

Resident Research & Scholarly Activity Requirement

Requirement

The Accreditation Council on Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) Program Requirement for Residency Education in Internal Medicine stipulates that internal medicine residents must demonstrate acceptable scholarly activity prior to the completion of training. To address this requirement, the UND School of Medicine and Health Sciences Department of Internal Medicine Scholarly Activity Committee has defined scholarly activity as consisting of the following:

1. Significant participation in a clinical or basic scientific research project either as principal investigator or as a co-investigator, with appropriate dissemination of the results through submission of an abstract or paper for publication with appropriate write-up deemed suitable by the Scholarly Activity Committee.
2. In certain circumstances, and after individualized consideration, submission of a case report or case series with a thorough literature review that ultimately leads to publication in a peer reviewed journal.

“Significant participation” is considered to be one or more of the following contributions to a project:

- A. Conception and design.
- B. Collection and assembly of the data.
- C. Analysis and interpretation of the data.
- D. Drafting of the article.

This will include an estimated percentage contribution to the total project with verification by the faculty mentor.

Residents must demonstrate acceptable scholarly activity to the satisfaction of the Committee in order to be certified to sit for the Internal Medicine board examination. It is the Committee’s strong recommendation that the best way for residents to satisfy this requirement is to undertake an independent research project designed to test a hypothesis by collection and analysis of data, leading to results from which conclusions can be drawn. This process should include development of a research proposal and data gathering, normally under the guidance of a faculty mentor, followed by presentation and/or publication of the results in an appropriate forum.

Procedures and Suggested Timetable for Project Completion

R-1 year: Begin gathering ideas for research projects that would interest you. Maintain notes regarding ideas, methods, potential mentors, etc. Consider scheduling a research rotation during the R-2 year or the beginning of your R-3 year. (A research rotation is encouraged, but not required. On the other hand, evidence of scholarly activity is mandatory. A research rotation may help you meet this requirement.)

Narrow down your idea list, contact potential faculty mentor to discuss the project and see if he/she is willing to supervise your work. The next step is to develop the proposal with your mentor and submit it to the Scholarly Activity Committee Chairman or his assistant (Sue Haugen). That submission must occur by the end of your PGY-1 year. If you plan to take a research rotation, your proposal must be submitted at least one month before your research month begins. If you join the program as a PGY-2 or -3 resident, you must have a research project approved within six months of entering the program. If senior-level residents participated in research at their previous program, the resident will need to furnish documentation to the Scholarly Activity Committee. The Committee will then determine if this satisfies the research and scholarly activity requirement for that individual.

A research proposal must include all of the following items (a template will be provided for this):

1. A. Title of Project
 B. Resident's Name (if more than one resident is involved, please list each Resident's expected contribution)
 C. Faculty Mentor's Name
 D. Abstract of Proposal to include:
 - a. Background and Significance
 - b. Rationale
 - c. Subjects and Methods
 - d. Projected timetable for completion.
 - e. How the research plan will answer the question(s) posed.
 - f. List of references (a minimum of 3 or 4) in the medical & scientific literature that are relevant to your proposal.
 - g. Letter from faculty mentor agreeing to assist you with your project.

2. Please provide the Scholarly Activity Committee secretary with a copy of your proposal at least one week before the next committee meeting. The Committee meets every other month and dates are posted at Sanford and in the resident lounge at the VA Hospital. An electronic version of your proposal is preferred and should be E-mailed to susan.haugen@med.und.edu. You will then verbally present your proposal to the Scholarly Activity Committee. This allows the opportunity for immediate feedback and suggestions regarding your proposal, design, feasibility, etc.

3. The IM Scholarly Activity Committee will review your proposal and notify you of: (a) approval of the project as proposed, (b) whether further information is needed, and (c) any suggestions to assist you.

4. **IMPORTANT!** The Scholarly Activity Committee is not an Institutional Review Board. Any studies involving human subjects must be reviewed and approved by the appropriate institution's IRB/CIC (e.g., Sanford, VAMC, Altru, or Innovis). Even simple chart reviews need IRB approval. (In the last few years, it has also become necessary to obtain University of North Dakota IRB approval.)

R-2 and R-3 year: Finish data gathering, complete the analysis, and write up your findings in consultation with your mentor. Present your findings and/or final write-up at a Scholarly Activity Committee meeting. Period updates of your research activities to the committee are also appreciated. (It is recognized that if you have taken a research rotation you may not necessarily have finished gathering data or finished writing your report/article by the end of the rotation. However, your report should be presented as soon as possible and, in any case, not later than March of your R-3 year.) The Scholarly Activity Committee will review your report and notify you whether you have successfully completed the research requirement or, if not, what further work is needed for the project to be successfully completed.

At the completion of your project, you must furnish the Scholarly Activity Committee Chair's assistant and the Residency Program Coordinator with:

- A. Copies of your final write-up (conclusions), whether the outcome of the project was successful or not.
- B. Copies of any abstracts submitted to regional and national meetings.
- C. Copies of abstracts published and those presented as posters at local, regional or national meetings (include name or meeting, dates & location of meeting).
- D. Copies of articles or case reports submitted for publication. If published, a copy of the published article would also be appreciated.

Only after completing this requirement to the satisfaction of the Scholarly Activity Committee can you be certified to sit for the ABIM board exam.

As you can see, the key to successful completion of this requirement is **not to procrastinate**.

