

Objectives of the Fellowship Program

The objectives of the fellowship program are:

- To recognize outstanding service to the American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM)
- To encourage continued service to ACSM in a leadership role
- To recognize distinguished professional achievement in research and/or service in the field of sports medicine & exercise science

Although candidates should have already displayed a strong commitment to ACSM, advancement to fellow status should be considered as a request to become even further involved in the internal affairs of the ACSM, including serving in a leadership capacity. Applicants should not consider fellow status as a final step, nor for personal gratification or enhancement.

Minimum Benchmarks for Consideration

The baseline metrics to be considered for fellow status, as outlined in Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution, and as defined by the Board of Trustees, (1-7 below) is the least possible to have an application evaluated. **Meeting the minimal benchmarks does not guarantee advancement; only that the application will be considered by the committee.** During the peer review phase, each candidate is subjectively evaluated. The committee's subjective assessment of the candidate's contributions and commitment to ACSM is the real determinant of advancement to Fellowship. **The Credentials Committee considers the items below of particular importance in the peer-review phase.**

- The significance, range, and enduring / longstanding / recurrent quality of service during which the candidate has been associated with ACSM.
- Responses to the last two open-ended questions (i.e. - how you came to be involved with ACSM and why your involvement in the College is important to you personally; and what "fellowship" in the College means to you.)
- The strength and enthusiasm of the candidate's two Fellow endorsers.
- For those applying in the research category, the quality of research as reflected in the candidate's professional publications, particularly in the four principal author peer reviewed articles that the candidate will submit best representing his/her work.

Candidates must meet the minimum benchmarks in each section (1-7) as outlined below to be considered for advancement.

1. Shall have demonstrated high standards of professional development and a commitment to the goals and long-range activities of the College.

"High standards of professional development" is defined as well-established contributions to Exercise Science and Sports Medicine through research and / or distinguished service (implying acknowledged excellence or superiority) in medical practice.

"Commitment to the goals and long-range activities of the College" is defined as well-rounded, meritorious service to ACSM, with service to one's Regional Chapter also being highly desirable.

The minimal criteria for service to ACSM can be met by a combination of the items listed on "FORM A, Section I: Service to ACSM" that add up to a total score of at least a "4" (unless applying via the "Exceptional Service Waiver" or "Service Waiver" pathways as defined below in requirement 5 below.) Candidates must earn points in a **variety** of sections on FORM A and are encouraged to be above the minimum.

In the event that a candidate does not have commendable service to ACSM or its Regional Chapters, exceptional service to the broader Sports Medicine and Exercise Science community *may* be considered as defined below in requirement #5 the Exceptional Service Waiver.

2. Shall have earned a diploma from an accredited college or university in one of the following fields: Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy, Doctor of Dental Surgery, Doctor of Philosophy, Doctor of Education, Doctor of Physical Education, Doctor of Public Health or an equivalent.

The intention of this requirement to be inclusive of other terminal degrees of equivalent education as those listed (i.e., other terminal degrees such as D.H.Sc., Sc.D., D.C., D.P.T., etc.)

3. Shall have been a Professional Member of the College for at least three consecutive years at the time of application for advancement.

The intention of this requirement is that at least three consecutive years of the Professional member level have been completed immediately prior to the time of application. A membership that expired six or more months before being renewed does not meet the requirement. Professional-in-Training membership, student membership, ACSM's Alliance of Health & Fitness Professionals membership, or any combination of these statuses with the Professional Membership (e.g., one year as a Student Member and two years as a Professional Member) does not meet the requirement.

4. Shall have attended at least two ACSM Annual Meetings of the College within the last five years.

The intention of this requirement is that the Member registered/paid and attended the full Meeting in person. The 2021 ACSM Annual Meeting – a Live Virtual Format also meets this requirement provided the Member signed in and participated during the live event. Post meeting/on-demand educational content, single day, and complimentary/free registrations do not meet this requirement. ACSM's specialty meetings (e.g. – Sports Medicine Essentials/Team Physician Course, Health & Fitness Summit & Exposition) ACSM Regional Chapter meetings, and the 2020 Virtual Experience are not acceptable to meet this requirement.

