



EXECUTIVE HEALTHCARE LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

**For Current and Aspiring
Leaders in Surgery**

January 28 - January 30, 2027
University of Alabama at Birmingham
Birmingham, AL

COURSE AGENDA

**THURSDAY, JANUARY 28, 2027 | The Marnix E. Heersink Conference Center
at the Altec/Styslinger Genomic Medicine and Data Sciences Building**

12 - 12:45 p.m. Check In

12:45 - 1 p.m. Welcome from Herb Chen

1 - 3 p.m. Session 1: Managing Yourself (Moderator: Lindsay Kuo)
Time Management - Dan Chu
Leadership Styles - Steve Nakada
DISC - Tracy Wang
Do I Need an MBA or MSHA? - Tom Varghese
Q & A

3 - 3:15 p.m. Break

3:15 - 5:15 p.m. Session 2: Managing Conflict (Moderator: Ken Tanabe)
Prisoner Exercise - Sophie Dream, Sharon Lum
Having the Difficult Conversation - Mary Hawn
Resources for the Struggling Surgeon - Chelsea Dorsey
Scenarios - Dev Desai, Mitu Agarwal
Q & A

5:15 - 5:30 p.m. Break

5:30 - 6:30 p.m. Session 3: Individual Development Resources
Should I Get a Coach? - Ankush Gosain
Developing a Support Network - Ed Barksdale
High-Functioning Anxiety and the "Indispensable but Expendable"
Leader - Navneet Sandhu, Tejal Brahmbhatt
Q & A

6:30 - 7:00 Dinner in Conference Center

7 - 8 p.m. Session 4: Tanabe-Gadd Lecture - Michele Kong

COURSE AGENDA

FRIDAY, JANUARY 29, 2027 | The Marnix E. Heersink Conference Center at the Altec/Styslinger Genomic Medicine and Data Sciences Building

7:30 - 8 a.m.	Breakfast
8 - 10 a.m.	Session 5: Understanding Finance (Moderator: Sai Yendamuri) The Language of Finance - Mary McDougal Funds Flow - Nipun Merchant PSAs and Contracts - Kasper Wang Compensation Plans - Bryan Clary Q & A
10 - 10:15 a.m.	Break
10:15 - 12 p.m.	Session 6: Competing for Leadership Roles Engaging with the Search Firm - Shannon Yeatman Nailing the Interview - Mary Killackey Giving the Vision Talk - Tom Chi Q & A
12 - 2 p.m.	Lunch - Networking and Mentoring Session
2 - 4 p.m.	Session 7: Securing Resources for the Mission Orange Exercise - Susan Tsai How to Lead Up? - Fiemu Nwariaku Negotiating for Your Team - Allan Tsung Panel with COO, Dean, Practice Plan Leader - Janet Hadar, Anupam Agarwal, Amir Ghaferi
4 - 5 p.m.	Session 8: Keynote Address TBA
5 - 6 p.m.	Break
7 - 9 p.m.	Dinner

COURSE AGENDA

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 2027 | The Marnix E. Heersink Conference Center
at the Altec/Styslinger Genomic Medicine and Data Sciences Building**

7:30 - 8 a.m. Breakfast

8 - 11 a.m. Session 9: Leading Your Team Forward in Academic Surgery
(Moderator: Eugene Kim)
Team Building: Lost at Sea - Brenessa Lindeman
The First 90 Days - Herb Chen
Building the Right Culture - Jeff Matthews
Advancement in National Organizations - Lillian Kao
Using AI Today - Ashleigh Allgood
Q & A

COURSE DIRECTOR



Herb Chen

Dr. Herb Chen is Chair of the Department of Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham and the Surgeon-in-Chief of UAB Hospital and Health System. He is a Professor of Surgery, Pediatrics, and Biomedical Engineering, and holds the Fay Fletcher Kerner Endowed Chair. He is an American Cancer Society MEN2 Thyroid Cancer Professor. Dr. Chen is the Editor-in-Chief of the American Journal of Surgery. He has held several leadership positions in major academic societies including President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons Foundation, President of Association for Academic Surgery, President of the Society of Clinical Surgery, President of the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, and President of Surgical Biology Club II.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Anupam Agarwal

