

Developing a Pediatric Fellows' Core Curriculum: Addressing Trainees Needs, and Meeting Training Requirements

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Abstract

In the past decade, the ACGME and ABP have increased requirements for fellowship training. Our department's goal has been to provide a stimulating learning environment that addresses required topics while establishing an interdisciplinary learning culture that includes participation of fellows and faculty in all 10 pediatric fellowships. Postdoctoral fellows in related areas, such as Ob/Gyn, pediatric ENT, and PhDs working within perinatal biology labs are also invited. Over the past few years we expanded our one hour per month lunchtime core curriculum seminar series to every two weeks, and finally, to every week. Our conference schedule includes topics relating to: 1) career development; 2) teaching skills; 3) responsible conduct of research; 4) fellow research presentations; and 5) professionalism ("Reflective Practice and Leadership"). All seminars, except fellow research presentations, are directed by senior faculty and institutional leaders who are skilled in leading interactive discussions. Evaluation of our series includes 1) devoting one seminar annually to review by fellows and faculty; 2) annual confidential evaluation by fellows; 3) record of attendance; and 4) input from a fellow-faculty education sub-committee. Key goals remain 1) to lay groundwork for trainees to develop life-long learning practices and 2) to encourage them to pursue careers in academic medicine.

ABP Statement

American Board of Pediatrics Statement on Fellowship*

"The goal of fellowship training will continue to be the development of future academic pediatricians."

* From "Summary of Subspecialty Training Requirements for Fellows Beginning Training July 1, 2004"

ABP Program Requirements

Maintain & improve training environment by providing:

- Core curriculum on specified topics
- Scholarship Oversight Committee that conducts ≥biannual meetings
- Annual promotion based on assessment of clinical competence & professionalism

<https://www.abp.org:443/resident/trchanges.htm>



ABP Core Curriculum

Specified Topics of Scholarly Activities

- In-depth understanding of biostatistics
- Preparation of applications for funding and/or approval of clinical or research protocols
- Clinical and laboratory research methodology
- Study design
- Critical literature review
- Principles of evidence-based medicine
- Ethical principles involving clinical research
- Achievement of proficiency in teaching

<https://www.abp.org:443/publicat/trainingrequirements.pdf>

Fellows' Core Curriculum Seminar Series - Six components

"Survival Skills"

- General skills for fellows pursuing academic career
- Addresses some ABP core curriculum issues, e.g., clinical & laboratory research methodology, study design, critical literature review, etc.
- Utilizes knowledgeable interdisciplinary faculty
- Provides information about career development: fellow to faculty

"Teaching Skills"

- All fellows learn to develop their skills as educators and motivators (6 to 8 presentations annually)
- Emphasis on principles of adult education using example
- Directed by skilled, enthusiastic pediatric faculty who have completed or are enrolled in the "Teaching Scholars Program"

"Fellow Research Presentations"

- Provides opportunity for *all* fellows to present at least once annually to colleagues & faculty in a supportive setting
- Develops trainees' skills in presenting to fellows and faculty with biomedical interests
- Provides feedback on science & presentation skills: verbally at time of seminar & as written evaluations by attendees

"Responsible Conduct of Research (RCR)" *NEW for this year!*

- Interactive RCR training within the context of an existing core curriculum
- Topics relevant to pediatrics, obstetrics, perinatal medicine & neonatology
- Directed by senior faculty/institutional leaders who are familiar to trainees as scholars/mentors & skilled in leading discussion
- Meets RCR requirements of NIH T32 grants
- Serves as a model for institutional RCR programs in other disciplines

"Reflective Practice & Leadership" *NEW for this year!*

Accelerates fellows' acquisition of professional skills*:

- Self-awareness, constructive responses and confidence in various challenging professional situations
- Ability to manage "front line" of medicine
- Self care in the effective management of difficult and stressful encounters.
- Utilize hypothesis-based approach to address clinical social and family issues

