



California University of
Science and Medicine
School of Medicine

Faculty Affairs Newsletter

Volume 09
February 2026



News from the Office of Faculty Affairs

Greetings CUSM Faculty,

We're excited to share the first Faculty Affairs newsletter as a fully LCME-accredited medical school. See below for more on this achievement.

As we head into the second half of the academic year, we are starting to plan our end-of-year events. Please save the date for our 3rd Annual Spring Faculty Celebration Lunch, to be held at noon on Tuesday, May 12th, in Lecture Hall 125. We will celebrate faculty achievements with recognitions for promotions, committee chair service, and faculty awards. A delicious, inclusive lunch will be provided, and the program will be kept to under an hour to best fit your schedules. We hope you can join us!

If you are interested in engaging with the school in new ways next year, please consider nominating yourself for a faculty committee. Nominations are open now through early March. A summary of each committee and the nomination link are provided below. You can also learn more at our Faculty Assembly meeting on Thursday, April 9th at noon (in person/online—watch for the email invite). All CUSM faculty are members and encouraged to participate.

Once we close the faculty committee poll then we will be opening nominations for our annual faculty awards. Please take a moment to nominate your faculty colleagues when you see the email in early March. Our office also collects nominations from students and awards are presented at our May 12th lunch.

We hope you all have a successful rest of the Spring semester. For those of you who like to keep up on faculty data and overall events for the year – we will be sharing the link to our 25/26 Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development Annual report in the June Newsletter. We have shifted our publishing schedule to better fit with the academic year.

As always, please reach out to let us know of your news and events (facultyaffairsoffice@cusm.edu). Our next newsletter will be emailed in June.

Best wishes,
The Faculty Affairs Team

[Visit our website](#)

[Send us an email](#)

University News

CUSM Earns Full Accreditation for MD Program

We are pleased to share that the California University of Science and Medicine (CUSM) School of Medicine has received full accreditation from the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME) for our MD program.

This achievement marks a significant milestone for CUSM and reflects years of dedicated work across the institution. The LCME Commission reviews comprehensive survey team reports and institutional documentation before making final accreditation decisions. Earning full accreditation affirms the strength of our educational program, governance, student support systems, clinical partnerships, and continuous quality improvement efforts.

This accomplishment is truly a collective success. Faculty engagement in curriculum development, assessment, advising, scholarship, and participation in the self-study and site visit process was instrumental in achieving this outcome. Your commitment to our students and to academic excellence continues to shape the future of CUSM.

Thank you for your leadership, collaboration, and unwavering dedication to our mission. Together, we have reached an important milestone and we look forward to building on this strong foundation as we continue to grow and innovate.

With gratitude,
The Office of Accreditation & Continuous Quality Improvement

Click below to read the CUSM press release on the attainment of full accreditation.

[Visit our Website](#)

CUSM Celebrates Rwanda's University Of Global Health Equity's First Graduation of Medical Doctors

California University of Science and Medicine (CUSM) celebrates the first graduation of the University of Global Health Equity (UGHE) in Butaro, Rwanda, marking more than a decade of collaboration that includes shared curriculum development, faculty training, and leadership engagement.

"The partnership between CUSM and UGHE brings together two mission-driven medical schools dedicated to advancing health equity," said Dr Zohray Talib, CUSM executive vice dean of Education and a member of the UGHE Dean's Advisory Committee. "Both institutions share a transformative vision of investing in people and communities while pioneering best practices in medical education that prioritize social accountability and serve populations underserved by healthcare systems."

Dr Talib has been involved with UGHE since its inception, initially serving as Founding Chair of the Department of Internal Medicine. In addition, several CUSM faculty contribute to UGHE's educational mission through both in person and virtual teaching.

Both UGHE and CUSM represent a new generation of medical schools that prioritize investing in human capital, community partnerships, and innovative educational approaches that prepare compassionate, culturally competent physicians equipped to serve where need is greatest."

UGHE's inaugural class completed 6.5 years of training, earning two degrees: a Bachelor of Medicine, Bachelor of Surgery (MBBS), and a Master of Science in Global Health Delivery (MGHD).



Dr Zohray Talib and Dr Adeline Mugeni pictured at the UGHE campus.