Dr. Anupam Agarwal is Senior Vice President for Medicine and Dean, Heersink School of Medicine at the University of Alabama at Birmingham (UAB). He served as Executive Vice Dean for the Heersink School of Medicine (2014-2022) and served as the Director for the Division of Nephrology (2008-2021). He also serves as the Program Director of the NIH/NIDDK funded O'Brien Core Center for Acute Kidney Injury Research. He has graduate faculty status in the Departments of Biochemistry and Molecular Genetics, Pathology and Cell, Developmental and Integrative Biology at UAB. Dr. Agarwal has an active role in clinical medicine, teaching, research and administration. He is intensively involved in the teaching of medical students, internal medicine house staff, and nephrology fellows. Dr. Agarwal's research program has provided critical insights regarding the protective nature and significance of heme oxygenase-1 (HO-1) in vascular and renal inflammation, and the molecular regulation of the human HO-1 gene. He is a member of the American Society of Clinical Investigation (ASCI), American Clinical and Climatological Association (ACCA), Association of American Physicians (AAP).



Suresh "Mitu" Agarwal

Dr. Suresh "Mitu" Agarwal is a professor of surgery and chief of trauma and critical care surgery at the Duke University School of Medicine, where he has been a member of the faculty since 2017. Dr. Agarwal's clinical practice as a trauma surgeon encompasses all areas of acute care surgery, including chest and chest wall injuries, and focuses on the management of ventilated patients. His research interests include social justice through healthcare, including the effects of opiate abuse and socioeconomic disparity. He serves as an at-large director for the SAAS Foundation.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Ashleigh Allgood

Ashleigh Allgood is a faculty member in the Department of Health Services Administration at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. An early adopter of artificial intelligence, she focuses on its practical applications to simplify and enhance personal and professional workflows. She has delivered workshops on how faculty and leaders can use AI tools to streamline tasks, improve efficiency, and support their academic and professional goals. With over a decade of experience in quality improvement and process redesign, Ms. Allgood is a Certified Lean Six Sigma Black Belt and is pursuing a PhD in Medical Sociology. Her research examines trust as a social construct and its role in shaping healthcare outcomes. She is dedicated to helping healthcare professionals embrace emerging technologies to make their work more efficient and manageable.



Edward Barksdale

Dr. Edward M. Barksdale, Jr., is Professor of Surgery at the University of Chicago and the Chief Surgical Officer of the Chicagoland Children's Health Alliance (CCHA). Most recently he was the Robert J. Izant, Jr. MD Professor and Surgeon-in-Chief at Rainbow Babies and Children's Hospital/University Hospitals and Case Western Reserve School of Medicine (CWRUSOM) (2007-24). An All-American Athlete and honors graduate of Yale University (1980), Dr. Barksdale received his medical degree from Harvard University (1984). He completed a residency in General Surgery at Massachusetts General Hospital (1991) and fellowship training in Pediatric Surgery at Children's Hospital Medical Center in Cincinnati (1994). Tenured Professor of Surgery at University of Pittsburgh and Children's Hospital of Pittsburgh (1994-2007). In Cleveland, he has been devoted to building programs to address health disparities, particularly in fragile populations of children. His life, leadership and career have been guided by strong values he learned from family and community growing up in Lynchburg, Virginia during the dynamic 1960s.



Tejal Brahmbhatt

Dr. Tejal S. Brahmbhatt is an Associate Professor, Director of the Surgical Critical Care Fellowship, and Chief of Surgical Intensive Care at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center in Los Angeles. He specializes in trauma surgery, emergency general surgery, and surgical critical care. He completed his surgical residency at Vanderbilt University and fellowship training in Traumatology, Emergency General Surgery, and Surgical Critical Care at University of Pennsylvania, with additional training in Acute Care Surgery Systems Management at Boston University. His NIH- and industry-sponsored research focuses on trauma surgery, surgical critical care, and point-of-care ultrasound. He lectures nationally and internationally on trauma surgery, surgical critical care, and surgical education with a focus on the psychological impact on trainees from modern surgical education models. Dr. Brahmbhatt is the current President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons. Additionally, Dr. Brahmbhatt has advanced training in late Romantic-era classical music theory and composition and serves as an academic composition consultant in the film production industry.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Tom Chi

Dr. Thomas Chi is Professor and Chair for the UAB Department of Urology where he also holds the Anton J. Bueschen, M.D., Endowed Chair in Urologic Surgery and Research. He graduated as a President's Scholar from Stanford University and earned his medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco (UCSF), and his MBA from the Wharton School of Business. He completed urology residency and fellowship in endourology and laparoscopy at UCSF. Dr. Chi performs percutaneous, ureteroscopic, and non-invasive stone removal. He established the first x-ray-free kidney stone treatment center in the United States. He is an expert in performing Holmium Laser Enucleation of the Prostate (HoLEP), a minimally invasive operation to treat men with BPH. Dr. Chi's pursuit of excellence extends to improving healthcare systems. He is actively involved in leadership development and has implemented a "Learning to Lead" curriculum for the UAB Urology residency.