5. Shall have submitted a curriculum vitae, including evidence that he or she has fulfilled at least one of the following:

Research

Members who publish papers in peer reviewed (refereed) journals such as those found in Index Medicus or Citation Index may be considered for advancement by having a distinguished publication record. Of your principal author publications, include **four** from peer reviewed (refereed) journals that best represent your sports medicine/exercise science research. On Form A - Section I, a minimum of 4 ACSM service points in a variety of areas (not all presentations) to be considered. Only in rare instances will the minimum be enough to be advanced.

Service

Members who do not publish research in indexed, refereed, peer reviewed journals, may be considered for fellowship by performing distinguished service to both ACSM and the sports medicine and exercise science community. This may entail notable **service in medical practice** in some aspect of sports medicine for a minimum period of three years, which may include being a team physician, involvement in the prevention of sports injuries, or in exercise testing or rehabilitative medicine. The minimum for this path requires service to both ACSM and the sports medicine and exercise science community; and on Form A, Sections I & II (having a minimum of “4” points in Section I, and a minimum of “10” points in Section II) that add up to a total score of “14” or higher. Service applicants are expected to be above the minimum points. Only in rare instances will the minimum be enough to be advanced.

Waivers

Members whose service to ACSM is *extraordinarily* beyond the standard Service pathway mentioned above may be considered for Fellowship in one of the two service waiver pathways.

Service without a Terminal Degree Waiver

Members without a terminal degree, may be considered for advancement by having: 10+ consecutive years as a Professional member at the time of application; and 15+ points in Section I –Service to ACSM; and 15+ points in Section II – Service to the Sports Medicine and Exercise Science Community. Must also meet requirements: 1 and 3-7.

Service with a Terminal Degree Waiver

Members who have earned a terminal degree where ACSM is their primary organization but have limited service outside of ACSM, may be considered for advancement by having: 10+ consecutive years as a Professional member at the time of application; and 20+ total service points between Section I and Section II, with more than half of their points being in Section I – Service to ACSM. Must also meet requirements 1-7.

Exceptional Service Waiver

Members, who due to extenuating circumstances, do not have the opportunity to give significant service to ACSM (e.g. - international members) but whose service to the sports medicine and exercise science community is considered especially noteworthy by both ACSM's Board of Trustees and the sports medicine and exercise science community at large, may be considered for fellowship by documenting exceptional service. This requires a detailed narrative and a curriculum vitae showing significant and sustained service. Must also meet requirements 1-7.

6. Shall have received a recommendation in writing by two Fellows of the College.

Typed recommendations from two current Fellows of the College are necessary to meet this requirement. The intent is for two and only two recommendations. Fellows should mentor you through the process, including reviewing your application for typos. They should be intimate with your ACSM involvement; and have a strong understanding of your work. Regardless of who the fellow is (e.g. ACSM President or Past President, Board Member, or Fellow Member, etc.) the strength and enthusiasm of the recommendation plays a significant role in your application.

7. Shall have received the approval of the Credentials Committee and the Board of Trustees. The Credentials Committee conducts the initial review of the applications and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees concerning advancement.

The Review

The review process for advancement to Fellow status involves the following steps:

- Candidate submits application to the National Center in for one of the two-yearly deadlines.
- National Center screens the application to ensure that all required materials are included (application, curriculum vitae, recommendation letters, payment, etc.)
- Credentials Committee subjectively evaluates individual applications based on the submission package and makes recommendations to the Board of Trustees concerning advancement.
- The final assessment is the responsibility of the Board of Trustees. The Committee's recommendation is normally followed, but in rare cases, information may be available to the Board, which can affect the Committee recommendations.

Maintaining Fellow Status

Fellow status is maintained by paying the annual Professional Member dues. Fellowship is not just another membership category, but a way to further show your commitment to ACSM and its future; therefore, any Fellow whose membership is delinquent (more than one year) may be reconsidered for Fellowship by adhering to the following courses of action:

- Up to one year of lapsed membership - send dues payment;

- one to two years of lapsed membership - send a letter requesting reinstatement, plus one-year dues payment;
- At three years of lapsed membership - must resubmit fellowship application and one-year dues payment

Process for Appealing a Decision by the Board of Trustees

Applicants not advanced to Fellowship may appeal to the Board of Trustees. Upon appeal, the Board will convene the Appeals Panel, consisting of the Executive Committee of the College and the Credentials Committee Chair. The Appeals Panel may consider only the information that was originally submitted to the Credentials Committee with the Fellowship application. If a candidate has additional information that would help their case, that information must be submitted to the Credentials Committee. The Credentials Committee would then re-review the application during the next regularly scheduled review period.