

# **ACR FELLOWSHIP GUIDE**

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## **PREFACE**

The first edition of this document was printed in April 1997. The document provided information to ACR chapter officers and members seeking to become Fellows about (1) the administrative procedures to follow in submitting fellow nominations and (2) examples of criteria considered by the Committee on Fellowship Credentials. The document is periodically reviewed and updated to ensure that it accurately reflects current Committee policy and practices.

In this edition, changes have been made to both the administrative procedures and the criteria to reflect current practices and 2009 College bylaws changes. In making the revisions, the Committee has attempted to preserve the distinction associated over the years with the Fellowship honor. Chapter officers and those members seeking to become Fellows are reminded that the criteria listed in each qualifying category in this document are only examples of the level of achievements sought by the Committee. The Committee recognizes that individual candidates will have a blend of achievements. To assure the best possible review of a candidate's nomination, both Chapters and nominees should provide strong documentation of achievements and strong letters supporting the nomination.

## **PURPOSE**

This document is intended to serve as a guide to the ACR fellowship process for chapters and individuals seeking to become Fellows.

## **ACR FELLOWSHIP**

One of the highest ways of formally recognizing members for exceptional achievement in the radiology profession is by elevation to the honor of Fellow of the American College of Radiology. ACR Fellows are members who have distinguished themselves by a history of service to the College, organized radiology, teaching or research. The honor of Fellow is given to those with truly distinctive accomplishments beyond the high threshold of achievement expected of all College members. Only 10% of active College members have been awarded this honor. Fellowship is awarded to diagnostic radiologists, radiation oncologists, and medical physicists during the ACR annual meeting at a special ceremony called the Convocation.

## ADMINISTRATIVE PROCEDURES

### Chapter Roles

The chapter serves critical roles in the Fellowship Nomination process. These include:

- reviewing nomination forms for completeness and accuracy;
- determining whether to *directly endorse* an individual or to *concur* in the nomination made by two or more Fellows; and
- forwarding the nomination package to the College and serving as a contact for matters relating to the nomination.

In addition, the Chapter must now forward all completed nomination packages to the College, even if they choose not to concur with a nomination made by two or more Fellows. A letter should explain why the Chapter has chosen NOT to concur with the nomination.

### Critical Date

**June 30** – Deadline for ACR receipt of nominations from the chapter for award at the next year's annual meeting (e.g., receipt by June 30, 2010 for fellowship award in May 2011).

The review process begins in July. Because nominations are grouped by years of College membership for review, it is important that all nominations be received by the June 30 date.

Please note that the June 30 deadline applies to the submission from the chapter to the College. Please check with your chapter regarding its deadline for receipt of fellow nominations. The chapter requires times to review and act on nominations prior to the June 30 College deadline.

### Processing of Documents

Upon receipt in the College's membership department, all nomination forms will be checked for completeness and for required signatures. Forms that are not properly completed will be returned to the Chapter for correction. To avoid this from happenings please insure that:

- The most current version of the nomination application form is being used. (Forms have a revision date in the lower left corner. An electronic version of the current nomination application on the ACR website is available for download)
- The form may be completed online and printed for distribution to the chapter and College. Applicants may reference an attachment rather than typing lengthy information on the form itself. The attachment must be formatted to match the nomination application.
- All signatures are present, dated and in the appropriate blocks.

- The Chapter officers signing the form are the same as the names on file with the College.
- The form indicates whether the Chapter is making the nomination *by direct endorsement* or *concurring* in the nomination made by two or more Fellows.
- The sponsor letters are typed and included with the nomination. *The Chapter should review the letters for accuracy, content, completeness etc.* If the Chapter feels strongly about one of its *direct endorsement* nominees, additional recommendation letters from the Chapter (e.g., President, Secretary or Fellowship Chair) are welcome. Guidelines concerning letters and sample letters can be found beginning on page 13.

