

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

**APPOINTMENT OF JASON WASSERMAN 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 his peers and review and approval by the School of Medicine's Dean and Committee on Appointments, Promotion, and Tenure, recommend Jason Wasserman 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.

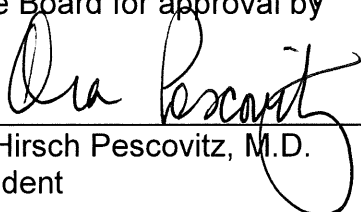
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Oakland University (SOM)  
Board of Trustees Formal Session  
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Page 2**

**8. Recommendation:**

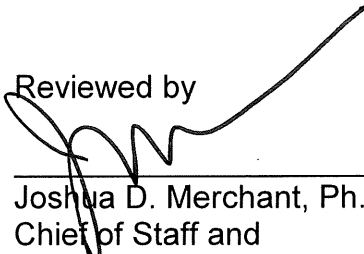
RESOLVED, that the Board of Trustees approves the appointment of Jason Wasserman, Professor of Foundational Medical Studies, as Dean's Distinguished Professor, effective July 1, 2024.

**9. Attachment: A. Nomination form for Jason Wasserman.**

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®

March 29, 2024

Re: Dean's Distinguished Professor Nomination - Dr. Wasserman

Dear Dean Carpenter, Drs. Lerchenfeldt, Cucullo, and Wiater,

It is with immense pride and enthusiasm that we submit the nomination of our esteemed colleague, Dr. Jason Wasserman, for the Dean's Distinguished Professor Award. Dr. Wasserman has been an invaluable member of the OUWB faculty since 2013 when he joined as a medical educator and tenure-track Assistant Professor. In recognition of his exceptional dedication to teaching and service, and outstanding scholarly contributions, he was promoted to Associate Professor with tenure in 2016, with a secondary appointment in pediatrics. In 2022, he achieved the prestigious rank of full professor, further solidifying his standing as a distinguished scholar and educator.

### ***Distinguished Scholarship***

Dr. Wasserman is a prolific and influential scholar in areas of homelessness, clinical bioethics, and Holocaust medicine. His scholarship and research range from core bioethics topics, such as autonomy and informed consent, to empirical research and qualitative inquiry into homelessness and medical ethics. He has published 3 books, 12 book chapters and text supplements, 64 peer-reviewed journal articles, 22 editor-reviewed articles, and 7 invited articles. His work has been published in leading bioethics journals (including the American Journal of Bioethics, Hastings Center Report, and Journal of Medical Ethics) and prestigious medical journals (including The New England Journal of Medicine, JAMA-Pediatrics, Pediatrics, and Mayo Clinic Proceedings). His numerous studies and projects have been recognized and supported by national and local organizations, totaling \$136 000 in funding. He is currently editing a special issue for the Journal of Bioethics on the use of slow codes in resuscitation, and is the associate editor for the forthcoming second edition of The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Health, Illness, Behavior and Society.

Dr. Wasserman's extensively cited research has contributed to important debates surrounding ethics in medical education, care for homeless individuals, pediatric ethical concerns, euthanasia, the rights of patients without decision-making capacity, and immunization policy. His profound impact is exemplified by his remarkable h-index of 23 and 1713 citations on Google Scholar, which stand as outstanding metrics within the field of bioethics. Dr. Wasserman is widely recognized as a respected voice in the national and international arenas, renowned for his contributions to his areas of scholarship and research. Dr. Wasserman is not only a prolific researcher and writer, but also a captivating speaker on the national and international stages, with 48 invited presentations and 35 oral presentations to his credit. His ability to effectively communicate complex ethical issues has garnered widespread recognition

and further solidifies his standing as a respected figure in the field of bioethics globally. Hence, he is regularly sought by the media for expert commentary on ethical issues. Dr. Wasserman has appeared over 20 times on local news outlets, has been quoted in the New York Times, and was the featured expert interviewed for the Court TV show, *Judgment with Ashleigh Banfield*, on Jack Kevorkian's court cases.

