

Agendum
Oakland University
Board of Trustees Formal Session
June 28, 2024

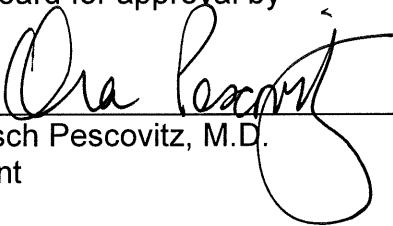
**APPOINTMENT OF NELIA AFONSO FOR THE TITLE
OF DEAN'S DISTINGUISHED PROFESSOR**
A Recommendation

1. **Division and Department:** Office of the Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost.
2. **Introduction:** In 2020 the School of Medicine requested the creation of the faculty rank of Dean's Distinguished Professor specifically for Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB) faculty. The rank was established in 2021 upon approval for the Provost and the Assistant Vice President of Academic Human Resources. The OUWB Dean's Distinguished Professor is a permanent, honorific title that acknowledges contributions of employed, full-time, tenured faculty at the rank of Professor, with exceptional records of scholarship, teaching and service. This designation shall be afforded to awardees who have superior teaching skills that encompass the breadth and depth of their discipline, a distinguished record of public service, and scholarly, creative, and artistic achievements. Upon recommendation of the President and Provost, the Board may appoint individuals to the rank of Dean's Distinguished Professor for OUWB for the duration of the individual's employment within Oakland University.
3. **Previous Board Action:** None
4. **Budget Implications:** A one-time salary stipend of \$1,000 for the Dean's Distinguished Professor will be paid from the SOM Dean's Discretionary Fund.
5. **Educational Implications:** Recognition of a distinguished faculty member's long-standing dedication to the mission of the School of Medicine reinforces a culture that is devoted to excellence in teaching, research, and service.
6. **Personnel Implications:** None.
7. **University Reviews/Approvals:** By nomination of her peers and review and approval by the School of Medicine's Dean and Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, recommend Nelia Afonso of the School of Medicine for approval to Dr. Britt Rios-Ellis, Executive Vice President for Academic Affairs and Provost, for the title of Dean's Distinguished Professor.
8. **Recommendation:** RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Nelia Afonso, Professor of Foundational Medical Studies, as Dean's Distinguished Professor, effective July 1, 2024.

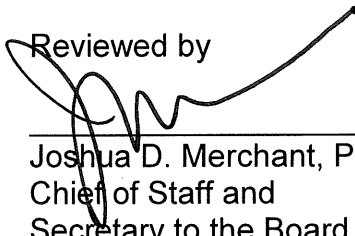
**Appointment of Nelia Afonso for the title of Dean's Distinguished Professor
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9. **Attachment:** A. Nomination form for Nelia Afonso.

Recommended on 6/19, 2024
to the Board for approval by



Ora Hirsch Pescovitz, M.D.
President

Reviewed by


Joshua D. Merchant, Ph.D.
Chief of Staff and
Secretary to the Board of Trustees



OAKLAND UNIVERSITY WILLIAM BEAUMONT

Sarah Lerchenfeldt, PharmD, BCPS
Associate Professor and Interim Co-Chair
Department of Foundational Medical Studies
Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine

March 27, 2024

Dear Dean's Distinguished Professor Selection Committee,

I am writing to nominate Dr. Afonso for the Dean's Distinguished Professorship at the Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine (OUWB). Dr. Afonso, a Professor in the Department of Foundational Medical Studies, exemplifies the criteria for this prestigious title through her exceptional contributions to scholarship, teaching, service, and her distinguished record of public and scholarly achievements. Since joining OUWB as a founding faculty member, she has demonstrated unparalleled dedication to medical education, significantly enhancing both the academic and practical aspects of these fields.

Scholarship: Dr. Afonso has consistently demonstrated scholarly excellence, particularly in the domains of medical education, clinical skills, women's health, and vaccine hesitancy. Her research is critical in addressing some of the most pressing challenges in the medical field today. As the principal investigator for the Merck Investigator Studies Program project titled "Promoting Vaccine Confidence in Medical and Dental Students," Dr. Afonso secured \$178,618.12 in funding, showcasing her ability to lead significant research initiatives that have substantial impacts on medical education and public health. Her publications reveal her active engagement with significant issues in medicine; for instance, she has several papers focused on vaccine hesitancy and acceptance. One of her most recent publications evaluating vaccine hesitancy among medical students has been cited 597 times over the past three years. Her work has provided valuable insights that have informed educational strategies as well as led to more effective vaccine advocacy and hesitancy mitigation efforts in the healthcare community.

Teaching: As the Assistant Dean for Community Integration and Outreach and the Director of the Art and Practice of Medicine Course, Dr. Afonso was instrumental in developing and refining the curriculum to better prepare students for the realities of medical practice. Her efforts led to the integration of practical skills training with theoretical learning, ensuring that students received a well-rounded education that encompassed the latest in medical research and clinical practice. Dr. Afonso was recognized for her teaching excellence through the Best Clinical Science Educator Award and Oakland University Founders Day Award, highlighting her significant accomplishments in instructional development and delivery. Her ability to develop educational materials, institute new courses, and implement innovative teaching and evaluation methods has profoundly impacted students' competency and confidence in clinical skills. I feel that her commitment to teaching excellence has left a lasting mark on the students and faculty at OUWB.

Service: Beyond academia, Dr. Afonso's commitment to service is evident in her active participation in community health initiatives like the Harvest of Health, flu vaccination drives at Hope Warming Center, and her leadership roles in the Southeast Michigan Center for Medical Education. Her involvement in a Global Engagement workgroup and various community advisory boards showcases her dedication to enhancing health education and services at both local and global levels.

Overall, I feel that Dr. Afonso's tenure at OUWB has been marked by a commitment to advancing medical education, research, and community health. I feel that her achievements make her an ideal candidate for the Dean's Distinguished Professors title. Her work not only reflects the values and mission of our institution but also sets a benchmark for academic and professional excellence. I believe that her continued contributions will further elevate the reputation and impact of the OUWB and hope she will be considered for this honorific title.

Thank you for considering my nomination of Dr. Afonso for this prestigious designation.

Sincerely,



Sarah Lerchenfeldt, PharmD, BCPS
Associate Professor and Interim Co-Chair
Oakland University William Beaumont School of Medicine