

Medical Student Summer Institute in Geriatric Medicine

at Boston University Medical Center



SUMMARY

Target Audience

Third- and fourth-year medical students

Purpose

To stimulate interest in careers in academic geriatric medicine and aging-related research

Program

A week-long conference that includes clinical and research seminars on key geriatrics/aging topics, site visits to clinical programs, and development of a research proposal

History

The program has been conducted annually since 1986, with up to 20 participants per year

Operating Costs

Airfare, housing, meals, and transportation for participants; visiting faculty honoraria and travel costs; administrative staff time

Outcomes

Participants have gone on to pursue geriatrics fellowships, geriatrics faculty appointments, and the Certificate of Added Qualifications in Geriatric Medicine

Available Materials

Schedule for the Week, Program Evaluation Form

For More Information

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Program Overview

The goal of the Summer Institute is to stimulate interest in careers in academic geriatric medicine and aging-related research. This program was established in 1986 as one means to address the shortage of academic geriatricians available to train health care professionals in the principles of geriatrics. Up to 20 third or fourth year students are selected each year and given opportunities to learn more about the field and interact with mentors.

Program Operations

Activities of the week-long Summer Institute include clinical and research seminars on key geriatrics/aging topics, site visits to clinical programs, and small-group development of a research proposal. Faculty members and mentors include nationally recognized academic geriatricians and Boston University faculty conducting aging research.

Applicants must have U.S. citizenship or permanent resident status (due to Federal funding). Selection is based on:

- a clearly demonstrated, strong interest in geriatric medicine, as reflected by curricular and extracurricular involvements
- prior relevant clinical or basic science research experience
- a letter of recommendation from a faculty member
- the content of a short essay (200 words or less) outlining career goals, interest in geriatrics, and reasons for applying

Staffing Requirements

Two administrative staff devote portions of their time to recruitment, organization, and evaluation. Twenty-seven interdisciplinary faculty participate in the program.



Program Costs and Funding Sources

Airfare, dormitory housing, and a small daily food stipend are funded in full for each student. Transportation is provided between the dormitories and the Medical Center. Visiting guest faculty members receive an honorarium, and faculty travel/hotel costs are covered as needed.

The program is sponsored by the American Geriatrics Society (AGS) and the Boston University School of Medicine. Funding is through the National Institute on Aging (NIA) R13 mechanism.

Process and Outcomes Data

80% of the students who participated in the program from 1995 -1999 were tracked using surveys and electronic databases. As of 2005, 15% were AGS members, 7% had the Certificate of Added Qualifications in Geriatric Medicine, and four participants held faculty appointments in geriatrics. Of the 21 participants from the 2003 program who are now finishing their residency training, three (14%) are pursuing fellowship training in Geriatric Medicine.

Implementation Lessons

- It is challenging to track students over time to obtain outcome data.
- The most effective way to recruit students directly is through electronic strategies.
- As more schools develop geriatrics curricula at the student level, crafting a curriculum that meets diverse student needs is challenging.

Available Materials

Tools/Resources

- Schedule for the Week
- Program Evaluation Form

Website

- Summer Institute website:
www.bmc.org/geriatrics/educationMedicalStudents_SIGM.htm

For More Information

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This document is part of a compilation of approaches to geriatrics recruitment, career development, and programmatic expansion, based on the work of the John A. Hartford Foundation "Centers of Excellence in Geriatric Medicine and Training." For more information, visit www.afar.org/recruitment or www.jhartfound.org.