### ***Distinguished Teaching***

Dr. Wasserman's multifaceted contributions to education and ethics exemplify his commitment to advancing medical education and fostering ethical awareness both within and beyond the university community.

Since joining OUWB, Dr. Wasserman has been instrumental in shaping the Medical Humanities and Clinical Bioethics (MHCB) curriculum, serving as the course director for MHCB 1-7. His dedication to enhancing the educational experience is evident through his continuous efforts to revise and innovate the curriculum. Notably, Dr. Wasserman replaced traditional essay assignments with extemporaneous self-reflection videos, fostering a more authentic and engaging learning environment for students. Additionally, he developed interactive iBooks to deliver course content and facilitate student engagement. His collaborative spirit has led him to work closely with faculty members from diverse departments, including English, Health Sciences, and Theater, to introduce new offerings for students through integration transcending disciplines. Recognizing the need for continuous improvement, he revamped the MHCB courses, introducing interactive case-based sessions focused on advanced clinical ethics. He authored 75 unique clinical ethics cases for students' clinical rotations, providing invaluable opportunities for mock clinical ethics consultations. Dr. Wasserman has been proactive in organizing educational sessions on ethics-related topics for faculty, residents, and students within the Pediatric Department, averaging approximately six sessions per year. His contributions extend beyond his primary teaching domain, as he has provided sessions in various courses and clerkships such as Promotion and Maintenance of Health, Reproductive Systems, Neurology, Pediatrics, and PRISM, and participated in TBLs in Biomedical Foundations of Clinical Practice and Hematopoietic-Lymphoid Systems.

Dr. Wasserman's contributions to teaching extend beyond the core curriculum. He has been an outstanding mentor to over 50 OUWB students in the Embark Program. Exceeding the program's requirements, Dr. Wasserman has co-authored peer-reviewed publications with many of his students and helped them present at national conferences. He has also expanded our collaborations with other universities, notably working with Brown University to develop a Holocaust and Medicine program, offering externship educational experiences centered on ethics and humanism at Auschwitz-Birkenau. To support student participation, he successfully raised funds to sponsor at least 15 students annually for summer trips to Poland since 2022. As a testament to his efforts and impact on Holocaust medicine, Dr. Wasserman was appointed as the Inaugural Fellow in Bioethics and the Holocaust at the University of Southern California Shoah Foundation and the Maimonides Institute for Medicine, Ethics, and the Holocaust.

Outside of OUWB, Dr. Wasserman has contributed to the planning of the McAuley Ethics Grand Rounds at St. Joseph Mercy and delivered several of these sessions each year. He also developed a national training course in bioethics for the Arnold P. Gold Foundation, *Humanism*

*in Health and Healthcare*. He has delivered the four-week virtual synchronous several times to hundreds of medical students.

### ***Distinguished Service***

Dr. Wasserman has been instrumental in various service roles, significantly impacting quality improvements across multiple domains. He has made substantial contributions to enhancing diversity, equity, and inclusion at Oakland University. In 2020, he was appointed as one of only two Provost Fellows for Faculty Diversity. In this capacity, he devised a series of recommendations and created an audit tool for review of the promotion, and tenure guidelines. These resources have been widely disseminated across the campus to assist departments in addressing any underlying biases in their review processes. His efforts have been concentrated on addressing systemic issues that stand to benefit the entire campus community. In recognition of his outstanding work in this area, Dr. Wasserman was honored with the 2022 Oakland University Founders' Day Award for Faculty Excellence in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion.

Within his field of expertise, Dr. Wasserman is the Founding Director of Oakland University's new Center for Moral Values in Health Medicine. The focus of the center's activities are medical humanism, clinical bioethics, social justice and community health. With the goal of being the premier bioethics center in the nation, the Center aims to produce original, high-quality research and curricula related to clinical practice and addressing social disparities and injustices. The launch of the Center has been a great source of excitement and pride at Oakland University, and it would have not come to fruition without Dr. Wasserman spearheading the proposal and approval process and overseeing its operations as Director.