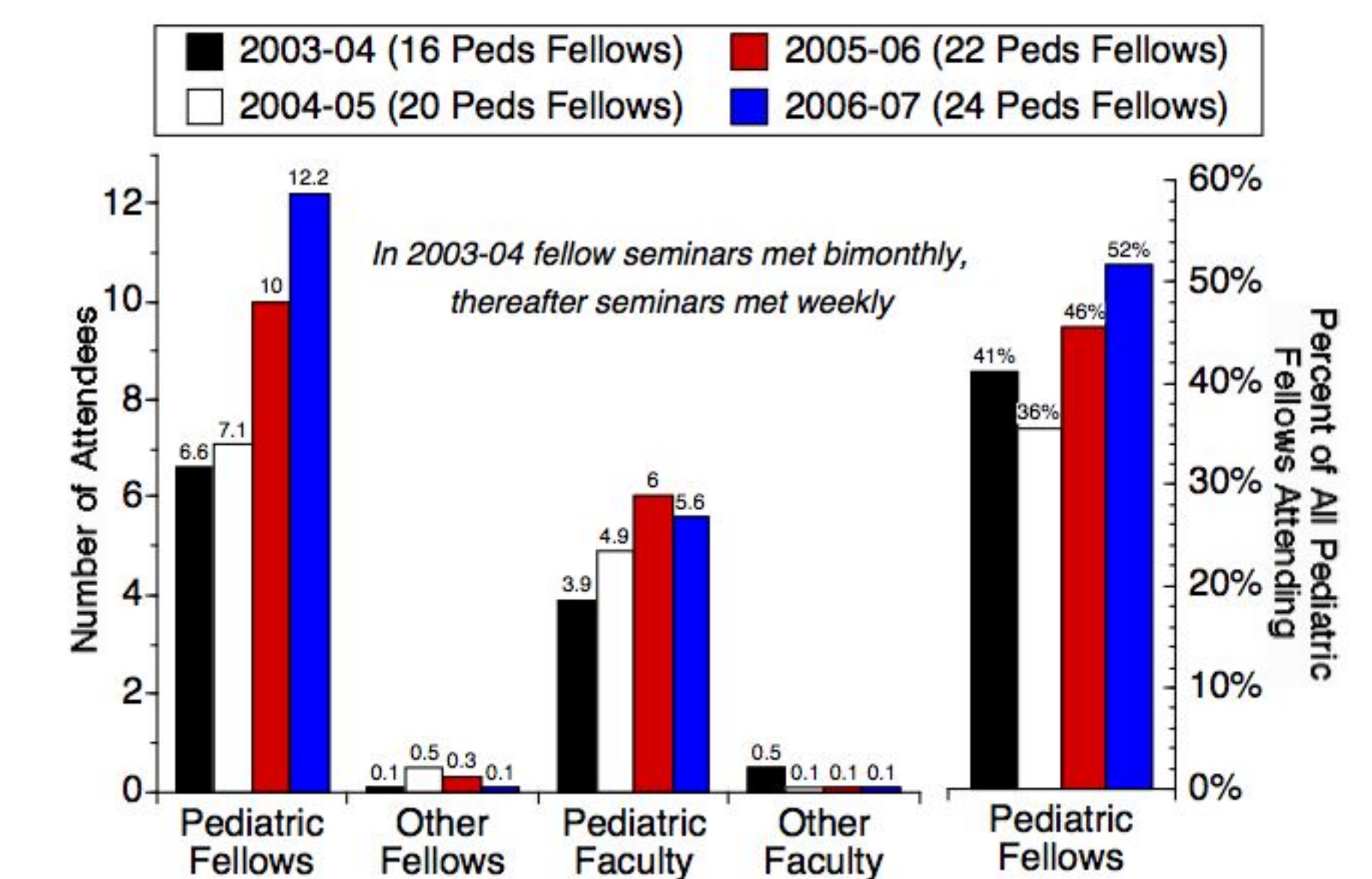
*Includes first year fellows only

"Fellows' Annual Retreat"