CUSM Partnership Award

Farewell Reception Honoring Dr Gordon Green

On December 10, 2025, CUSM held a farewell reception for Dr Gordon Green, Professor and Senior Associate Dean for Senior Associate Dean for Simulation & Patient Safety.

Dr Green joined the CUSM faculty in August 2018 and, through progressive senior leadership positions, has been a central figure in building our programs. At the reception, the Office of Faculty Affairs presented Dr Green with a plaque in acknowledgement of his leadership and service.

Dr Green will remain a CUSM faculty member and continue to collaborate with colleagues and students.



From left to right: Stephanie Diaz, Dr Gordon Green, and Dr Linda Connelly during the presentation of Dr Green's plaque.

Faculty News

Enhancing Clinical Skills Education
through AI-Assisted Learning

Dr Daryoush Javidi represented CUSM at the AAMC Learn, Serve, Lead Annual Meeting this past fall, delivering an oral presentation titled “Enhancing Clinical Skills Education through AI-Assisted Learning” on November 3, 2025.

Dr Gordon Green served as a co-author on the associated poster presentation. The session drew over 300 attendees and highlighted innovative CUSM initiatives integrating artificial intelligence into clinical skills education.

The presentation was very well received and sparked meaningful discussion about the future of medical education and learner engagement.

Drs Javidi and Green also presented a workshop at the Innovations in Medical Education Online Conference 2026, sponsored by the Department of Medical Education at the Keck School of Medicine of the University of Southern California, held Wednesday–Thursday, February 11–12, titled “Supercharging Clinical Competence: AI-Driven Innovation in Clinical Skills, Reasoning, and Documentation for Students and Faculty”.



Dr Daryoush Javidi representing CUSM at the AAMC Learn, Serve, Lead Annual Meeting.

Faculty Opportunities in CUSM's Pathways Programs

Pathways programs are a vital part of fulfilling CUSM's mission, and faculty play a critical role in inspiring the next generation of scientists and physicians. Our programs support middle school, high school, and undergraduate students through on-campus experiences that showcase life as a medical student and future physician. Students engage in clinical simulations, panels with medical students and faculty, and other interactive learning activities.

This year, we have served hundreds of students and invite all CUSM faculty to participate by joining panels, leading interactive workshops, and sharing real-world experiences as clinicians and researchers. If you are interested in volunteering, please email joel.arvizo-zavala@cusm.edu or watch for upcoming invitations from our team.

Nominate Your Colleagues for This Year's Faculty Awards!

The Faculty Affairs Office invites you to recognize the outstanding contributions of your colleagues by submitting a nomination for this year's Faculty Awards. Keep an eye on your email on March 2nd for the nomination link.

Nominations will be reviewed by our Nominating Committee, composed of last year's award recipients, who will select the award winners. Be sure to provide a clear rationale for your choices on the form so the Committee can fully consider your recommendations.



Award winners will be honored at the Spring Faculty Celebration Lunch on May 12th—look out for the invitation in your email in late March.

The nomination poll closes on March 31st, so don't miss your chance to submit your nomination!

Faculty Assembly

Faculty Assembly Updates

The Office of Faculty Affairs has partnered with its faculty committees to develop a Faculty Committee Overview Table. This table outlines key information for each committee, including scope and key responsibilities, meeting frequency (based on this year's schedule), and expectations for work completed between meetings.



Please note that committee schedules are based on the current academic year and may change depending on next year's committee leadership. All committees currently meet virtually via Microsoft Teams.

As you consider serving on a faculty committee, please refer to the table below for additional details (click on the table to open a downloadable version or to zoom in for easier viewing). Nominations will remain open until Monday, March 2nd.

Use the link below to nominate yourself or a colleague for committee service.