## POLICIES

### Years of Membership to Qualify for Nomination

- To qualify for nomination, an individual must be a board-certified Member of Member in Physics and have completed **ten (10) consecutive years**, without interruption, as a Member or Member in Physics in the American College of Radiology and a chapter. Members in good standing who are serving in or have previously served in the active military service or public health service within the last ten (10) years may be exempted from the requirement that Members are eligible for fellowship only after ten (10) years of chapter membership.
- Time spent as an in-training member, international member or associate member is not counted toward the ten (10) consecutive year requirement
- The ten (10) years of consecutive membership are not restricted to the ten (10) years immediately preceding nomination. However, if there has been a break in membership, the application will be reviewed based on criteria that relate to the nominee's actual aggregate years of membership.

### Years of Membership

- For those individuals who completed training and were certified by the American Board of Radiology, the American Osteopathic Board of Radiology or the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada immediately following training, membership will be considered to have begun in the year after training was completed unless the member in training declines membership at the time by failing to pay his/her first dues invoice, failing to join a state chapter, or by declining membership in writing.
- For those individuals becoming members at a time subsequent to immediately following completion of training, membership will begin in the year they join both the College and a State Chapter.
- For those individuals who are exempt from State Chapter membership (Article III, Section 2 ACR Bylaws), membership will begin in the year they join the College.

## Criteria for Nomination

Nominees for Fellowship must be nominated under **one or more** of the criteria established in the bylaws for nominations for Fellowship. *It is the responsibility of the Chapter to assure the accuracy of the information under these criteria.* They are:

1. Service to the ACR at the national or chapter level.
2. The accomplishment of significant scientific or clinical research in the field of Radiology, Radiation Oncology or Medical Physics, or significant contributions to the literature in these areas.
3. The performance of outstanding service as a teacher of Radiology, Radiation Oncology or Medical Physics.
4. Service to organized medicine in local, state or national medical organizations.

It is not necessary to have qualifications in all areas of the criteria; any one category can be sufficient. However, candidates are encouraged to list activities in all categories in which they have relevant contributions to report.

## Qualifications to Nominate

- Nominations for Fellowship may be made by:
  - a. Any two Fellows of the ACR, one of whom is not associated in practice with the nominee. Such nominations must be approved by the Chapter before being submitted. This approval process is referred to as Chapter Concurrence.
  - b. A Chapter of the College of which the nominee is a member. In a Chapter Nominations, letters of recommendation from two Fellows, at least one of whom is not associated in practice with the nominee, are still required. In the Chapter Nomination case, however, the Chapter puts the force of its own endorsement behind the candidate in addition to the letters from two Fellows. **The Committee gives extra consideration to Chapter Nominations.** Additional letters of support from chapter officers are welcome – but not required – for a Chapter Nomination.
- If a nominee for Fellowship moves from the state in which he/she was nominated to another state before action has been taken by the Committee on Fellowship Credentials, the nomination must be referred to the nominee's new State Chapter for concurrence.
- Nominations for Fellowship for those in Military Service can be supported by Fellows outside of the Military and in regions of the country other than that where the individual is currently located. If a military member is not a member of a state chapter, the Councilor for the appropriate branch of the Military Service will sign the nomination. This will be done for military members not belonging to chapters. If the military nominee is a member of a state chapter, then that nomination will be processed as a standard nomination (i.e, the individual will have the nomination approved through

the chapter and the supporters and nominators will be from that chapter. It will be incumbent upon the military councilor to determine whether the nominee is a member of a chapter prior to submitting the nomination to the ACR.

### **Endorsements of Nominations**

- All nominations must be accompanied by recommendation letters from two Fellows of the ACR – at least one of whom is not in practice with the nominee. Both Fellows also should sign and date the nomination form, which then should be submitted to the Chapter Fellowship Committee.
- In those instances where there are no Fellows of the College in the Chapter area, it is permissible to have sponsors and letter of support from Fellows of the College outside the Chapter area.
- Nominees may include more than two letters.

