Fellowship Council Guidelines for Quarterly Fellow Assessments and Technical Skills Assessments

The Fellowship Council has historically mandated quarterly evaluations in order to achieve and maintain accreditation. In 2012, FC members voted to approve both a mandatory quarterly fellow assessment and technical skills assessment to be developed by the Fellowship Council Education/Curriculum Committee. Below is information regarding the guidelines for these assessment tools.

**Quarterly Fellow Assessment Tool**

1. **The Quarterly Fellow Assessment Tool is required to be completed once a quarter, and should be a composite evaluation of all contributing faculty members.** The Program Director should collate the individual faculty evaluations and ideally, address any discrepancies or outlying positive or negative ratings or comments in advance of the required quarterly evaluation review with the Fellow so that they can be discussed at that meeting with the Fellow and constructive feedback and dialogue achieved.

2. The Quarterly Fellow Assessment tool is independent of the type of fellowship and is based on the ACGME Core Competencies. This is specifically in order to allow Program Directors to substitute the Fellowship Council tool in the place of any individual institutional evaluation forms, and thus avoid filling out redundant evaluations. If any Program Directors encounter resistance to the use of the tool in place of the individual institution’s form based on one or more required elements not present, please communicate that to the Council so that the addition can be considered and the tool modified appropriately.

3. To access the Quarterly Fellow Assessment Tool, log into your account on the Fellowship Council website, www.fellowshipcouncil.org, and go to the Evaluation Tools section. Click on the link for the Quarterly Fellow Assessment Tool. Print a copy of the tool to review with all contributing faculty members. Then the program should complete ONE composite form online per quarter.

**Technical Skills Assessment**

1. The Technical Skills Assessments are intended to allow Program Directors to track the progress of the Fellow(s) as they progress through the program. For this reason, the more evaluations done during the year, the better, and the more different types of cases evaluated, the better. **The Fellowship Council has mandated a minimum of at least one Case-by-case evaluation per quarter.**

2. If only four evaluations per fellow are to be done over the year, all four should be the exact same case in order to provide the most reliable data. For instance, four successive evaluations of lap band placements will be more useful than one evaluation of a lap ventral hernia followed by an evaluation of a lap Nissen, then followed by an evaluation of a lap appendectomy. However, four evaluations of EACH of those cases would be even more useful.

3. Multiple faculty members may each enter evaluations as many times as desired (the Program Director should provide them with the appropriate information and create an administrative user account), and the results do not need to be reviewed or collated by the Program Director.

4. The results are tracked by the Fellowship Council in de-identified form for research purposes under the supervision of the Fellowship Council Research Committee. **The results are NOT used to grant or deny**
accreditation or funding other than to determine that the minimum number of evaluations were completed per year for each program.

5. Because there are multiple types of fellowships within the Council, there are multiple Technical Assessment tools.
   a. The Global Operative Assessment of Laparoscopic Skills (GOALS) tool is intended for minimally invasive procedures and has been independently validated against inter-evaluator bias.
   b. The Global Assessment of Gastrointestinal Endoscopic Skills (GAGES) has likewise been independently validated in both upper and lower GI versions.
   c. The Open Surgery Assessment tool has been adapted from the Cleveland Clinic’s form and has been constructed as similarly as possible to the GOALS tool, but is not independently validated in its current form.
   d. The Thoracic and Hepatobiliary tools are modified versions of the Open Surgery Assessment Tool by Fellowship Council Education/Curriculum Committee members from each specialty area.

6. To access the Technical Skills Assessment tools, log into your account on the Fellowship Council website, www.fellowshipcouncil.org, and go to the Evaluation Tools section. Click on the link for the appropriate Technical Skills Assessment tool. The program should complete the online form.

7. Since accessing the Technical Skills Assessment tools requires being able to log on to the Fellowship Council website, each faculty member who participates will need his or her own user account. The Program Director can manage those sub-accounts using the Manage Program Administrative Users link under the Actions section of the Program Director’s regular FC account.

   Using this menu, Program Directors may control which users have access to which functions, so that you may control exactly which users may modify the program description or applicants page, all users will have access to the evaluation tools.

8. Fellowship Council members interested in research projects using the data generated from the Technical Skills Assessment tool are directed to submit requests for data access to the Fellowship Council Research Committee.

9. Program Directors will receive quarterly reminder emails from the Fellowship Council office to complete the assessments. The quarters will be defined as follows: July – September; October – December; January – March; April – June.

Assessment deadline dates are as follows:
For the 2014-2015 Fellowship Year, 1 Quarterly and 1 Technical Skills assessment are due each quarter by:
September 30, 2014
December 31, 2014
March 31, 2015
June 30, 2015

Please send any questions regarding these tools or the process to Executive Director Yumi Hori at yumi@fellowshipcouncil.org.

Thanks for your participation!