

Policy on Program Director Responsibilities

Effective 12/13/2024

All Graduate Medical Education (GME) programs must have one faculty member appointed as Program Director (PD) with authority and accountability for the overall program, including compliance with all applicable program requirements, McGaw and base hospital policies, ACGME requirements, and NRMP or other matching bodies.

All PD changes must be reviewed and approved by the Graduate Medical Education Committee. For ACGME-accredited programs, final approval of a new PD resides with the ACGME Review Committee.

Continuity of program leadership and transition planning are important to the success and ongoing administrative stability of a program. Therefore, current PDs will retain the role until the appointment of a successor has been approved. For guidance on requesting a PD change, refer to the Appointment Criteria for New Program Directors (below).

Involuntary removal of a PD may occur in the following circumstances, including, but not limited to:

- a. Unable to fulfill the requirements of the role;
- b. Determined to be ineffective at program oversight; or
- c. The subject of disciplinary action that impacts ability to serve in the role.

If a PD is unable to effectively perform their duties, as described above, a PD may be removed from the position by:

- a. Voluntary resignation;
- b. The Department Chair; Division Head; or
- c. The Designated Institutional Official (DIO).

Appointment Criteria for New Program Directors

Materials required for GMEC consideration of a new Program Director (PD) must be received by McGaw leadership (via jadrianna.sobczak@northwestern.edu and valerie.rodriquez@northwestern.edu) no later than the 1st of the month prior to the proposed effective date taking place.

Documentation Required for GMEC Review

1. A letter detailing / including the following:
 - Rationale for PD change
 - Nomination of new PD being appointed
 - Specify whether permanent or interim
 - If interim, proposed recruitment timeline for permanent PD
 - Qualifications of the new PD
 - Programs should ensure the proposed PD's CV accurately details the individual's qualifications and readiness to step into the role as outlined in section II.A.3. of the Program-Specific Requirements.
 - Effective date
 - Confirmation that adequate support (including FTE support) will be provided for administration of the program, as required by the accrediting body, as well as details on how such support will be met
 - Verify II.A.2.a) for ACGME-accredited programs
 - Mentorship plan
 - Description of the onboarding plan for the incoming PD (example: frequency with which the incoming PD will meet with the outgoing PD)
 - Confirmation the incoming PD will have sufficient protected time to engage in faculty development specific to the role of PD, of which examples may include:
 - ACGME Annual Educational Conference
 - Specialty-specific or sponsored professional development for educators / program leaders
 - Feinberg Academy of Medical Educators (FAME)
 - Medical Education Day
 - Other institutional- and / or department-sponsored events
 - Department Chair, Division Head, Vice Chair of Education, or Designee Signature
2. Curriculum Vitae (CV) of incoming PD updated to include the following (as applicable):
 - Specialty / subspecialty expertise and the minimum number of documented educational and / or administrative experience (ACGME Req. II.A.3.a)
 - Current certification in the specialty for which they are the nominated PD by the American Board of Medical Specialties or American Osteopathic Specialty Board, or equivalent specialty qualifications acceptable to the ACGME Review Committee / other accrediting body (ACGME Req. II.A.3.b)
 - Ongoing clinical activity (ACGME Req. II.A.3.c)
 - Current medical licensure
 - Current faculty appointment(s)
 - Prior experience as an Associate Program Director or Core Faculty
 - Relevant local and / or national educational leadership experience
 - Completed faculty development