Daniel Chu

Dr. Daniel I. Chu is Professor and Division Director of the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. He completed his undergraduate at Yale and medical school at The Johns Hopkins School of Medicine. After residency at Boston University Medical Center, he completed a colon and rectal surgery fellowship at the Mayo Clinic. As a double-board certified colorectal surgeon, he specializes in the spectrum of colorectal disease including inflammatory bowel disease, colorectal cancer, diverticular disease, and anorectal disorders. His NIH-funded research interests focus on identifying, understanding, and reducing health disparities in surgery with particular attention to health literacy.



Bryan Clary

Bryan Clary, M.D., MBA, graduated from the University of California, San Diego, with a degree in bioengineering. He received his medical degree from the University of California, San Francisco; completed general surgery residency at Duke University; and completed a fellowship in general surgical oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center. Dr. Clary joined the Duke University faculty in 2000, where he maintained a high-volume practice in complex HPB oncology and conducted translational research on primary and metastatic liver malignancies. He served as program director for the general surgery residency and the surgical oncology/HPB fellowship programs, and Vice-Chief of Surgical Oncology. Dr. Clary completed an executive MBA at the Duke Fuqua School of Business and, in 2015, was recruited to serve as Chair of the Department of Surgery and Surgeon-in-Chief for UC San Diego Health. In this capacity, he leads more than 100 full-time faculty members. Dr. Clary is also a member of the UC San Diego Health Executive Committee, co-Chair of the UC San Diego Health Finance Committee, and Co-Convener of the Council of Health Science Chairs. Dr. Clary served as president of the Society for Clinical Surgery from 2018 to 2020 and is currently a member of the Editorial Board for the Annals of Surgery.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Dev Desai

Dr. Dev M. Desai is the Chief of Pediatric Transplantation at Phoenix Children's Hospital and a Professor of Surgery at the University of Arizona in Phoenix. He is a member of several professional organizations, including just being elected to serve on the Board of Directors of the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN), which governs all organ donation and transplantation policy in the United States. He has also served on the board of directors of the American Board of Surgery, and as a member of the American College of Surgeons, the American Society of Transplant Surgeons, the International Pediatric Transplant Association, the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons, and the American Surgical Association.



Chelsea Dorsey

Dr. Chelsea Dorsey is a Professor of Surgery in the Section of Vascular Surgery and Endovascular Therapy at the University of Chicago Medicine. She serves as the Associate Dean for Medical Student Academic Advising and Advancement at the Pritzker School of Medicine and Senior Vice-Chair of Faculty and Educational Affairs in the Department of Surgery. After earning her medical degree from the University of Chicago, she completed a vascular surgery integrated residency at Stanford University. Dr. Dorsey is Director of the UChicago Vein Clinic. Her research interests include workforce diversity in surgery, augmentation of inclusive practices in the surgical environment, and optimizing academic resources for diverse learners in the undergraduate medical education space. Dr. Dorsey is a Distinguished Fellow of the Society of Vascular Surgery and she was also recognized nationally as one of the "40 under 40" surgeons from the Association of Women Surgeons.



Sophie Dream

Dr. Sophie Dream is an endocrine surgeon and Section Chief of Endocrine Surgery in the Department of Surgery at the University of Alabama at Birmingham. After completing her fellowship in endocrine surgery at the University of Alabama in 2019, she served as section chief of endocrine surgery in the department of surgery at the Medical College of Wisconsin and program director for the Medical College of Wisconsin Comprehensive Endocrine Surgery Fellowship prior to returning to UAB in 2025. Her clinical practice focuses on the surgical treatment of benign and malignant disorders of thyroid, parathyroid, and adrenal glands. She has established and grown thyroid ablation program at MCW and UAB. Her focus of investigation is in exploring the roles provider uncertainty and patient literacy and navigation play on the undertreatment of surgical endocrine disease. She is an Associate Editor for the American Journal of Surgery and Clinical Thyroidology and serves on the Editorial Boards of Surgery, Journal of Surgical Research, and Surgical Oncology Insight.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Amir Ghaferi

