

PROGRAM OVERVIEW

The M.D. with Distinction in Research Program offers a unique opportunity to NJMS medical students to conduct original research of excellent quality during their Medical School training. The student is expected to conduct independent research that is Laboratory, Clinical or Population based. The research experience will provide students the opportunity to study a certain subject in depth. The Program is specifically designed for a rigorous development in scientific thinking, including a thorough understanding of research methodology and scientific writing. The program is highly suited to students who plan a career in Academic Medicine.

The M.D. with Distinction in Research Program will be administered through the Office of Student Affairs and in conjunction with the Office of Education. The program will be overseen by Dr. Salgame, Director of the Graduate Medical Research Program.

Student Selection. The selection of students for the program will be based on the following criteria: i) Academically strong students; ii) Students from the Summer Biomedical Research program; iii) Students with previous Research experience.

Program Goal and Learning Objectives. The overall goal of the program is to provide medical students an opportunity to acquire research skills and foster independent scientific thinking. The specific objectives are- i) The student obtains training in research skills and critical thinking- formulation of a hypothesis, designing experiments that will allow for testing of the hypothesis, and critical evaluation of data; ii) The student learns the art of communicating scientific findings-Oral and written.

Program Structure. Students can perform their research project during the Medical School years or can take a scholars year to perform the research project. Application to the program is on a rolling basis. In order to be eligible for participation in the program, the student must be in good academic standing. A student may not participate in the program if he/she has experienced academic difficulty or has unremediated, incomplete or failing grades. Upon acceptance into the program, the student picks a research mentor/advisor in consultation with the Program Director.

Student Evaluation. At the end of the research year, the student is expected to have completed a research project and presented a paper. The text of the written proposal should be 25-30 pages, double-spaced, excluding references. The paper should contain the following sections- Abstract, Specific Aims, Background & Significance, Experimental Design and data, Discussion and References. The paper will be assessed, and a letter grade (S-satisfactory or UN-unsatisfactory) will be provided. A *Certificate of Thesis Approval* form will confirm the acceptance of the student's paper. Upon approval of the written document, the student will graduate with an **MD degree with Distinction in Research**.

Stipend and Academic Rules. For students taking a Scholars Year, they will be enrolled in the NJMS Scholars Program. The student will not be charged tuition during the research year, however, student fees will be assessed. Each student must remain in good academic standing in order to remain enrolled in the research program. With the permission of their Research mentor and the Associate Dean for Students Affairs, students may cross-enroll in courses offered by GSBS or SPH. Participation in the Research Program and/or cross-enrolled coursework cannot fulfill any requirements for degree in the Doctor of Medicine degree program.

For further information regarding the program you can contact the Program Director-

Padmini Salgame PhD

Professor, Department of Medicine

Director, Graduate Medical Research Program

Associate Director, The Public Health Research Institute (PHRI)

Email: padmini.salgame@rutgers.edu

Tel # 973 972 8647