



RICE HUMANITIES

Medical Humanities

Health, Humanism, and Society Scholars – Project Submission Form

Project Title: VA Quality Scholars Fellowship Program (VAQS)

Project Description:

VA Quality Scholars Coordinating Center is located at the Michael E. DeBakey VA Medical Center in Houston, Texas. The Coordinating Center is comprised of program directors, local and site core faculty, staff, and Health Professions Education Evaluation Research postdoctoral fellows. It is responsible for program implementation and assessment, developing and delivering a national, core curriculum, program operations and marketing, and fostering collaboration among the fellowship sites. The Coordinating Center also organizes an annual quality improvement conference (Summer Institute) which provides VA Quality Scholars an opportunity to meet face-to-face and collaborate and network with faculty and fellows from across the nation. VAQS fellowship program consists of 9 sites located around the United States and one site in Toronto. Potential trainees will have the opportunity to work in numerous components of the CC.

VAQS conducts a rigorous program evaluation using quantitative (e.g. self-reported surveys/questionnaires and existing data) and qualitative methods (self-reported descriptive data) to measure the Curriculum Knowledge, Needs Assessment, and numerous End of Year surveys among all fellows. We also collect weekly national and bi-annually local curriculum evaluations. VAQS faculty and fellows are key stakeholders in evaluation. Our goal is to collect data to make continuous and ongoing improvements to the educational components offered to the fellows and to enhance the experiences for both stakeholders in the program. The trainee will have the opportunity to gain evaluation experience by collecting and analyzing critical data as well as developing and presenting reports on all surveys and assessment tools.

The Summer Institute planning project involves developing conference content and working with staff to prepare all professional materials, programs, program directories, sessions topic slides, and other programmatic materials for the national conference including populating the web-based, conference management software (Whova) with all conference materials. The trainee will gain experience in developing and contributing to the content of the conference.

The Alumni committee, comprised of current faculty and past fellows, is involved in numerous projects throughout the year. This year, they will be submitting an alumni survey which is administered every 5 years. The project would include building the alumni tracking database, developing and designing the survey instrument and assisting with data collection and analyzing



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of the results. Working with the CC staff and the committee, this project will also lead in the development of reports for key stakeholders.

Program operations includes developing marketing materials for the VAQS fellowship program, as well disseminating these materials to all fellows and faculty. We also develop and distribute an individualized infographic recruitment and marketing report to each site based on data collected through our evaluation program and edited using Canva program software. These instrumental reports are developed annually for each site. The trainee will work closely with key faculty and staff in editing and completing these reports, among other marketing projects.

Additionally, trainees can work on special projects and scholarship opportunities as applicable. Over the course of the program, trainees will learn more about the day to day operations of running a national CC. Trainees are invited to attend key all-staff and department specific meetings and encouraged to take advantage of any opportunities, to ask questions, and learn more about areas of quality improvement, program evaluation, marketing and operations that are of particular interest to them.

Institution and Location: Center for Innovations in Quality, Effectiveness and Safety (IQuEST)
Michael E. DeBakey Veterans Affairs Medical Center

Project timeframe: (2 semesters is standard, 1 semester options also): 2 Semesters

Prerequisite training: Students with the following interests/experience in Program Evaluation, Program Operations, Communication and Marketing, Data Collection and Analysis and generating national reports, might consider this project. Some basic familiarity with qualitative and quantitative methods would be helpful but is not required. Familiarity with databases (e.g., Excel) is also a plus. Methodological training (e.g. data entry, analyzing limited qualitative data) will be provided. Experience in preparing abstracts, posters, and manuscripts is ideal. Students should be enthusiastic, organized, detail-oriented, self-motivated, adaptable, punctual, professional, willing to be flexible, adaptable, and have excellent communication skills.

Knowledge and skills student can expect to gain: Depending on area of interest, students can gain insight into working on a National fellowship program including multiple components of a large scale program evaluation, developing conceptual models, data reports, summaries and analysis, national conference development and planning, developing marketing materials and dissemination, literature reviews, developing posters for national conferences, and manuscript preparation. Students will gain and/or build upon skills in qualitative and quantitative methods to assist the evaluation team in better understanding the potential benefits of the fellowship education on key stakeholders. Skills in quantitative data collection include administering surveys, data entry and management and report development. Students will also have the



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opportunity to assist the VAQS evaluation team in preparing abstracts, presentations and/or manuscripts based on the data collected and analyzed.

Expectations of student (Rice University and host requirements are listed):

- The student must devote 8 hours per week to the project (consistent with a 3-credit course) and will develop a timeline of activities in collaboration with supervisor(s). The student will meet at least monthly with the faculty supervisor(s) to evaluate progress.
- The student should be available to assist with both in-person and electronic data collections. Depending on area of interest, students may be asked to attend a relevant, regularly scheduled meetings. Students will also need dedicated time to conduct literature searches on any topics as determined by the coordinating center.

Expectations of PIs/project sponsors:

- The projects should be designed with the academic rigor of Rice University in mind, and abide by the U.S. Department of Labor's Fair Labor Standards Act for unpaid internships. Mid-semester and final supervisor evaluations will be submitted to evaluate student's professional progress. Complete details found here: [Project Sponsor Eligibility](#).