, on earning her Master of Science in Health Professions Education from the University of Louisville on May 9, 2026.

Dr. Urbina-Lopez, as co-director of the M1 Clinical Skills course with Dr. Sheikh, has recently worked on a redesign to enhance student learning.

She also teaches Medical Spanish and facilitates small-group sessions for Clinical Cases and Health Systems and Professional Practice.



Deborah Farber, MLIS, AHIP
Instructor and Medical Librarian

Evaluating the Effectiveness of Evidence-Based Research

Deborah Farber, Instructor and Medical Librarian at CUSM, recently published her manuscript, "*Evaluating the Effectiveness of An Evidence-Based Research Study: A Pilot Study,*" in Hypothesis: Research Journal for Health Information Professionals.

The study examines the effectiveness of a workshop designed to strengthen medical students' research and critical appraisal skills, emphasizing the importance of evidence-based learning in medical education.

View Article

Faculty Assembly

Faculty Executive Council

The Faculty Executive Council (FEC), the administrative branch of the Faculty Assembly, is pleased to announce its leadership for the 2026–2027 academic year.

Dr. David Seigler, Associate Professor and Department Chair for Behavioral Health at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center, serves as Faculty Assembly Chair, alongside Dr. Daryoush Javidi, Executive Director of the Clinical Skills and Simulation Center, who serves as Vice Chair/Chair-Elect.

Faculty Committee Updates

All faculty committees transitioned to new memberships in July 2026. To welcome incoming committee members and prepare them for the academic year, the Office of Faculty Affairs hosted its Faculty Committee Kickoff and Orientation on July 22, 2026.

The event provided an opportunity for faculty and administrative support staff to connect, review committee roles and responsibilities, and strengthen their understanding of faculty governance. Attendees participated in an engaging learning experience featuring opportunities to collaborate, connect with colleagues, and enjoy prizes and giveaways.

For a detailed overview of current committee memberships or additional information about participating in the Faculty Assembly and its committees, please contact the Office of Faculty Affairs at **FacultyAffairsOffice@cusm.edu**.

Remembering Dr. Andrew Lowe, November 10, 1954 – June 14, 2026



Dr. Andrew Lowe, PharmD, was the Clinical Director of Pharmacy at Arrowhead Regional Medical Center (ARMC) and an Associate Professor at CUSM, joining in October 2021.

Dr. Lowe was an experienced teacher and mentor who directed the Pharmacy Practice Residency Program at ARMC.

He also contributed extensively to educating local students in healthcare profession programs, maintaining faculty appointments at multiple institutions throughout his career. Dr. Lowe taught pharmacology in our pre-clinical curriculum, giving annual lectures on household medications for common illnesses and management of acute and chronic complications of diabetes.

We are grateful that our students were among the many trainees able to benefit from Dr. Lowe's instruction. His contributions to medical education and the training of healthcare professionals will be remembered and appreciated.

Office of Faculty Affairs

Southern California Faculty Affairs & Faculty Development Consortium

On October 6, 2026, the CUSM Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of Faculty and Professional Development attended the Southern California Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development Consortium, hosted by the Keck School of Medicine of USC in Los Angeles.

The consortium brought together faculty affairs and faculty development professionals from institutions across Southern California to exchange best practices, discuss shared challenges, and strengthen collaboration. Through interactive sessions and networking opportunities, attendees explored topics including faculty flourishing and sustainable engagement, operational excellence in faculty affairs, and fostering a culture of professionalism.

The event provided valuable opportunities to exchange ideas and identify strategies to further support faculty and institutional initiatives at CUSM.





Pictured at the Southern California Faculty Affairs & Faculty Development Consortium, hosted by USC. From left to right: Jonathan Townsend, EdD, Linda Connelly, PhD, and Stephanie Diaz, MBA.

2026 Annual Report: Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of Faculty & Professional Development



We are pleased to share the 2026 Annual Report from the Office of Faculty Affairs and Office of Faculty & Professional Development, released in August 2026.

This report provides an overview of our offices' ongoing efforts to support faculty success, professional growth, and engagement at CUSM.

It also serves as a valuable resource for learning more about our services, initiatives, faculty recognition programs, and contributions to the CUSM community.

We invite you to explore the report to learn more about the work of our offices and the resources available to support our faculty.

Annual Report

Message from the Title IX Coordinator

Welcome to another academic year. A quick reminder about Title IX—and your responsibilities under it.

Title IX of the Education Amendments Act of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination (also known as sexual harassment and sexual misconduct) in educational programs and activities at institutions that receive federal financial funding. California University of Science and Medicine is committed to providing an environment that respects the dignity and worth of every member of its

community, and strictly prohibits all forms of sexual discrimination, sexual harassment, and sexual misconduct.

The role of the Title IX Office is to respond to complaints, reports, or information about incidents of sexual harassment from students and employees as described within the Title IX Sexual Misconduct and Harassment Policy to stop inappropriate behavior, eliminate any hostile environments, and take steps to prevent the recurrence of the prohibited conduct impacting students and employees.

If you receive information that may implicate the Title IX Policy—or you're not sure, you are required to reach out to **titleixcoordinator@cusm.edu** to report the concerns and discuss next steps. Stay tuned for future communications, including new policies and an updated website!

Upcoming Events

CUSM MD & MBS Commencement
Monday, May 17, 2027
Riverside Convention Center

SAVE THE DATE!

Commencement is scheduled for Monday, May 17, 2027, at the Riverside Convention Center! A Save the Date will be distributed via email in the coming weeks with additional event details.

Faculty planning to attend are kindly asked to submit their RSVP below no later than February 1, 2027.

Please stay tuned for further information!

RSVP HERE



Spring Faculty Celebration Event
Tuesday, May 11, 2027
12:00 PM-1:00 PM | CUSM Lecture Hall #125

SAVE THE DATE!

Mark your calendars and join us as we celebrate the outstanding dedication, achievements, and contributions of our CUSM faculty! This annual event will highlight faculty accomplishments through the presentation of faculty awards, recognition of Faculty Assembly committee leadership, and celebration of spring promotions. We look forward to honoring our faculty and their continued commitment to excellence in education, service, and leadership.

More details to follow!

The Office of Faculty Affairs



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