Dr. Amir Ghaferi is a Professor of Surgery with Tenure, the President and CEO of the Physician Enterprise, and Senior Associate Dean for Clinical Affairs at Froedtert & the Medical College of Wisconsin. In these roles, he leads the enterprise strategy for establishing and advancing a regionally integrated and aligned medical group operation. Prior to moving to the Medical College of Wisconsin, he was the Moses Gunn, M.D. Professor of Surgery and the Chief Clinical Officer of the University of Michigan Medical Group where he oversaw clinical operations, quality, strategy, and finance. He was also the Director of the Michigan Bariatric Surgery Collaborative, a consortium of 40 hospitals and 80 surgeons focused on improving the safety and quality of bariatric surgery. His clinical practice is devoted to the surgical management of obesity and abdominal wall and groin hernias.



Ash Gosain

Dr. Ankush Gosain is the Surgeon-in-Chief of UVA Health Children's Hospital, Division Chief of Pediatric Surgery in the Department of Surgery at the University of Virginia School of Medicine, and Physician Executive of Fortify Children's Health, which is Virginia's first Clinically Integrated Network (CIN) dedicated to children. Dr. Gosain serves on the Executive Councils of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons (President), the Society of University Surgeons (Secretary), the Surgical Research Committee of the American College of Surgeons (Chair), and the Surgical Biology Club II (Board of Directors). He is an elected member of the Society of Clinical Surgery (Treasurer) and the American Society for Clinical Investigation, platforms which he uses to advocate for the Surgeon-Scientist phenotype.



Janet Hadar

Janet Hadar serves as the System Chief Operating Officer of UAB Medicine. She joined UAB in January 2026. Janet previously served as President and CEO of UNC Hospital & Clinics. With over 25 years of experience in healthcare, she led the growth, quality, and operational performance of UNC Health's flagship academic medical center in Chapel Hill, the NC Children's Hospital, the Basnight Cancer Hospital, the Youth Behavioral Health Hospital, Hillsborough Hospital, Chatham Hospital, and a multi-county ambulatory platform. Under her leadership, the organization earned top honors. She is board certified in healthcare management as a fellow in the American College of Health Care Executives. She is past Chair of the Vizient National CEO Academic Council, executive member of the NC Healthcare Association, and serves on several other non-profit Boards. She received her bachelor's degree in nursing from Villanova University, a master's degree in nursing from the University of Pennsylvania and a master's degree in business administration from Case Western Reserve University.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Mary Hawn

Dr. Mary T. Hawn is the Emile Holman Professor of Surgery and Chair of the Department of Surgery at Stanford University School of Medicine. Dr. Hawn received her general surgical training at the University of Michigan. She completed her minimally invasive surgical fellowship at Oregon Health and Sciences University. Her clinical area of specialty is minimally invasive foregut surgery. She has earned a Masters in Public Health from the University of Michigan and her Certificate in Healthcare Quality and Safety from UAB. Dr. Hawn has extensive research in surgical quality measurement and national policy affecting surgical populations. Her work has changed guidelines for noncardiac surgery in patients with coronary stents and also informed policy about national surgical quality measurement. Dr. Hawn is President of The Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract, and Treasurer of the James IV Society. She was elected to the National Academy of Medicine in 2021.



Lillian Kao

Dr. Lillian Kao, is a Professor of Surgery, the Division Director of the Division Of Acute Care Surgery, and the Jack H. Mayfield, MD Chair in Surgery at the McGovern Medical School at UTHealth. After completing a seven-year undergraduate and medical school program at the University of Michigan, Lillian did her residency at the University of Washington. She is co-founder and co-director of the Center for Surgical Trials and Evidence-based Practice (C-STEP). Her research focuses on comparative effectiveness trials and dissemination and implementation of evidence-based practices.