[Faculty Committee Nominations](#)

Faculty Committee Overview

Faculty Committee	Scope & Key Responsibilities	Meeting Frequency <small>*Based on this year's schedule</small>	Between-Meeting Responsibilities
Admissions Committee	Oversight of MD admissions and admittance of students	Weekly on Thursdays, September-April, 4:30 PM-6:00 PM	2-2.5 hours per week
Assessment and Evaluation	Oversees student assessment processes and performance	Bi-weekly on Fridays, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM	1 hour per month
Bylaws	Review and revision of the Bylaws	2-3 times per year	1 hour pre-meeting
Curriculum Committee	Oversight of MD curriculum	Monthly on every 4 th Thursday, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM	1 hour per month
Diversity and Inclusion	Advances CUSM's efforts to recruit, retain, and support a diverse and inclusive community	2-3 times per year	1 hour pre-meeting
Graduate Admissions	Oversight of MBS admissions and admittance of students	1-2 times per month, March-August	1 hour pre-meeting
Rank and Promotion Committee	Review of faculty appointments and promotion applications and oversight of guidelines	Monthly on every 1 st Thursday, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM	1-3 hours per month
Research	Review of and makes recommendations in relation to research programs	2-3 times per year	1 hour pre-meeting
SASaP	Monitor student progress towards promotion and graduation	1-2 times per month	1 hour pre-meeting
FEC	Leadership body for Faculty Assembly	Monthly on every 3 rd Monday, 12:00 PM-1:00 PM	1 hour pre-meeting

Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting

The Faculty Assembly will have its second Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting of the academic year on Thursday, April 9th, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

This hybrid event will take place in MBS Classroom #255 on the CUSM campus, with an option to attend virtually via Microsoft Teams.

Please find the link and agenda below.

[MS Teams Link](#)

Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting Agenda



Dean's Townhall

- 1** Dean's Updates

Faculty Assembly Meeting

- 1** Faculty Committee Slate Presentation
- 2** Bylaws Updates
- 3** Admissions Presentation
- 4** Faculty Speaker Program

** Lunch will be provided for in-person attendees*

**THURSDAY,
APRIL 9TH**

12:00 PM-1:00 PM

This will be a hybrid session held in MBS Classroom #255 on the CUSM campus or online via Microsoft Teams

Faculty Spotlights

**Dr Guillermo Valenzuela
Honored with Lifetime**

Achievement Award



Guillermo Valenzuela, MD

Professor of Medical Education

Arrowhead Regional Medical Center's Guillermo Valenzuela, M.D., chair of the Women's Health Department, has earned the Hospital Association of Southern California (HASC) Lifetime Achievement Award for his philanthropic efforts and decades of work to improve maternal care in the Inland Empire.

Dr Valenzuela has been instrumental in leading ARMC to several regional and national awards, and his commitment to giving back to the community has helped thousands of women and children in San Bernardino County over the years.

CUSM's First Yoga Study Manuscript



Drs Shazia Sheikh, Associate Professor of Medical Education, Paul Lyons, Dean and President and Fauzia Nausheen, Professor of Medical Education.

Drs Nausheen, Sheikh, and Lyons published CUSM's first manuscript on participants' yoga experiences in BMC Complementary Medicine and Therapies.

The study, *Exploring yoga adherence, experiences, future preferences and barriers in the medical university community: a 6-week study*, is available on PubMed and highlights key insights into yoga participation within the medical university community.

[Link to Article](#)

Dr Wakida Publishes New Research on Dementia Care

Dr Edith Wakida published a paper titled "Integrating Dementia Care into Primary Health Services: Lay Health Workers with Internal Facilitation in Uganda" in *Ageing & Mental Health*.

Click on the link below to read the full paper.



[Link to Article](#)

Edith Wakida, PhD

Associate Professor of Medical Education

Drs Sheikh and Mohsin Present at USC Conference

Dr Shazia Sheikh along with one of our MD students, Anya Vertanessian, gave an oral presentation at last week's 2026 Innovations in Medical Education Conference hosted by the University of Southern California.

Their presentation titled "Evaluating the Efficacy of a Mastery of Clinical Procedures Elective Course for Medical Students" was co-authored with Dr Hina Mohsin.



Shazia Sheikh, MD

Associate Professor of Medical Education



Hina Mohsin, MD

Associate Professor of Medical Education

Dr Daniel Aminpour Led Session on Pneumonia

One of our newest faculty members, Dr Daniel Aminpour, CEO of Elite Family



Medicine and Family Medicine physician, led an engaging session for M1 students on February 19th.

The session focused on the diagnosis and treatment of pneumonia as part of the SYTM5504 Respiratory & Cardiology course.