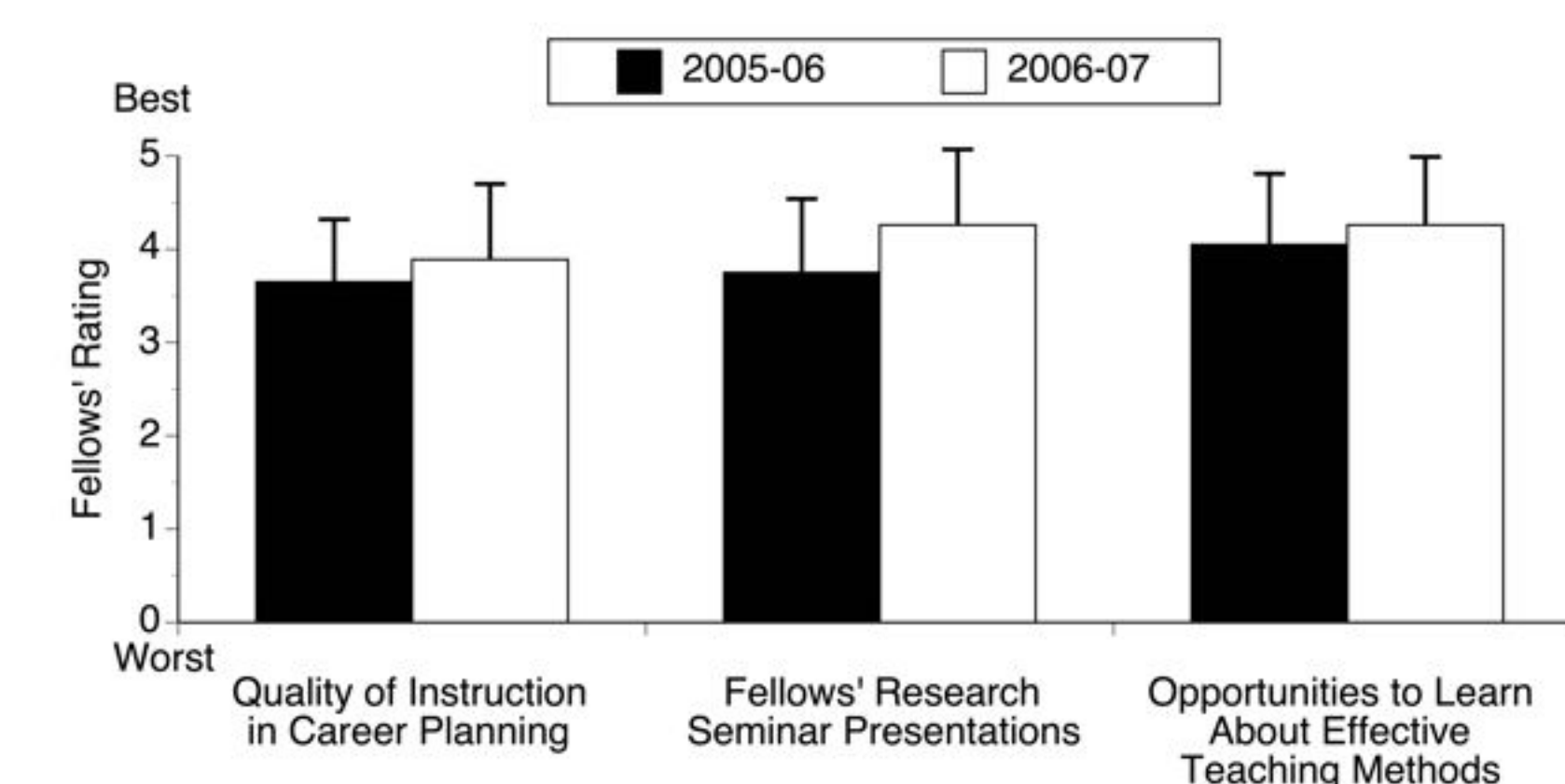
- One day retreat early in year (to acquaint new fellows and build rapport) free from training responsibilities
- Morning sessions: 3 separate topics by yr of training
- Afternoon sessions: Single topics of interest to all
- Organized (& originally suggested) by fellows themselves – with leadership planning provided by fellow members of the education subcommittee
- Faculty provide oversight, advice & assistance
- Facilitates team building by & for trainees – self-directed learning

