

Committee on Applicants Information and Training Session

Presented by:
Candace Church
Supervisor, Member Services
November 2018



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Welcome to our second annual Committee on Applicants Information and Training session. This PDF version of the webinar includes the slides presented as well as, beneath each slide, the information presented with that slide.

Agenda

- **Purpose and Responsibilities of the Committees**
- **Changes – where we stand**
- **2018 Committee on Applicants Survey**
- **2019 Fellowship Timeline**
- **Conducting the Interviews**
- **Next Steps**
- **Questions and Answers**



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Today I hope to provide you with information that will be useful to you and your committee and will include:

- A brief review of the purpose and responsibilities of the committees on applicants.
- Where we stand with the revisions we made to procedures this past year, including some feedback from the Committee on Applicants Survey.
- A review the 2019 Fellowship timeline.
- Then we'll discuss conducting the interviewing with the applicants and the steps that come after the interviews.

If you have any questions, please contact me. Contact information will be provided on the final slide.

Purpose of Committees

- Investigate, interview and evaluate applicants
- Submit report on each applicant
- Provide recommendations for each applicant's eligibility for Fellowship
- Meet once per year to conduct the interviews
- Meeting networking



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The Committees have a very limited, very focused but very important purpose – to investigate, interview, and evaluate the applicants for Fellowship.

The committees provide the College with a report on each applicant interviewed, which includes a recommendation as to whether or not each applicant is eligible for Fellowship.

The committees meet once each year to conduct the interviews in their local area. Interviewing applicants in their local area is one of the things which makes the College unique.

We also feel that the interview meetings are a good opportunity for networking.

Responsibilities of the Committees

- **Chair Responsibilities**
- **Committee Member Responsibilities**



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Chair's responsibilities

- Arrange the interview meeting
- Notify the College of the date of the interviews
- Notify Committee members of the date, time and location of the meeting
- Notify each applicant of the date, time and location of their interview
- Review the applicant's biographical summary and surgical lists - Can ask committee member to do this
- Contact references (if preferred)
- Conduct the interviews of the applicants
- Complete and return to the College a report form for each applicant

Committee members responsibilities

- Assist the Chair with investigating applicants
- Participate in the interview process
- Helps committee determine recommendation for report form

Changes – where we stand

- **Committee Member Term Limits**
- **Boundary changes for some districts**



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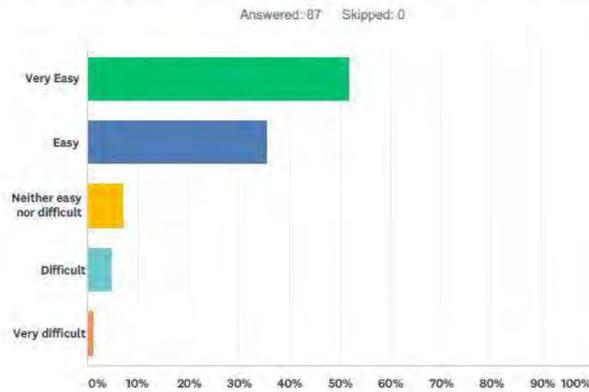
We implemented a number of changes to the committees last year.

One major change was that we began instituting term limits for committee members. We are continuing the process of instituting term limits by removing from committees all members who have served for more than ten years. New members will be appointed for a three year term, with no more than two reappointments.

Another change was that we made boundary changes for some districts. This year we reviewed those changes. Most of our boundary changes worked out well. A few required modification or additional changes this year. We will continue to monitor the boundary changes throughout the next year and, if necessary, make additional changes.

2018 Committee on Applicants Survey

Q1 Overall, how easy was it to access and use the materials sent to you as chair - the applicants' biographical summaries and surgical lists, instructions, and the contact information for your committee.

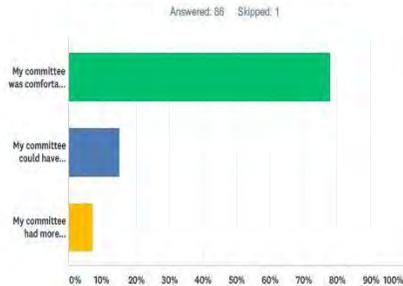


Earlier this year we sent a survey to the committee chairs - including some of you – seeking to discover how well all of the aspects of the interview process are working. Almost 70% of the chairs responded to the survey. I'd like to share some of the results with you.