### **Items to Include with Nomination Form**

- The nominee's curriculum vitae **must** be included.
- Adequate information concerning the accomplishments of the candidate under the criterion for which the nominee is being nominated must be provided on the nomination form.
- If the nominee has only been a **member of the ACR for 10 or 11 years**, the individual's credentials must truly be extraordinary and include positions of prominent leadership, preferably in national or international societies, national awards for outstanding teaching or research and/or a substantial number of significant publications. If the individual has held national offices, it should be specified what these offices were and the membership size of the organization for which the office was held. Information concerning teaching or research should include the amount of the time devoted to teaching as well as the institutions and titles held for teaching, as well as any awards for teaching that were earned. *The Chapter should provide a very strong letter supporting the outstanding accomplishments.*
- Those nominees who have been **members of the ACR for 12 to 14 years** also should demonstrate truly outstanding accomplishments. They should provide a CV indicating any national or state medical society offices they have held as well as any national or state achievements in teaching. Information should be provided about the office, the number of people in the ACR unit or particular society in which the individual served as well as the dates of service. In regard to teaching, the name and location of the institution should be supplied as well as the number of students taught and the number of hours spent teaching and teaching awards earned. Documentation of national or statewide recognition in teaching or as a researcher should be included plus a CV including pertinent publications.
- For those nominees with **15 to 19 years of membership in the ACR**, the CV should include offices or committee positions held by the nominee in the

- ACR or other state or national medical organizations. For teaching, sufficient documentation should be supplied in the CV noting significant service as a faculty member and include subjects taught, number of students, hours spent teaching and any teaching awards earned. For research, documentation regarding recognition within the state or broader as well as CV including pertinent publications should be included. The specific criteria to follow will be slightly different for those applying at 15-17 years than at 18-19 years.
- For those with **20 and more years of membership in the ACR**, documentation should contain facts supporting the nominee's achievements in ACR and local, statewide or national organizations, as well as any teaching or publication activities. Significant non-medical activities should be included as well.

## APPEALS

Appeals regarding decisions on Fellowship nominations should be made by the Chapter within thirty (30) days of receipt of the notification letter from the Board of Chancellors' regarding their decision on a nomination. Appeals must be in writing and addressed to the Chairman of the Committee on Fellowship Credentials and mailed to the ACR headquarters officer. Appeals must contain sufficient additional information to support a review of the original decision.

## EXAMPLES AND REVIEW GUIDELINES

The items in this section should be looked at as general guidelines. They do not guarantee that a nominee will be granted fellowship. They are provided as examples in an attempt to provide general direction and consistency to the review process. Chapters and others are encouraged to provide documentation about an individual's outstanding service, which includes detailing unusual circumstances that should be considered by the Committee on Fellowship Credentials.

### Service to Organized Medicine

Examples:

- Office held in an ACR Chapter such as Chapter President, President-elect, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary or Board of Directors, chair of Chapter Committee
- Positions held in the ACR such as councilor/alternate councilor, chair of ACR Committee/Commission, member, other than chair, or ACR Committee/Commission
- Positions and accomplishments while a resident or fellow in an ACR Chapter or in the ACR. While years or membership to qualify as a candidate for Fellowship do not accrue during residency and fellowship, some candidates will have significant accomplishments while a member of the Resident and

Fellow Section (RFS). Those activities should be documents in the Fellowship application and will be given similar weight as comparable accomplishments while a full member of the ACR.

- Participation in charitable medical services outside regular practice (i.e., free clinic, health care to homeless, etc.)
- Participation in charitable medical services within regular practice
- Radiology or radiation oncology practiced in an underserved area (i.e., Indian Health Service, Public Health Service, rural or inner city clinic, etc.)
- Government (national, state, or local) services performed in an elected or appointed office (excluding full-time government work). Examples would be: Medical Advisory Board, PRO Board, Peer Review, and Legislative Task Force
- Public relations activities that explain the specialty of radiology, radiation oncology or medical physics to the public, such as lectures to civic groups or public service announcements, radio or TV appearances, etc.
- Patient education activities performed outside of practice, such as health fairs, cancer screenings, writings for lay publications, school health lectures, etc.
- Community organizations service (e.g., Scout leader, Rotary, Kiwanis, church activities, service clubs, etc.)
- Executive or leadership role(s) in health care (CEO, Executive President/VP, Practice Leader, Chief Medical Director, etc.)
- Leadership Education and activities (MBA, MMM, MPH, RLI Certificate of Proficiency, etc.)
- Positions held in hospital service such as Chief of Staff, Hospital Board of Trustees, chair of hospital committee, Chair of Department
- Volunteer medical services performed (team physician, school clinic, STD clinic, etc.)
- Legislative services performed in the following areas: Service in a legislative key contact program of a medical organization, such as ACR or its chapters, state medical society, etc.; presentation of legislative testimony on medically related issues at state or federal government; service in "Doctor-of the Day" program at state legislature
- Service as committee chair, officer, or delegate/alternate representing radiology in another medical organization such as AMA, ASTRO, RSNA, AAPM, state or county medical society, etc.
- Participation in non-clinical education activities, such as leadership skills development, fundamentals of management, self-study leadership course, etc.