Daniel Aminpour, MD

Assistant Professor of Medical Education

Upcoming Events

Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting

Thursday, April 9, 2026 | 12:00 PM-1:00 PM | Classroom #255 & MS Teams

You are invited to attend the upcoming Dean's Townhall and Faculty Assembly Meeting on Thursday, April 9th, from 12:00 PM to 1:00 PM.

This will be a hybrid session, held in MBS Classroom #255 on the CUSM campus or online via Microsoft Teams.

[MS Teams Link](#)

Spring Faculty Celebration Event

Tuesday, May 12th | 12:00 PM-1:00 PM | Lecture Hall #125

Join us for the Spring Faculty Celebration Lunch on May 12th, where we will present Faculty Awards, recognize leadership on Faculty Assembly committees, and celebrate spring promotions. More details to follow.

California University of Science and Medicine

SPRING FACULTY CELEBRATION

TUESDAY

12

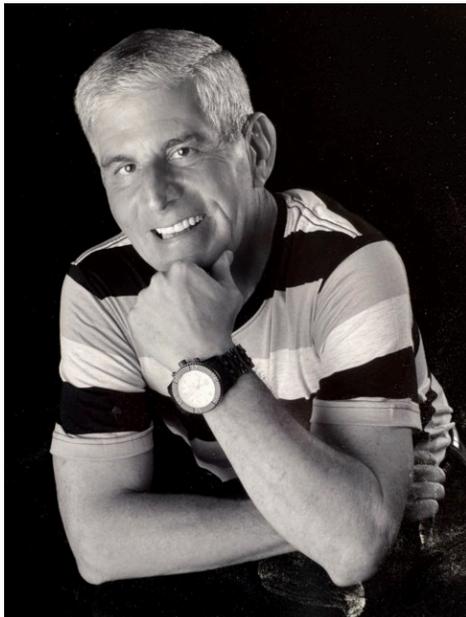
MAY

Lecture Hall #125
12:00 PM to 1:00 PM

1501 VIOLET ST, COLTON, CA 92324



Remembering Dr Stephen Damiani, April 11, 1957-December 30, 2025



Dr Stephen Damiani, who joined the CUSM faculty in 2022, served as a dedicated preceptor for our 3rd-year medical students. He was a mentor who led with joy, showing the next generation of physicians that clinical excellence and deep human compassion go hand-in-hand.

Beyond the walls of the clinic, Dr Damiani was a deeply respected figure in Apple Valley. Dr Damiani's legacy lives on in the community he served so faithfully, and the students he inspired to practice medicine with kindness. He will be deeply missed.

Office of Faculty Affairs

CUSM Joins SoCal Consortium of Faculty Affairs

The CUSM Faculty Affairs and Faculty Development Offices were recently invited to join the SoCal Consortium of Faculty Affairs. This group was initiated by the Faculty Affairs team at the Kaiser Permanente Bernard J. Tyson School of Medicine.

The first meeting was hosted by the Kaiser Permanente team at their building in Pasadena on Wednesday, December 2nd, with representatives from Cedars Sinai, Charles Drew University School of Medicine, City of Hope, UCLA David Geffen School of Medicine, and Keck School of Medicine of USC.

The event included discussion groups focusing on key themes related to faculty management and development as well as a lunch and tour of the Kaiser building.



Stephanie Diaz, Dr Linda Connelly, and Dr Jonathan Townsend representing CUSM at the SoCal Consortium of Faculty Affairs.

Faculty Affairs Team Update

Throughout the year, the Faculty Affairs team (Linda Connelly and Stephanie Diaz) look for ways to build and strengthen our office. In late Summer and early Fall, Linda participated in the AAMC CORE: Leading for Impact conference while Stephanie attended the leadership training, AAMC CORE: Elevate Your Potential.

We also engaged with local Faculty Affairs colleagues, as presented above, and had an oral presentation accepted for the upcoming AAMC Group on Faculty Affairs conference.

We wrapped up a busy and successful 2025 with a team-building retreat day at Disneyland.



The Office of Faculty Affairs



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Please contact us for any faculty news items or spotlight submissions.

[Contact US](#)





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