Results

Increasing Fellow and Faculty Attendance at Core Curriculum Seminars

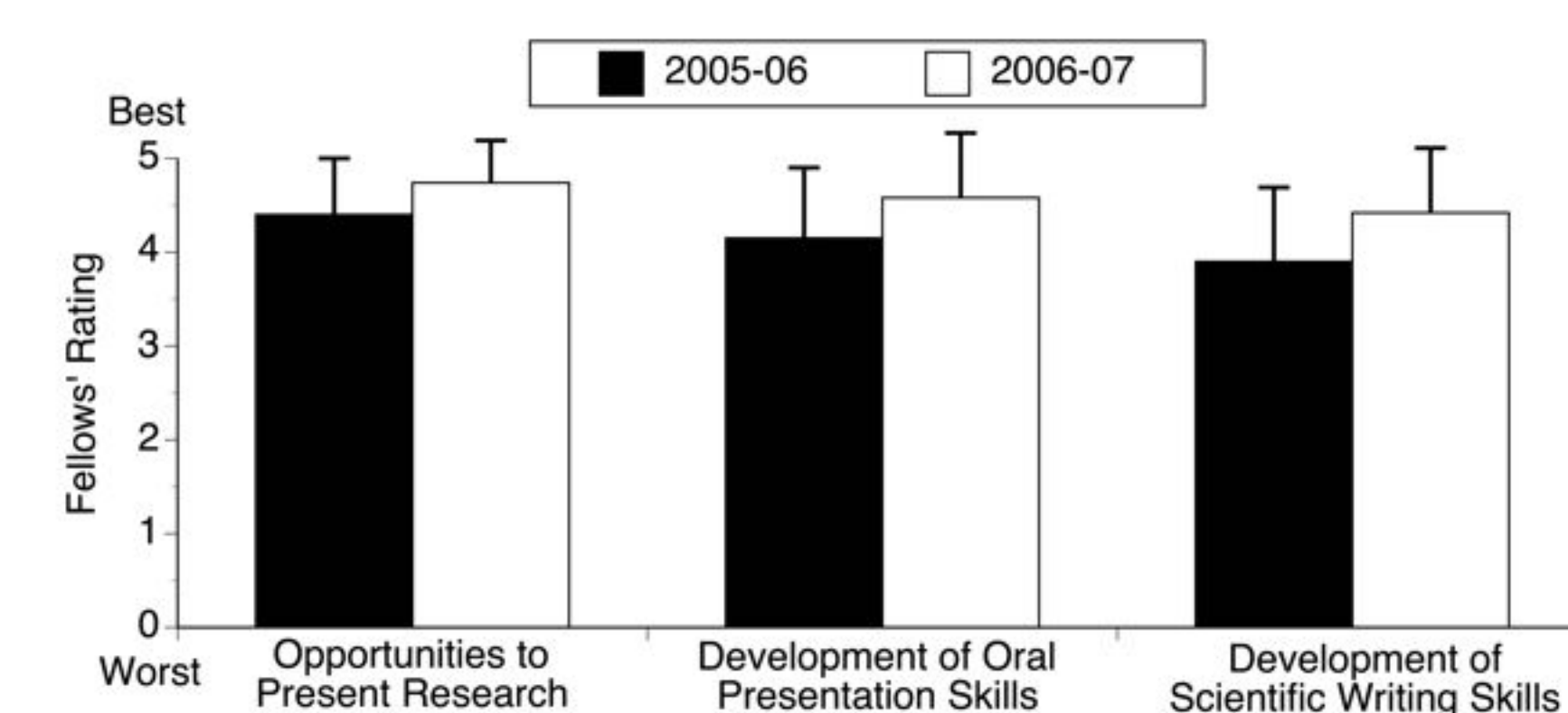


Fellows Report High Ratings for Core Curriculum*



*Based on annual, confidential evaluations by fellows

Fellows Appreciate Presenting Their Own Research*



*Based on annual, confidential evaluations by fellows

Continuing Improvements & Challenges

- Fellowship Education Subcommittee input: 6 to 8 fellows and 4 faculty
- Annual Review Session: Input requested from 1 hr Core Curriculum session attended by fellows and faculty
- Annual, anonymous on-line evaluation
- Ad hoc suggestions from faculty and fellows – anytime, any place, from anyone
- Evolution to include new topics of importance with excellent speakers, esp. for selecting area, mentor, and laboratory
- Improving quality of fellows' research presentations & continuing to have all fellows present
- Maintaining high quality of topics presented
- Tracking careers of graduates: academics vs. private practice, & other long term outcomes