## **Review Guidelines**

### **10 - 11 Years**

- Holding or having held prominent leadership roles particularly in ACR and also other national or international radiology organizations. National or international medical organizations outside of radiology will also be considered.
- National or international award(s) from organized medicine

#### **12 - 14 Years**

- Holding or having held major offices in a national radiology medical organization, particularly the ACR, although major offices held in organizations such as ASTRO, RSNA, AAPM, etc. will be considered here.
- Award(s) from national medical organizations
- Individuals who have been ACR state chapter presidents may be considered here
- RLI Certificate of Proficiency

#### **15 - 17 Years**

- Holding or having held major office(s) in state radiology medical organizations, particularly the ACR. This includes major offices in state and regional CARROS chapters, which are part of the ACR chapter system.
- Executive or leadership role(s) in health care (CEO, Executive President/VP, Practice Leader, Chief Medical Director, etc.)
- Leadership Education and activities (MBA, MMM, MPH, etc.)

#### **18 - 19 Years**

- Service on committees or in leadership positions in state or local radiology organizations, especially ACR chapters. These include positions such as CAC representatives, program committees for state meeting, etc.
- Leadership positions on hospital medical staffs, such as department chairmanship, president of the medical staff, hospital trustee, etc.

#### **20 and More Years**

- Service to other state or local medical organizations, such as state or county medical societies, state subspecialty groups, etc.
- Leadership roles in group practices, such as president of a medical group
- Service to other community based medical organizations, such as service to a governing board of a local hospice, membership on a state or local insurance, medical, or pharmacy board, etc.
- Service in the charitable care of patients, such as overseas medical missions, local free medical clinics, free screening programs, etc.

## **Significant Scientific or Clinical Research in the Field of Radiology, or Significant Contributions to its Literature**

Examples:

- Presentations of non-published research (research and presentation must pertain to radiology, radiation oncology or medical physics)
- Research grants received
- Authored research published in a referred radiology journal
- Clinical review articles published in a referred medical journal
- Articles published in (clinical or socio-economic) non-referred radiology publications
- Service as editor of a non-referred radiology publication
- Radiology books authored or co-authored
- Involvement in research coordinated by the ACR including RTOG, QRRO and ACRIN
- Involvement in other sponsored research such as CALGB (Cancer and Leukemia Group B), NSABP (National Surgical Adjuvant Breast and Bowel Project) or other collaborative or academic groups
- Involvement in state, local, regional or national Institutional Review Boards

### **Review Guidelines**

#### **10 - 11 Years**

- International reputation as a researcher
- Extraordinary original contributions to the field of radiology

#### **12 - 14 Years**

- National reputation as an investigator - author
- Lead investigator on RTOG, QRRO or ACRIN trials
- Lead investigator on other national collaborative trials such as CALGB, NSABP, etc.

#### **15 - 17 Years**

- Major investigator on RTOG, QRRO or ACRIN trials, such as acting as the lead investigator on these trials at your institution
- Major investigator on other major collaborative trials, for example acting as lead investigator at your institution
- Participant on a national Institutional Review Board

#### **18 - 19 Years**

- Statewide reputation as an investigator - author (show evidence of works presented, shared and used by others in the medical field)

## **20 and More Years**

- Local reputation as an investigator – author (show evidence of works presented, shared and used by others in the medical field)

## **Performance of Outstanding Service as a Teach of Radiology**

Examples:

- Services as a contributing author, co-author, or editor of a radiology book; chapter of a medical or non-medical book; ACR monograph; or CME tape or online course
- Lecturer at a national ACR meeting
- Lecturer at an ACR constituent chapter meeting
- Service as a volunteer preceptor (for 4 week rotations) or off-site clinical faculty with medical students and/or residents in your practice
- Lectures, on a volunteer basis, to students and/or residents
- Service as chair of a state chapter resident physician section
- Appointments teaching radiology residents or medical physicists
- Awards for teaching

