

Understanding, using, and developing the CERA surveys: A workshop for Program Directors and faculty to develop scholarly activity skills

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What is CERA?

- Council of Academic Family Medicine Educational Research Alliance
- Sponsored by the CAFM organizations
 - AFMRD
 - STFM
 - NAPCRG
 - ADFM

Objectives Today

- Describe the process for submitting a CERA proposal and how proposals are reviewed and accepted into a CERA survey
- Participate as a researcher and reviewer in a mock review process for a CERA proposal
- Write an *a priori* hypothesis that could be answered using a CERA survey

What does it do and why was it created?

- Many clinician educators do not have funding and/or infrastructure to do research, particularly educational research.
- CERA's goal is to increase published research and scholarly activity among members of CAFM organizations by providing infrastructure and consultation support.

CERA MISSION

- The mission of CERA is to
 - set within family medicine a standard for medical education research that is rigorous and generalizable
 - to provide mentoring and education to junior researchers
 - to facilitate collaboration between medical education researchers
 - to guide the specialty by providing leadership and vision in the arena of medical education research

How does CERA complete its mission?

- Increase the quality and frequency of research and scholarly activity among members of CAFM organizations.
- Improve the process for surveying constituents with better questions and fewer surveys

cont'd

Meeting the Mission (cont'd)

- Provide a clearinghouse of data that CAFM members and their residents can use to meet scholarship requirements.
- Provide mentoring and education to junior researchers

Surveys

- Family medicine residency directors (surveyed twice per year)
- Clerkship directors
- Department chairs
- General CAFM membership, including subsets of members as selected by applicants

How does this work? Submission/Proposal

- The CERA Steering Committee issues a call for proposals
- Complete and submit a CERA application
- Limit the number of questions you submit to 10 or fewer

Survey dates

Posted at: <http://www.stfm.org/Research/CERA>

Audience	Call for Proposals	Survey Dates
Program Directors	7/15/16-8/26/16	11/4/16-12/16/16

How does this work? Proposal scoring

- Reviewed by at least 2 researchers
- Criteria
 - Interest of topic
 - Background and significance
 - Is it hypothesis-driven?
 - Quality of questions as written
 - Is it publishable?
 - Overall quality of submission

How does this work? IRB Approval

- CERA surveys use the AAFP IRB
- All questions submitted for you!!!!

How does this work? Post-survey

- Researchers get their individual survey results, plus the demographic and organizational information.
- Individuals who submit specific questions for study are given 3 months to analyze the data from the survey prior to release of the data to the general membership.
- The expectation is that investigators will write and submit a paper within those 3 months.

Good News!!!

- You get a mentor to help you push through to that 3 month deadline.
- Volunteers from CAFM help you.

- The CERA Steering Committee is available to answer questions and assist individuals in preparing proposals.
- <http://www.stfm.org/Research/CERA>

- Rest of our time will be spent
 - Reviewing a proposal
 - Writing a hypothesis and some survey questions

Proposal Review



Developing a Good Research Question



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The hardest part of research is asking the right question

- Coming up with a research question is often the most difficult step in conducting research, especially for the beginner.
- In a study of family practice residents, the importance of assistance in identification of a research topic was much greater for novice researchers than for experienced researchers .
[Temte et al, Fam Med 1994; 26:93-7]

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Keep it simple!

- The key is to frame your elegant question in very simple terms, such as *yes/no*, *how frequent*, or *is factor A related to factor B?*
- More complex research questions can often be broken apart into simple segments.

Brainstorm Potential Questions for CERA

“The best way to have a good idea is to have lots of ideas and throw out the bad ones”



-Linus Pauling

Elements to Determine When Developing Your Research Question

- Target group to survey
- Topic area
- Focused research objective/aim
- Develop an a priori hypothesis

During the break...

- Discuss / think about how you might implement the information you just heard.
- Fill out a session evaluation.



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