Academic Medicine Fellowship: 
Pilot Study at the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine
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Abstract
The nationwide shortage of physicians and growing numbers of medical schools has created a shortage in clinical faculty. Most physicians working in academia note stimulation from students and academic colleagues, research, and mentorship during their undergraduate medical education as motivating factors to enter a career in academics, although interest has continued to fall. This study attempts to identify the prevalence and curriculum structure of undergraduate Academic Medicine Fellowship programs at Allopathic and Osteopathic institutions in the United States. Additionally, factors that influence medical students to pursue a career in academics are examined.

Methods
An electronic survey was sent to an associate dean or director of clinical medicine at 39 Osteopathic and 29 Allopathic medical schools with similar geographic location or similar class size as the Arkansas College of Osteopathic Medicine (ARCOM). Schools responding to the survey were then sent a secondary survey asking for more details about their programs. All sixty-eight schools were then phoned in order to increase response rate. Objectives of the surveys were to identify the presence and structure of undergraduate AMF programs. Institution websites from schools indicating that they had a program were then searched for additional information.

Results
- Sixty-eight schools were surveyed, with 46 schools responding (67.7%)
- 11 schools indicated the presence of an Academic Medicine Fellowship and 35 indicated they did not have a program.
- Literature review results showed that lack of early mentorship and research is a hindrance to students considering academic careers.
- Practicing physicians note a lack of support for their research, absence of autonomy, and less leisure time as factors deterring them from teaching.

Conclusion
Early introduction into academic medicine increases the likelihood students will enter a career in academic medicine. There seems to be a deficiency in the number of fellowship programs currently available. The scope and structure of AMF programs is varied, further study must be conducted to delineate the best program design. AMF programs may provide early exposure to research and mentorship for current medical students. Furthermore, AMF programs may create a paradigm shift that will enhance a culture of academic prowess and will help to develop dynamic leaders to train our next generation.

References