## **Review Guidelines**

### **10 – 11 Years**

- International recognition in teaching with major awards in teaching; recognition as a teacher documented by inventory of invited lectures, visiting professorships

### **12 – 14 Years**

- National recognition in teaching with national awards as a teacher; presentation of refresher courses, seminars
- Chairmanship of an academic department

### **15 – 17 Years**

- Documented exemplary service as a faculty member
- Any awards for teaching should be documented
- Program director of a residency program

### **18 – 19 Years**

- Other leadership positions in an academic program
- Teaching of “core” radiologic courses such as physics or radiation biology

## **20 and More Years**

- Documented service as a faculty member for at least 15 years, with documentation of the high quality of teaching

- Participation as clinical faculty in an otherwise non-academic setting for at least 15 years, with documentation of the high quality of resident and/or medical student participation at your facility

### **Additional Useful Information:**

#### **Guidance regarding Individuals with 20+ Years of Membership**

The 20+ year category often presents the most difficult decisions for the committee because of a belief by members that “excellent professional and community reputation” constitutes the primary criterion for acceptance at this level. That misconception is somewhat understandable based on the fact that those words appear only in association with the 20+ category on the nomination form. The Fellowship Committee believes that an excellent community reputation is necessary for election to fellowship at any level, but is not in itself sufficient reason for selection. At each fellowship level the candidate is expected to have distinctive accomplishments in one or more of the categories under which nominations are made (e.g., service to organized radiology (especially ACR), significant scientific contributions to the field of radiology, radiation oncology, or medical physics and outstanding service as a teacher of radiology, radiation oncology or physics).

#### **Service as a Chapter President**

The Fellowship Committee is particularly respectful of individuals who have served as chapter presidents. Many chapters’ ascension systems are such that most chapter presidents can document years of statewide ACR service. Despite the respect that the Fellowship Committee has for these people, generally they are not approved for fellowship until at the 12 to 14 year range. If a person is a chapter president and also has additional qualifications, then approval in the 10 to 11 year range would be typical. If a person’s achievements have been focused on chapter work alone, then approval in the 12 to 14 year range would be typical. Service in the Council, especially as a full 3-year Councilor, also clearly weighs in favor of a candidate and might advance the approval date.

#### **Chapter Nomination vs. Concurrence**

More weight will be attached to an individual receiving chapter nomination as opposed to chapter concurrence. Therefore, the Chapter should use this to clearly indicate the level of support for the nominee. Additional supporting letter(s) from the Chapter are welcome. Nomination packages received by the state, but where the state nominating or fellowship committees choose NOT to concur with the nomination must be forwarded, along with a letter of explanation regarding the refusal to concur, to the Fellowship Committee Chairman. This is now required by the 2009 Bylaws.

### **Letters of Reference**

As a general rule, more weight will be given to letters that provide substantial information as opposed to a brief or pro-forma letters. Sponsors should be encouraged to provide detail in their letters. **Although at least two letters are required, more are certainly allowed, particularly if they document significant or unusual experience, or service not specifically spelled out in this document, but felt by the nominee to be applicable.**

### **Chapter Activity**

In weighing chapter activity, consideration will be given to the size of the chapter together with the candidate's geographic location. Candidates who are distant from the central chapter location or whose state chapters are not very active will not be penalized. Similarly, the fact that local chapter activity is often more difficult for physicists to achieve will be taken into account. *The Chapter should provide sufficient information to permit valid evaluation of Chapter activity.*

### **Non-Selection**

Not all nominations receive endorsement of the Committee of Fellowship Credentials and subsequent approval by the Board of Chancellors the first time an application is submitted. An application may not be successful for several reasons. The principal reason is failure to meet the accomplishments deemed needed based upon the nominee's years of membership, or inadequate documentation of accomplishments. Some applicants will be accepted, but deferred to a future year that more accurately represents their accomplishments. Those who are not deferred, and are not selected, may submit a new application in a future year. Non-selection does not adversely affect a subsequent application. However, nominees should be mindful of the reasons given for non-selection and work to correct them prior to a future submission. Nominees who are considering a new application following non-selection should feel free to contact the Chairman of the Fellowship Committee for suggestions.