Mary Killackey

Dr. Mary Killackey is the Robert & Viola Lobrano Professor and Chair of Surgery and Adjunct Professor of Pediatrics at Tulane University School of Medicine. She was appointed Chair of Surgery in May 2016 and since that time has exponentially grown the department in all missions. In recognition of her leadership, she was accepted into the Executive Leadership in Academic Medicine fellowship in 2017. Later that year, she was inducted into AOA Medical Honors Society and in 2019, elected to the Leonard Tow Gold Humanism Society. Since 2017, she is the Inaugural Faculty Lead of the Tulane Professionalism Program. Currently, she is a recipient of Fellows in Leadership Award from the Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Society and is also participating in Leading Organizations to Health with the Association of American Medical Colleges.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Eugene Kim

Dr. Eugene Kim obtained his medical degree from Columbia University College of Physicians & Surgeons. He completed his residency in general surgery at Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center and completed a two-year research fellowship in Tumor Biology and an ECMO fellowship. Dr. Kim subsequently completed a fellowship in pediatric surgery at Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center. He is Professor of Surgery and Pediatrics at Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, where he is the Director of the Division of Pediatric Surgery and Vice Chair of the Department of Surgery, Surgeon-in-Chief and Deputy Director of Guerin Children's. Dr. Kim maintains a basic science research laboratory which is focused on mechanisms of metastasis and recurrence in high-risk neuroblastoma. Dr. Kim is Past President of the Association for Academic Surgery and the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons, and Secretary-Treasurer of the Surgical Biology Club II. He is actively involved in mentoring and promoting young academic surgeon-scientists.



Michele Kong

Dr. Michele Kong is the co-founder of KultureCity, a global nonprofit whose work has helped shape sensory accessibility and inclusion initiatives across healthcare systems, airports, sports and entertainment venues, museums, schools, and public spaces worldwide. Through KultureCity, accessibility programs have been implemented in more than 7,000 venues and events across 40 countries. In 2026, KultureCity was recognized by TIME as a TIME100 Companies Industry Leader for its impact and leadership in accessibility and inclusion. She also founded and serves as Medical Director of the Sensory Integration Program at Children's of Alabama, a multidisciplinary initiative focused on improving care delivery and reducing barriers for children with sensory, communication, and social challenges. Her work has contributed to broader changes in how healthcare systems recognize and support individuals with invisible disabilities and sensory needs. A stroke survivor living with hemifacial spasm, Dr. Kong's personal experiences with stroke recovery and neurological disability have further deepened her commitment to creating more inclusive systems and communities. She currently holds the Children's of Alabama Endowed Professorship in Critical Care.



Lindsay Kuo

Dr. Lindsay Kuo is an Assistant Professor of Surgery at the Temple University Lewis Katz School of Medicine. She graduated from Northwestern University in 2010, and completed her training at Penn Medicine Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania and Brigham and Women's Hospital. Dr. Kuo is a high-volume endocrine surgeon, specializing in surgery of the thyroid, parathyroid and adrenal glands. Dr. Kuo regularly treats benign and malignant conditions including Graves' disease, complex thyroid cancer, primary hyperparathyroidism, and hyperfunctioning adrenal masses. She is one of only two surgeons in the Philadelphia region to perform retroperitoneoscopic adrenalectomy. Her research interests include health disparities and access to care, and surgical decision-making and extent of surgery, particularly for thyroid cancer.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Brenessa Lindeman

Dr. Brenessa Lindeman is a Professor of Surgery, Pediatrics, and Medical Education at the University of Alabama at Birmingham where she serves as Vice Chair of Education, Fellowship Director for Endocrine Surgery and the Assistant Dean for Graduate Medical Education. A native of eastern Kentucky, she completed her undergraduate training summa cum laude at the University of Louisville and was the Founder's Medalist at the Vanderbilt University School of Medicine. She completed general surgery training at Johns Hopkins, and endocrine surgery fellowship at Harvard/Brigham and Women's Hospital. She earned a Master of Education in the Health Professions from Johns Hopkins and has mentored more than 30 students, residents, and postdocs in endocrine surgery, surgical education, and competency-based assessment. She has led work to develop and study Entrustable Professional Activities for the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons and the American Board of Surgery for whom she is a Councilor and Vice-Chair of the General Surgery Board. She is also Immediate Past President of the Association for Academic Surgery.



Sharon Lum

Dr. Sharon S. Lum is Chair of the Department of Surgery at Loma Linda University Health. She is a Professor of Surgery in the Division of Surgical Oncology and has been a dedicated breast surgeon for more than 20 years. A graduate of Harvard College and Washington University School of Medicine, she trained in general surgery at Oregon Health and Sciences University, where she completed an American Cancer Society Clinical Research Fellowship. She received her MBA from the Brandeis Heller School of Social Policy and Management. She is President of the Southern California Chapter of the American College of Surgeons, Recorder and Program Committee Chair of the Pacific Coast Surgical Association, and served as a Governor of the American College of Surgeons, where she also served on the Commission on Cancer. She is Chair of the Legislative Committee of the American Society of Breast Surgeons, where she was a founding member of the Health Equity Advisory Group. Her academic interests address the interplay of disparities, quality measures, and health policy in breast cancer care.



