

The roll of the Commission on Accreditation of Medical Physics Education Programs, Inc. (CAMPEP) in medical physics education is first and foremost, to ensure quality in all aspects of medical physics education. This applies to the accreditation of graduate and residency programs in medical physics, and to continuing education in medical physics to maintain a level of quality and competency once the basic information has been acquired. The rationale for CAMPEP accreditation is to standardize the level of quality and content of material and to ensure that the basic information that is the foundation of medical physics has been conveyed to the students. An additional role beyond standardization is to establish minimum training standards and guideline for accredited programs. Accreditation ensures that the institutions participating in the program have adequate facilities, adequate faculty numbers and expertise, and adequate structure within their programs to provide a quality educational experience. The objectives of maintaining an accredited program are to advance academic quality, to demonstrate public accountability, and to encourage in purposeful change and needed improvement within the program and within the field. There are many benefits associated with program accreditation. These include increased visibility within and outside the program, improved structure and documentation within the program, and to improve the educational experience within the institution.

Many individuals find the process of accreditation to be a daunting task. This can indeed be the case but CAMPEP and the AAPM are making great efforts to help programs become accredited. Most recently a program writing workshop was held where 24 individuals representing 24 different institutions met for a day and a half concentrating specifically on producing a final Self-Study document. In addition, CAMPEP has provided much more detailed guidelines and self-study writing templates to assist in the development of programs. Review and reporting templates for reviewers, new reviewers, and lead reviewers have been developed to improve the quality and uniformity of reviews done by different individual and to streamline the review process. CAMPEP has much more detailed policies and procedures to define exactly the roles of various officers and individuals associated with the accreditation process. As CAMPEP accredited program to become more formalized, structured, and of uniformly higher quality, so to has CAMPEP become a much more streamlined and better organization.

The residency program at the University of Minnesota has changed and improved over the years. The residency program started out as an informal and loosely structured apprenticeship. As the accreditation progress became more rigorous, the program was continuously upgraded to meet the improved CAMPEP guidelines. It took real effort to formalize the program and make it what it is today. We have benefited continuously, as have our residents, from this improved structure and definition within the program.

Objectives:

1. To explain the role of CAMPEP in residency training
2. To explain how CAMPEP assists potential programs to become accredited
3. To explain the residency review process
4. To describe how improvements in CAMPEP's guidelines have improved the program at the University of Minnesota