## SUPPORTING LETTERS

Supporting letters from current fellows or the Chapter are very important components of the nomination package. They should not be considered as casual documents of support. The only information the Fellowship Committee has to assess a candidate is that which is presented in the nomination form, the CV and the supporting letters.

The most critical aspect of a supporting letter is specific documentation of accomplishments. Letters that simply state that the author has known the candidate for many years, that the candidate has been a worthy member of the College and should be a Fellow do not represent a strong endorsement of the candidate. Although a letter need not exceed two pages, it should present substantive examples of the candidate's accomplishments as known by the writer of the letter. The letter should support the candidate's activities in one or more of the categories under which he or she is seeking fellowship. Please be explicit about the accomplishments that support the nomination.

To assist Chapters and letter writers, the Appendix of this document contains two sample letters. There are countless styles that could be used. However, the theme is that the letter should provide substantive discussion of the candidate's qualifications.

The minimum number of supporting letters required for the nomination to be accepted by the College is two. However, candidates are encouraged to obtain additional letters. In addition, Chapters are encouraged to include additional letters for candidates they wish to strongly support.

As noted earlier, Chapter leaders should review all letters for accuracy, content, and completeness before forwarding a nomination package to the College. The president of the Chapter or chair of the nominating or fellowship committee should send additional letters as appropriate. Nomination packages received by the state, but where the state nominating or fellowship committees choose NOT to concur with the nomination must be forwarded, along with a letter of explanation regarding the refusal to concur, to the Fellowship Committee Chairman. This is now required by the 2009 Bylaws.

## APPENDIX

American College of Radiology  
1891 Preston White Drive  
Reston, VA 20191

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter is in regard to **Jane Doe, M.D.** whom I wish to nominate for Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. Dr. Doe has been a member of the College since XXXX. It is indeed a pleasure for me to submit her name in nomination. I have known Dr. Doe since XXXX. I have followed her career carefully since that time, and I have been very pleased to observe her many accomplishments. Dr. Doe fulfills all of the criteria for Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. She has contributed significant clinical research to the field of radiology and has made important contributions to the literature. She has published over XX original manuscripts in peer reviewed journals. She has also co-edited a textbook.

Dr. Doe has also performed outstanding service as a teacher of radiology. She is noted for her teaching skills and her devotion and enthusiasm to the medical students. She has been actively involved in education throughout her career, both during her appointment at University Hospital where she participated in seminars and medical school radiology clerkships and more recently in her position at St. Elsewhere Hospital where she has been an outstanding leader in all levels of teaching and education to residents and medical students.

Finally, Dr. Doe has certainly given significant service to organized medicine at both the national, state, and local levels. In regard to national organizations, she has served on several committees of the RSNA. At the state level she has been actively involved in the state radiological society serving both on the legislative and standards committees.

In summary, Dr. Doe fulfills all of the criteria for the nomination for Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. I am convinced that Dr. Doe will continue to be a leader in the field of radiology and to contribute significantly to the American College of Radiology's missions. I support her nomination with enthusiasm.

Very truly yours,

Fellowship Committee  
American College of Radiology  
1891 Preston White Drive  
Reston, Virginia 20191

Ladies and Gentlemen:

This letter is to support the nomination of John Doe for the honor of Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. I have known Dr. Doe for approximately XX years, beginning when he served as a resident in our hospital.

Dr. Doe has been a member of the College since XXXX, and is an excellent clinical radiologist with high moral and ethical standards. I suggest he is worthy of Fellowship because:

1. Service - Dr. Doe has held several officer positions including secretary and fellowship chair in our local and state radiological societies and is President-elect of his regional subspecialty society. He has served as a Councilor for the past five years and earlier as an Alternate Councilor to the ACR. He is currently President of the local medical society.
2. Teaching - He has been a willing and popular teacher while in private practice and on a local faculty. A series of invited lectureships is presented for your consideration. He also has won a Teacher of the Year Award from our local university.

I highly recommend him for Fellowship.

Sincerely,