Jeffrey B. Matthews

Dr. Jeffrey B. Matthews is the Distinguished Dallas B. Phemister Professor of Surgery, Chair of the Department of Surgery, and Surgeon-in-Chief of The University of Chicago Medicine. Dr. Matthews is a gastrointestinal surgeon and leading authority on the surgical treatment of diseases of the pancreas, bile ducts, and liver. He serves on the Editorial Board of eleven prestigious surgical and scientific journals and is Editor-in-Chief Emeritus of the Journal of Gastrointestinal Surgery. He is the past Chair of the Surgery Residency Review Committee of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. He is a senior Director of the American Board of Surgery, and past President of the Society of Surgical Chairs, the Society of University Surgeons and the Society for Surgery of the Alimentary Tract (SSAT).

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Mary McDougal

Mary McDougal, MPA, is the Executive Administrator for the Department of Surgery at the UAB Heersink School of Medicine. Mary came to UAB from Virginia Commonwealth University, where she led teams working to establish the Sheltering Arms Institute, a 114-bed freestanding rehabilitation hospital. Mary is an active member of the Association of Academic Surgical Administrators serving on the finance committee. Mary received her undergraduate degree from Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University in Blacksburg, Virginia, and received a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Seattle University.



Nipun Merchant

Dr. Nipun B. Merchant holds the Alan S. Livingstone Chair in Surgical Oncology and is Professor of Surgery, Vice Chair of Surgical Oncology Services and Chief of the Division of Surgical Oncology in the Department of Surgery at the University of Miami Miller School of Medicine. At the Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center, he serves as the Associate Director of Translational Research, Surgeon-in-Chief of the oncology service line. He is also the PI of a T32 training grant in Surgical Oncology and is the author of over 200 peer reviewed publications. He is a past president of SAAS.



Steve Nakada

Dr. Stephen Y. Nakada is Professor and Chair of the Department of Urology and the David T. Uehling Chair of Urology at the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health in Madison, WI. Dr. Nakada has been the Chairman of Urology in Madison since 2001. In 2020, Dr. Nakada was named the Chief Administrative Physician of the Practice Plan at University of Wisconsin Medical Foundation. Dr. Nakada's research focuses on urolithiasis and renal aspects of minimally invasive urology. He has authored or co-authored over 275 scientific articles, 50 book chapters, and he has edited more than 10 textbooks in those areas. Dr. Nakada has served on the AUA Staghorn Stone and Ureteral Stones Guidelines Committees, the AUA/ABU Examination Committee, and he served as the Chair of the AUA Laparoscopy and Robotic Surgery Committee. He has served as President of the R.O.C.K. Society, the Society of Academic Urologists, the Endourological Society, the American Board of Urology, and in 2025 the American Urological Association. Currently, Dr. Nakada is an active member of the American Association of Genitourinary Surgeons and the Clinical Society of Genitourinary Surgeons.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Fiemu Nwariaku

Dr. Fiemu E. Nwariaku is a Professor and Chair of the Department of Surgery at the Spencer Fox Eccles School of Medicine at the University of Utah. He also holds the Helen Lowe Bamberger Colby Presidential Endowed Chair in Health Sciences at the University of Utah. He specializes in endocrine surgery and has a keen interest in caring for patients with diseases of the thyroid, parathyroid, adrenal and pancreas. Dr. Nwariaku is at the forefront of breakthroughs in robotic surgery and minimally invasive surgery. An accomplished surgeon scientist, Dr. Nwariaku has broad research interests ranging from inflammation to cancer, to the use of technology to improve surgical outcomes. He is nationally and globally recognized for his work in thyroid and adrenal disease. In recognition of his contributions, he is a member of many prestigious organizations including the American College of Surgeons, American Association of Endocrine Surgeons, Association for Academic Surgery, Society of University Surgeons, and the Society of Clinical Surgery. His training includes medical school at the University College Hospital in Nigeria, the University of Texas Southwestern Medical Center, where he completed a residency and fellowship prior to serving as a faculty member and executive vice chair in the Department of Surgery.



