

M.D. with Distinction in Research Program

1. Objective: To provide training and experience for medical students with a special interest in research.
2. Administration: The program will be administered by a director, chosen by the Dean of the Medical School for a one year term. If necessary, an associate director may be chosen to assist with the administrative process.
3. Definition of research: The research can be either basic or clinical. A project may consist of original: 1) laboratory experiments, or 2) prospective and retrospective clinical studies. Original research is defined as developing *new information*. Reviews based solely upon library research are not acceptable.
4. Procedure for entering the program:
 - a. Information regarding possible research projects should be provided to all medical students.
 - b. A medical student should identify an advisor who is willing to provide guidance, lab space, resources, and financial support for the conduct and reporting of the research. Names of potential advisors will be kept by the director of the program. A project should be mutually agreed upon between the student and advisor.
 - c. The student, with the advisor's assistance, must define the project by submitting a brief (e.g., 1-5 pages) written description including hypothesis, literature review, investigative design, and significance to the director of the program for approval.
 - d. A student must be in good academic standing to enter and remain in the program. Good academic standing is defined as having passing grades in all courses, USMLE exams, and clerkships completed. If a student withdraws from the program due to academic deficiencies, he/she may petition the director to be re-instated, upon re-establishing good academic standing.
5. Criteria for approval of the project:
 - a. A defined hypothesis must be clearly presented.
 - b. The proposed methodology must be appropriate for the conduct and completion of the project.
 - c. The student must be individually responsible for the project.
 - d. The project must be significant to the advancement of scientific knowledge.
 - e. The project should be of such a caliber that its successful completion would provide the possibility for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.
 - f. The student must have the time and be provided with resources to complete the project.

6. Financial considerations:

- a. The advisor is responsible for covering the costs of the study.
- b. Participation in the program is voluntary; a stipend may not be available.

7. Monitoring of progress:

Periodic progress reports will be required, at the discretion of the director of the program. At this time the director will evaluate the scientific progress of the project, and the academic standing of the student will be reviewed.

8. Evaluation of the completed program:

- a. *The general procedure:* To qualify for the M.D. with Distinction in Research, the following must occur: 1) the advisor must endorse giving the above title for work completed; 2) a written report must be evaluated and approved by a research committee consisting of three faculty members that are independent of the advisor; 3) an oral report must be given to a body of peers. Furthermore, the director of the program and the Dean of the Medical School must give their approval, indicating successful completion of the program. Although the results of the study should be “publishable”, it is not necessary that the project be published for the student to qualify. However, it is expected that the advisor will pursue publication of the work.
- b. *The paper:* Following completion of the project, the student must submit a written report documenting the research. As stated above, the project should consist of individual contributions by the student, and the final paper should focus on the student’s work, and not an overall team effort. The format of the paper should be that of a scientific journal article.
- c. *The research committee:* The committee will consist of three members of the Chicago Medical School faculty who are chosen by the director, after consultation with the advisor. The committee reports to the director, who will choose one of the members to serve as chairman. The director will be an *ex-officio* member of the committee.

9. Credit

- a. Upon successful completion of the program, the student will receive a certificate, indicating that the MD degree was earned with Distinction in Research. The certificate will be presented at the Awards Day program.
- b. This distinction will appear on the student’s transcript, and will be indicated on the program at graduation, but will not appear on the diploma.
- c. Elective credit may be available for the work.