

Fellows' One-Year Academic Career Development Course

at the University of Rochester Medical Center



SUMMARY

Target Audience

Fellows from geriatric medicine, dentistry, psychiatry, and other subspecialties

Purpose

To prepare fellows as the next generation of academic clinician-teacher-scholar geriatrics leaders

Program

A year-long, annual academic career development course consisting of reading assignments, class participation and presentations, and product development

History

The course began in 2005

Operating Costs

Faculty time; photocopying of teaching materials

Outcomes

100% of the fellows reported that the course positively impacted their future career development; six of nine fellows chose academic careers

Available Materials

List of course topics and projects; article with table of learning experiences, outcomes, audiences, and ACGME core competencies

For More Information

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Program Overview

The University of Rochester Division of Geriatrics and Aging, in collaboration with the University of Rochester Warner Graduate School of Education and Human Development, conducts a year-long academic career development course that focuses on achieving excellence in teaching and career development. This course is designed to prepare fellows as the next generation of academic clinician-teacher-scholar geriatrics leaders.

The program is an innovative addition to current geriatrics fellowship training and enhances the development of all fellows as clinician-teacher-scholars while providing additional opportunities to integrate and assess the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) core competencies.

Participants gain:

- the prerequisite knowledge and experience to successfully develop, implement, and evaluate various educational materials that target interdisciplinary trainees
- the teaching and leadership skills necessary to succeed as clinician-educators and leaders in academic geriatrics.

Program Operations

The academic career development course is offered to fellows in geriatric medicine, dentistry, psychiatry, and other subspecialties at the University of Rochester. The year-long course meets twice a month for one hour and includes reading assignments, class participation and presentations, and product development.

12 University of Rochester faculty with expertise in each topic area participate in the course on an annual basis. They are not given any monetary or financial incentive to participate.



Several faculty members teach more than one session. The course director is also a University of Rochester faculty member who attends each class and teaches 30% of the classes. Classes consist of small-group didactic sessions typically beginning with a PowerPoint presentation, followed by an interactive feedback/discussion session. Some classes are case-based and all involve active participation and presentation/discussion.

The curriculum focuses on three areas:

The Clinician: Fellows are encouraged to identify a clinical niche and to use that niche throughout the year as an educational and research focus. The practicum experiences include ethnicity/diversity training (ethnogeriatrics) as well as training to improve communication with patients and families. This supplements the experiences of the traditional one-year clinical geriatrics fellowship.

The Teacher: Fellows gain experience in classroom teaching, podium presentations, poster sessions, small group facilitation, giving effective feedback, clinical reasoning, exam-question writing, and lay-audience teaching. To coordinate these teaching experiences with their clinical niche, each fellow chooses one geriatric syndrome or topic to focus on throughout the year. At the conclusion of the year, each fellow has a portfolio of developed educational materials (posters, lectures, cases) to share with the entire group.

The Scholar: Fellows gain experience in writing abstracts, giving poster presentations, academic curriculum vitae development, mentoring strategies, peer assessment and professional competence, preparing publishable articles, and literature reviews.

Staffing Requirements

12 University of Rochester faculty with expertise in each topic area participate in the course on an annual basis. They are not given any monetary or financial incentive to participate. Several faculty members teach more than one session.

There is one course director, who is provided 5-10% time for the course.

Administrative support involves helping to develop the schedule of faculty participants, photocopying course materials, and sending e-mails to faculty and course participants.

Program Costs and Funding Sources

The costs involved are faculty time and photocopying of teaching materials.

Funding for the course is currently provided by a Health Resources and Service Administration's Bureau of Health Professions grant to train physicians, dentists, and behavioral health professionals.

Process and Outcomes Data

Fellows complete mid-year and end-of-year evaluations that assess their overall satisfaction with the course, the usefulness and impact of the course, and the efficacy of the teaching methods provided with respect to their future careers. The mean individual session Likert score was 4.0, with a range of 3.5-4.6. 100% of the fellows responded positively to several open-ended questions, including "How do you think this course will impact your future career?" Additionally, the majority of fellows choose to pursue academic careers upon completion of their fellowship.

Fellows' career paths are also monitored and tracked by intermittent mail and e-mail surveys for five years to determine intermediate and long-term outcomes of scholarly activity: professional activities, teaching venues, academic development, publications, and promotion. There is no current data available from this fellowship to compare career choice prior to and after the implementation of the Academic Career Development Course.

The new classes and materials created by the fellows have substantially increased the number of scholarly products within the curriculum. For example, fellows submitted



abstracts for poster presentations to the American Geriatrics Society, the American Dental Association, and the American Association for Geriatric Psychiatry. In collaboration with the nursing education department at Monroe Community Hospital, a core lecture series for certified nursing assistants was developed. The reviews from the series participants were extremely positive, with recent expansion of the series to include presentations at other local university-affiliated nursing homes.

All of the scholarly products were new additions to the fellowship curriculum, not required of former traditional geriatric medicine or interdisciplinary geriatric fellows in prior years of training. Fellows received both verbal and written feedback on their scholarly products, including their grand rounds and lay presentations, their mock poster sessions, and pre- and post-test evaluations of the communication sessions.

This course resonates well with the May 2006 *Fellowship Position Paper* from the American Geriatrics Society and the Association of Directors of Geriatric Academic Programs. Several options for further leadership training and projects were suggested as a result of it, as was a proposed education curriculum for additional years of fellowship training.

Implementation Lessons

- This program has been extremely well received among participants. The challenge has been to recruit other subspecialty fellows to participate in it, in addition to the geriatrics fellows.
- Additionally, this course has provided an avenue to teach and evaluate the ACGME core competencies which are critical to a successful fellowship training experience.

Available Materials

Tools/Resources

- Course topics for 2007-08
- Course projects for 2007-08

Publications

- Academic Career Development in Fellowship Training
Medina-Walpole, A, Fonzi, J, Katz, PR
Journal of the American Geriatrics Society
2007;55(12):2061-7

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