Navneet Sandhu

Dr. Navneet Sandhu is a California based clinical psychologist and national speaker with over 15 years of experience focused on the mental health and well-being of health care professionals, including trainees, physicians, and surgeons, and executive administrative leadership. Her work focuses on how leadership structures, professional identity transitions, and the culture of academic medicine shape mental health, well-being, performance, and long-term career sustainability. Dr. Sandhu holds a Doctorate in Clinical Psychology and a Master of Public Health, along with a certification in Perinatal Mental Health. Her clinical work is dedicated to supporting individuals in cultivating healthier professional environments, ones that promote both psychological well-being and sustainable, effective leadership in health care settings.



Kenneth Tanabe

Dr. Kenneth Tanabe serves as Professor of Surgery at Harvard Medical School and President of the Society of Surgical Oncology. He has served in many leadership positions including Deputy Clinical Director of the MGH Cancer Center, Chief of Surgical Oncology, PI of NCI T32 training grant, and Director of the MGH Surgical Oncology Research Laboratories. He has served on NIH and DoD study sections and programmatic panels, and editorial board of several journals. He has mentored many faculty to their first NIH awards. Dr. Tanabe's varied career experiences include running a translational cancer research laboratory, clinical service line development, drug development via sponsorship of FDA INDs, restructuring of faculty compensation plans, and international hospital network development.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Susan Tsai

Dr. Susan Tsai is a Professor of Surgery and Division Chief in the Division of Surgical Oncology, Department of Surgery at the Ohio State University. She completed her medical school education and general surgery residency at the University of Michigan. During residency, she completed a clinical research fellowship at the Surgery Branch of the National Cancer Institute. After residency, she completed a Surgical Oncology Fellowship at the Johns Hopkins Hospital and also received a Master's in Clinical Investigation from the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health. She previously was at the Medical College of Wisconsin, where she helped to lead the LaBahn Pancreatic Cancer Program. During her time there, she established an integrative biorepository and established an investigator initiated trial program for patients with operable pancreatic cancer.



Allan Tsung

Dr. Allan Tsung is Chair of Surgery at the University of Virginia where his goal is to expand the field of surgery, strengthen the institution, and most importantly, shape and inspire faculty, residents, and students to make outstanding contributions in clinical care, research, and education. Dr. Tsung's work has generated 300+ published peer-reviewed manuscripts in leading scientific journals and has a long track record of funding as Principal Investigator on multiple NIH and society grants. Dr. Tsung is the past president of the Society of University Surgeons, Society of Asian Academic Surgeons and current Secretary of the Society of Clinical Surgery. He also participates in leadership roles in several other important academic surgical organizations, such as the Society of Surgical Oncology, the Americas Hepato-Pancreato-Biliary Association, and the American Association for the Study of Liver Diseases.



Tom Varghese

Dr. Thomas Varghese, Jr., is the Chief, Section of General Thoracic Surgery at the University of Utah; Chief Value Officer (Ambulatory and Inpatient) at the Huntsman Cancer Institute (HCI); Associate Chief Medical Quality Officer at Huntsman Cancer Hospital; and a Professor (Tenure-track) in the Department of Surgery at the University of Utah School of Medicine. Tom is a health services researcher whose clinical, research and operational experience are focused on the optimization of patient health before surgery, surgeon performance, and health system outcomes. He helped create the American College of Surgeons (ACS) Strong for Surgery program and is a co-PI on the National Cancer Institute RO1-funded clinical trial on the role of Precision Exercise Prescription (PEP) for elective lung cancer surgical resection. Dr. Varghese has served in several leadership positions in organizations such as the Society of Thoracic Surgeons, ACS, NCCN, Thoracic Surgery Directors Association, Cardiothoracic Surgery Network, and Society of University Surgeons. He is a founding member, and inaugural President (2016-2018) of the Thoracic Surgery Outcomes Research Network (ThORN), a collaborative that now spans 29 institutions nationwide. He is a Past President of SUS (2024-2025), and is the Editor-in-Chief for the Journal of the American College of Surgeons (JACS), the 8th editor in the 121-year history of the journal.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Kasper Wang

Dr. Kasper Wang is the Robert M. Filler Chair of Paediatric Surgery, Head of General and Thoracic Surgery at The Hospital for Sick Children, and Professor of Surgery at the University of Toronto Temerty Faculty of Medicine. He received his education at The Johns Hopkins University and The Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. Dr. Wang completed his general surgery training at Stanford University and his paediatric surgery training at Children's Hospital Los Angeles. Dr. Wang is well published in high impact journals such as JAMA, Nature Communications, Cell, Gastroenterology, Hepatology, Surgery, Annals of Surgery, Journal of Hepatology, and Pediatrics. Dr. Wang is the Past President of the Society of University Surgeons and past Chair of the Western Pediatric Surgery Research Consortium. He is the immediate past Chair of the Pediatric Surgery Board of the American Board of Surgery. He is the current chair of the American College of Surgeons Pediatric Advisory Board.



