

Faculty Paper Presentation

Lessons Learned from Nine Years of Experience with a Physician Assistant Teaching Fellowship

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Abstract

Introduction:

The rapid growth of the number of PA programs (1) in the last two decades has resulted in a heightened demand for qualified and experienced PA faculty. Barriers to recruitment and retention of faculty include desire for diverse teaching experiences and the availability of mentors (2). In order to provide a structured experience for training potential faculty for careers as PA educators and address the barriers to recruitment and retention of new faculty, our institution has offered a PA Teaching Fellowship since 1998. Since the inception of the fellowship program, eight PAs have completed the one-year Teaching Fellowship.

Methods:

This paper will describe the prerequisites for application, the structure of the one-year educational program, advantages of the teaching fellowship to the institution and to the individual fellow, and summary of the annual departmental survey questions regarding the PA Teaching Fellow's overall experience.

Results:

The Teaching Fellowship has met its goal for increasing the pool of qualified PA faculty, as seven of the eight graduates were hired full-time into PA teaching and program administrative positions. The eighth graduate chose to return to full-time clinical practice but teaches classes in a PA program and serves as a clinical preceptor. Curriculum projects developed by Fellows during the fellowship year have been incorporated into our

curriculum and have been shared with other PA programs through on-line training modules and presentation at national conferences.

Conclusions:

The PA Teaching Fellow is a valuable strategy for developing teaching skills, promoting professionalism among PA educators, increasing the pool of available and qualified PA faculty and overcoming barriers to retention. This model may be useful to other institutions. Future research will compare the career paths of teaching fellows with career paths of faculty who did not have the teaching fellow experience.

References:

¹ Physician Assistant Education Association: 22nd Annual Report on Physician Assistant Educational Programs in the US, 2005-2006

² Min, EA. Recruitment and Retention of Young Faculty: A Young Faculty Member's Perspective. *Perspective on Physician Assistant Education* 2003; 14(2):101-102.