

MEDICAL BOARD STAFF REPORT

DATE REPORT ISSUED: April 14, 2022
 ATTENTION: Members, Medical Board of California
 SUBJECT: Special Faculty Permit Review Committee
 Recommendation
 STAFF CONTACT: Marina O'Connor, Chief of Licensing

REQUESTED ACTION:

- 1) Approve the Special Faculty Permit Review Committee's (SFPRC) recommendation for a Special Faculty Permit (SFP) appointment for Rodrigo Antonio Brant Fernandes, M.D., pursuant to California and Business Professions Code (BPC) section 2168.1(a)(1)(B).

BACKGROUND:

The Medical Board of California (Board) is authorized to issue an SFP to a physician who is academically eminent and meets all the requirements pursuant to BPC section 2168.1.

The SFP authorizes an individual to practice medicine only within the medical school and its affiliated institutions where the SFP holder is providing instruction as part of the medical school's educational program, and for which the medical school has assumed direct responsibility.

The SFPRC is comprised of two Board members, one who is a physician and one who is a public member, one representative from each of the 11 allopathic medical schools in California, and one representative to represent academic medical centers. The SFPRC reviews and makes recommendations to the Board regarding the eligibility of the applicants applying pursuant to BPC section 2168.1(c)(1).

At the SFPRC's March 16, 2022, meeting, the SFPRC reviewed the qualifications of an applicant from the University of Southern California (USC) Keck School of Medicine. Glenn Ault, M.D., Professor of Clinical Surgery, Educational Scholar, presented USC's request for Dr. Brant Fernandes to receive an SFP. Dr. Ault indicated that Dr. Brant Fernandes is nationally and internationally recognized for his clinical and research expertise in new development for vitreoretinal surgery such as application of stem cells for inherited retinal degenerations, as well as stem cell implantation techniques for retinal diseases. Dr. Brant Fernandes' surgical skill and clinical acumen were instrumental in developing and implementing a novel surgical approach to subretinal implantation of a stem cell derived implant in a porcine model that was being developed during his time visiting the Engineering Research Center at USC from 2010 – 2012. The translational work Dr. Brant Fernandes accomplished during this two-year period laid the foundation for a key patent for "Instruments and methods for the implantation of cell-seeded substrates" in 2019. These methods were used in at least two peer-reviewed publications and were later used to develop a surgical procedure that was implemented in human subjects during a first-in-man Phase 1/2a clinical trial.

Dr. Brant Fernandes was the final candidate because of his exceptional clinical and research expertise and his interest in working at LAC+USC Medical Center; to provide patient care to the underserved community, as well as train residents, interns, and fellows.

USC Keck School of Medicine has been searching for an individual with Dr. Brant Fernandes' skill set for the last few years and has not been successful to recruit someone of his caliber. Dr. Brant Fernandes has a notable record of peer-reviewed publications and has been involved in student mentorship in the past several years. Dr. Brant Fernandes is constantly requested to be an invited lecturer in both national and international conferences and in several resident and fellow courses and his skill and accomplishments have been acknowledged by his peers nationally and internationally.

If approved for an SFP by the Board, Dr. Brant Fernandes will hold a full-time faculty position as Associate Professor of Clinical Ophthalmology at the USC Keck School of Medicine where he is expected to manage ocular trauma and retinal diseases including diabetic retinopathy and retinal detachment. Dr. Brant Fernandes will contribute to developing a stem cells implantation unit in the USC Keck School of Medicine's retina service. He is expected to continuously conduct pre-clinical and translational retina research along with his clinical responsibilities and will also teach medical students, residents, interns, and fellows at LAC+USC Medical Center as well as Ph.D. and postdoctoral students. Dr. Brant Fernandes has more than 20 years of unique experience, has completed a double fellowship in vitreoretinal and glaucoma surgery, and is an experienced cataract surgeon. In addition to his exceptional clinical expertise and extensive surgical experience in retina, glaucoma and cataract surgeries, Dr. Brant Fernandes has extraordinary world-class experience in stem cell therapeutic application.

EDUCATION:

MEDICAL SCHOOL

Federal University of São Paulo
Brazil: 1995 – 2000
Graduated: 2000

Postgraduate Training

Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil
Ophthalmology: 2003 – 2005

Foundation Getulio Vargas, Brazil
Specialization in Health Care Management: 2004

Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil
Glaucoma: 2004 – 2006

Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil
Ph.D.: 2006 – 2019

Federal University of São Paulo, Brazil
Vitreoretinal Surgery: 2007 – 2008

University of Southern California, Keck School of Medicine, California
Vitreoretinal Surgery: 2010 – 2012

SPECIAL FACULTY PERMIT REVIEW COMMITTEE FINDINGS:

The SFPRC recommended approval of Dr. Brant Fernandes for an SFP at the USC Keck School of Medicine, pursuant to BPC section 2168.1(a)(1)(B).