

The Skills Development Program (CRSDP) Overview:

The goals of Cleveland Clinic's clinical research skills development program are to educate, nurture, and equip future lifelong cardiothoracic surgeon-investigators in skills necessary for successful multidisciplinary clinical research and to create a vibrant learning environment for Cardiothoracic Surgical Investigators. These surgeons will be able to accelerate the translation of basic biomedical research into advances in clinical practice and move state-of-the-art clinical care into the cardiovascular surgery community.

Cleveland Clinic leverages the Clinical and Translational Science Collaborative and KL2 competency-based research education and training program at Case Western Reserve University and mentored interdisciplinary team-based clinical research at Cleveland Clinic. The current CRSDP Program is a full-time 2-year program which typically leads to an MS in Clinical Research. The future CRSDP Program will have three (3) distinct tracks:

Track 1: Single year focused on a research project.

Track 2: Two year program with intensive didactic work and research leading to a thesis and MS degree in Clinical Research. Two additional tracks are available for Scholars: MS in Health Informatics and MA in Bioethics, Research Ethics. However, if a Scholar enters with an advanced degree in epidemiology or biostatistics and demonstrates the requisite competencies, he or she may elect other courses. Similarly, elective courses are individualized to the needs of each scholar.

Track 3 (just approved by Ohio Regents and in 30-day public discussion period): 3 year program of didactic work and thesis research leading to a PhD in Clinical Research.

Application Process:

Interested applicants should communicate with Dr. Eugene Blackstone. Application materials must be submitted electronically by mid-October of the year prior to the July 1 program inception, with decisions made by mid-December. Candidates must complete the following: 1) a face page; 2) NIH-style biographical sketch; 3) two-page personal statement addressing previous research experience, why they are interested in a multidisciplinary approach to CTS research, their mathematical level and statistical background, and how the program will change the trajectory of their careers and assist them in meeting their career goals; and 4) a CTS clinical research question of their choice, why it is important, what research objectives might be, and a suggested study design. Additionally, applicants will submit three letters of recommendation.

Core Coursework:

Didactics and research are based on 11 Core Competencies in Clinical Research. Each required coursework fulfills one or more Core Competencies. All Scholars will take the following courses:

CRSP 603: Research Ethics: Emerging Issues and Ongoing Challenges (IRB and HIPAA challenges, research with vulnerable subjects and in the developing world, infections, stem cells, genetics)

CRSP 501 and 502: Leadership and Team-Building) values and knowledge sets, conflict management, group decision skills)

CRSP 503: Innovations and Entrepreneurship (translating academic research into commercial use, goals and objectives of businesses, technology development and transfer)

Individualized Mentored Research:

Scholars will be guided by at least three mentors: an education mentor, a research mentor, and a career mentor.

The education mentor chairs each Scholar's thesis committee.

The research mentor(s) supervise the research and meet with the Scholar weekly. The research mentors must be active, independent CTS clinical investigators with a track record of successfully mentoring young investigators. Research mentors will guide the Scholar in developing a feasible research proposal within the Clinical Investigations facility and promote collaboration throughout the institution. Thesis research is supplemented by smaller research projects, generally with a different CTS mentor to increase variety of exposure to the field and its knowledge gaps.

The career mentor will support the Scholar's academic planning, assist in understanding and managing participation in the program, provide a multidisciplinary perspective on the Scholar's Career Development Plan, and help the Scholar develop multidisciplinary research.

Each Scholar participates in some aspect of CTSN research. Additionally, each scholar will practice mentoring.

Career Development Plans-Progression to Independent Status:

Scholars must construct a Career Development Plan. They must describe career goals for the next 5 years, and then specify two to five objectives that will result in achieving those goals. The Career Development Plan is an important tool that allows a Scholar to benchmark his or her own progress and for the program leadership to track the Scholar's progress. It provides an excellent vehicle to foster



career-related discussions and guide evolution from a closely mentored clinical researcher to an independent scientist.

Productivity:

Each scholar is expected to present at national conferences as well as first author manuscripts during their time in the program.

Previous Scholars

Previous Scholars have published their primary work and often additional papers in collaboration with their mentors. Examples of multidisciplinary collaborations have included: development of an electronic data capture system and an ancillary study with other CRSDP scholar. Past scholars have mentored college students, medical students and foreign fellows.

For Additional information please contact:

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