In the School of Medicine, Dr. Wasserman has served a total of 18 committees, nine of which he is still active on. Most notably, Dr. Wasserman was the Chair of the Admissions Committee for five years. During his tenure, he implemented an algorithm that streamlined the applicant screening process, resulting in savings of nearly 3000 hours of faculty/staff time without compromising admission standards. As Director of Student Professionalism for nine years, he managed the feedback process and provided education on professionalism expectations to both students and faculty. In this role, he was also a standing guest of the Student Performance Review Committee to serve as an advisor on professionalism-related policy and school issues, and to present specific student cases. Outside of his committee and directorship appointments, Dr. Wasserman is a highly respected mentor and source of support for OUWB faculty. He currently mentors Drs. Abram Brummett, Ngan Nguyen, and Stefanie Attardi on their career development in academia, and served as an AAMC LEAD program coach for Dr. Linda Dillion, one of our family physicians.

Outside of Oakland University, Dr. Wasserman's community engagements are equally impactful. He co-founded the Street Medicine Program addressing homelessness in Pontiac in 2019 by obtaining liability coverage for the program, developing policies, and securing significant grants for its continuation. He continues to serve as a member of the Street Medicine Oakland Advisory Board. His work in our community has been recognized by the Ascend Foundation in Pontiac with the 2023 Vanguard Neighborhood Champion Award for Service and by OUWB with the 2023 Excellence in Service Award.

Dr. Wasserman's commitment to excellence in healthcare ethics is evident through his attainment of certification as a Healthcare Ethics Consultant from the American Society of Bioethics and Humanities National Certification Commission in 2020. He was a volunteer clinical ethicist for four years at Beaumont Health, where he had significant contact with physicians, patients, and their families, to aid in the navigation of ethical issues in their healthcare. He was also instrumental in developing ethics education for the health system and policies related to ethics.

Nationally, Dr. Wasserman's involvement extends to serving on the Michigan State Medical Society's Committee on Bioethics and chairing the Annual Bioethics Conference. His role as a subject matter expert with the AAMC underscores his commitment to shaping admissions processes at a broader level.

### **Summary**

During his tenure at OUWB, Dr. Wasserman has demonstrated a decade of distinguished scholarship, teaching, and service. His efforts have positioned OUWB's medical humanities and clinical bioethics curriculum as the best in the country. His scholarship and research in the areas of homelessness, clinical bioethics, and Holocaust Medicine have had international impact and acclaim from scholars, organizations, and the media. Finally, Dr. Wasserman's leadership in establishing the Street Medicine Program, Center for Moral Values in Health Medicine, and Holocaust Medicine Program have been central in executing our mission: *to develop compassionate physicians who are dedicated to improving the health of their communities, collaboration, and lifelong learning.*

Sincerely,



Stefanie Attardi, PhD  
Associate Professor of Histology & Anatomy



Inaya Hajj Hussein, PhD  
Associate Professor of Histology



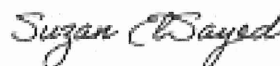
Malli Barremkala, MD  
Associate Professor of Anatomy



Ramin Homayouni, PhD  
Professor and Director of Population Health Informatics



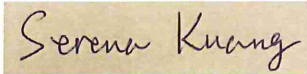
Claudio Cortes, DVM, PhD  
Associate Professor of Immunology



Suzan Kamel-ElSayed, DVM, PhD  
Associate Professor of Physiology



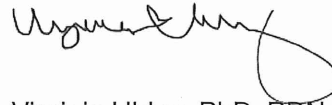
Vardan T. Karamyan, PharmD, PhD  
Professor, Pharmacology and Neuroscience



Serena Kuang, MD, PhD  
Associate Professor of Physiology and  
Neuroscience



Varna Taranikanti, MBBS, MD, PhD  
Associate Professor of Clinical Anatomy



Virginia Uhley, PhD, RDN  
Associate Professor of Nutrition