

Society for Hematopathology Education Committee March 2008

Thank you to all program directors who responded to the FISHE and fellow recruitment surveys and to those who were able to attend the directors' breakfast meeting at USCAP 2008. We would also like to thank Drs. Henry (Harv) Rinder and John Sinard (ASCP national RISE chair and chair of the USCAP eAcademy initiative, respectively) who kindly attended our meeting and offered insights into these educational areas.

They are two major goals of this communication. 1) Report on our current involvement in fellow recruitment and standardization of timelines. This includes a brief summary of the ongoing efforts of various groups (PRODS, APC) to standardize all pathology fellowship recruitment processes. 2) Our efforts in enhancing fellow competency testing and fulfillment of the ACGME core competencies.

1) Standardization of the fellow recruitment process – Timelines!

a. Society for Hematopathology:

- i. The decision was made to continue this year with the same guidelines that were proposed by our group last year. Timelines: accept applications until December 1 (19 months in advance of the fellowship start), interview candidates in the month of January, offer positions anytime on or after February 1. These guidelines will be posted on the SH website, sent to program directors and sent to the SH list serve. In addition, we will be sending a reminder email with these guidelines in late October/early November prior to the onset of the recruiting season. The results of the survey indicated that most of us are in agreement with the proposed guidelines for recruitment and that most are following them.

b. National effort to standardize fellow recruitment process

- i. The PRODS meeting at USCAP 2008 presented discussion from a variety of groups (APC (association of pathology chairs), CAP residents forum, ASCP residents forum and PRODS) regarding an effort to better regulate and standardize the fellowship recruitment process for all pathology areas.
- ii. Currently these groups are soliciting your opinions and concerns regarding this process. Talk to your residency program directors and chairs!
- iii. It is possible that some definitive guidelines for all pathology fellowships will be established by this summer. Stay tuned and we will let you know.
- iv. Briefly, there are some advancements that have been made.
 1. Move toward a standardized application: The CAP residents forum has come up with a standardized application form which is not in final form yet through APC but is available on the website <http://residents.cap.org> Most programs also have an application that is specific to

their institution but this form is at least a way for residents to begin the application process.

2. Proposed timelines by CAP residents forum: Applications received for review until November 1 (20 months in advance of fellowship start), Interviews take place during January and February, offers begin March 1.
 3. Utilization of a “Match” system for fellowship has generally been deemed undesirable for the majority of residents.
- v. APC will convene this July after input from pathology chairs, program directors, CAP and ASCP resident groups, Task Group (Kaari Reichard from our committee is on this) etc. to arrive at a final decision for standardization of this process.
1. Let your voice be heard. Talk to your chair, program director or our committee (kreichard@salud.unm.edu).

2) Fellow competency testing

- a. FISHE: Dr. Bachir Alobeid of our committee gave a thorough summary of program director’s opinions about the ASCP FISHE (Fellow In-Service Hematopathology Exam). FISHE was offered for the first time this year. The general consensus is that it is a good, well-balanced test which should be offered once a year. Dr. Harv Rinder (ASCP RISE chair) provided a breakdown of the test questions and those with the huge job of putting the exam together and updating it (John Anastasi, Sara Monaghan, Harv Rinder). They plan on adding a molecular pathologist to their FISHE committee this year. Anyone interested in submitting questions for this exam is strongly encouraged to do so. Contact Dr. Monaghan (monaghansa@upmc.edu).
- b. Virtual Microscopy: Dr. Fiona Craig of our committee gave a detailed presentation on/demonstration of the potential use of virtual microscopy in fellow competency testing. She illustrated this concept using an example from the USCAP eAcademy Initiative. This type of approach, with pull-down menus for ancillary testing options, is potentially a useful approach to address 2 of the ACGME competencies (Systems-Based Practice and Practice- Based Learning and Improvement). Such an effort would be quite an undertaking and require ongoing monitoring, but a substantial bank of questions could be established over time.
- c. Satisfying the ACGME 6 core competencies is challenging. If you have some methods that are effective and efficient, please consider sharing them with the SH fellowship directors community-at-large. We are working on enhancing fellow education, training and competency achievement and welcome your contributions. You can submit them to me (kreichard@salud.unm.edu) or any member of the education committee (Drs. Fiona Craig, craigfe@upmc.edu and Bachir Alobeid, ba2024@columbia.edu).

- d. Additional Resources for fellow training (kindly suggested by Dr. James Vardiman). <http://ash-sap.hematologylibrary.org/misc/overview.dtl>
 - i. ASH self assessment program (free access to registered fellows)
 - ii. ASH teaching cases
 - iii. ASH image bank

Final comments:

I would like to encourage all members to submit any education ideas or efforts that they think our committee should tackle. Continually improving education is our goal.

Regards and looking forward to hearing from all of you,

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