Tracy Wang

Dr. Tracy S. Wang is a tenured Professor of Surgery, Vice-Chair of Strategic and Professional Development in the Department of Surgery at the Medical College of Wisconsin (Milwaukee, WI). She leads the Department's CAPTAINS (Career Advancement and Professional Training Academy IN Surgery) course. Dr. Wang has published over 150 peer-reviewed manuscripts and book chapters. She is President-Elect of the Society of University Surgeons. She is the Treasurer for the Central Surgical Association and the American Association of Endocrine Surgeons Foundation and is on the Executive Council for the International Association of Endocrine Surgeons. She is a past-President of the Society of Asian Academic Surgeons. She also serves as an Associate Editor for the American Journal of Surgery and on the Editorial Boards of World Journal of Surgery, Surgery, and the Journal of Surgical Research.



Shannon Yeatman

Shannon Yeatman is a consultant and a member of Spencer Stuart's Healthcare Practice. Based in Atlanta, Shannon brings more than a decade of experience as an adviser to academic medical centers and healthcare services providers on leadership positions including medical school deans, clinical and basic science department chairs, academic health system executives and healthcare-focused association and foundation leaders. Recruitment partner with 20 years of experience in the medical and healthcare fields. In more than a decade at Spencer Stuart, Shannon has worked closely with university leadership, boards and health system executives to recruit more than 150 senior executives. She also served as the Healthcare Practice's associate practice leader. Prior to joining Spencer Stuart, Shannon was a senior associate with another leading executive search firm, where she also specialized in academic medicine. She is a graduate of the University of Georgia, where she earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications.

FACULTY BIOGRAPHIES



Sai Yendamuri

Dr. Sai Yendamuri serves as a Professor of Oncology and Chair of Thoracic Surgery at the Roswell Park Comprehensive Cancer Center (RPCCC). He is a surgeon scientist with a busy practice in complex thoracic surgical oncology. Dr. Yendamuri is regionally and internationally known for his clinical expertise. He also serves as the Director of the Thoracic Surgery Research Laboratory at RPCCC. His research focuses on the role of obesity on lung cancer initiation and progression. Through this lens, his team explores the metabolic regulation of lung cancer initiation as well the corresponding immune response. Dr. Yendamuri has been continuously funded by the NIH for over 12 years and has received grant support from DoD and several foundations. He has published 200 peer reviewed manuscripts and 7 book chapters. He is a graduate of the MBA program for Executives (Major in Strategic Management) from the Wharton School of Business and serves as CEO of RPCI Oncology, P.C, the care network of RPCCC. He also serves as the Chief Strategy Officer and Senior Vice President of Business Development and Outreach at RPCCC.

COURSE ALUMNI

Gina Adrales
Tania Arora
Diego Avella Patino
Samantha Baker
Abigail Beard
Avi Bhavaraju
Tejal Brahmbhatt
Amy Bunts
Carlos Chan
Judy Chen
Do Yeon Cho
Daniel Chu
Carlo Contreras
Kim de la Cruz
Ghaleb Darwazeh
Jashodeep Datta
Sophie Dream
Monica Dua
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Oliver Eng
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Annabelle Fonseca
Anthony Froix
Emmanuel Gabriel
Samir Gadepalli
Sabha Ganai
Jinny Ha

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Panos Vardas
Jiping Wang
Russell Woo
Sai Yendamuri
Kay Yoon-Flannery
Y. Nancy You
David Yu
Esther Yung
Jessica Zagory



“This course is an essential investment for any surgeon looking to lead with impact and vision. I left with a clear, actionable road map for my leadership journey. This is exactly what I needed at this stage of my career.”

Dr. Tejal Brahmbhatt
Associate Professor of Surgery
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

SAAS EHLA SNAPSHOTS