We asked how easy was it to access and use the materials we sent. 87% of the respondents said it was easy or very easy to access the material. We did have a few respondents who had difficulty with the materials, mainly due to technical issues. Those issues should be corrected for this year.

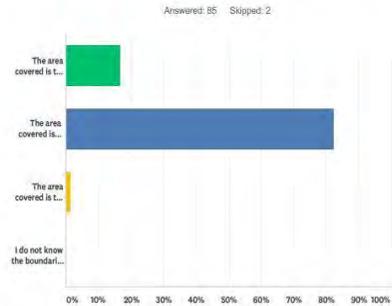
2018 Committee on Applicants Survey

Q5 How comfortable were you with the number of applicants that your committee was required to interview?



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
My committee was comfortable with the number of applicants to be interviewed	77.91% 67
My committee could have comfortably interviewed more applicants	15.12% 13
My committee had more applicants than one committee could comfortably interview	6.98% 6
TOTAL	86

Q6 How do you feel about the geographic area covered by your committee?



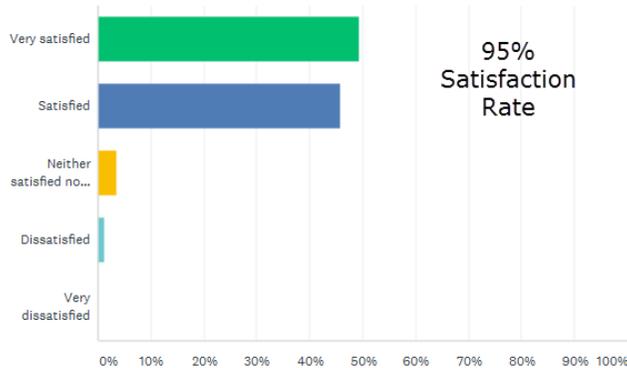
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
The area covered is too large	16.47% 14
The area covered is about right	82.35% 70
The area covered is too small	1.18% 1
I do not know the boundaries of the area covered	0.00% 0
TOTAL	85

Because of the changes we made to the geographic boundaries of some of the committees, we asked how comfortable you were with the number of applicants your committee was required to interview and with the geographical area covered by your committee. 93% of the respondent were comfortable with the number of applicants and over 98% were satisfied with the geographical areas.

The Committee on Applicants Survey

Please rate your overall satisfaction with this year's interview process.

Answered: 85 Skipped: 2



Overall, 95% of the respondents were satisfied or very satisfied with the interview process. We did receive some specific suggestions for further improvements and we are exploring possible further refinements to the process. While we were glad to see that 95% of the chairs were satisfied with the process, we would like it to be even better and we will continue to seek improvements.

2019 Fellowship Timeline

- **December 1, 2018**
Deadline for receipt of Fellowship applications
- **January 15**
Chairs provide meeting date to ACS
- **January through March**
Application information is provided to chairs
- **March through May**
Committees conduct interviews



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Next, I'll go over the timeline for applications.

December 1, 2018 - Application deadline for Fellowship in 2019 - As applications are received, our Credentials analysts process applications to make sure everything complete, request further information if necessary, and send reference requests to the applicants referees.

January 15 - Chairs to provide meeting date – In early January we will send you an email requesting the date of your committee's interview meeting. This email will give you an estimate of the number of applicants to be interviewed by your committee. When we receive the interview date, we will put it on the applicants' dashboard so that if they sign in to their ACS Profile, they will see the date. Our goal with this is to provide applicants with earlier notification of their meeting date so that they can arrange their schedules appropriately and, it is hoped, be less likely to miss their interview. Please be aware that the only thing we put on the applicants dashboard is the date of the meeting. You will still be responsible for notifying each individual applicant of the place and specific time of their interviews.

January through March - We send chairs information and materials necessary to arrange and conduct the interviews (more detail about what we provide in a minute). We receive a huge number of applications during the weeks right before the deadline and it does take a while to get everything processed, but we work to get the information to you as fast as possible.

March through May – Committees conduct interviews

2019 Fellowship Timeline

- **May 15**
Deadline for committees to submit their applicant reports to ACS
- **May through early June**
Recommended applicants submitted to Board of Regents for their approval
- **July 31**
Deadline for notifying applicants of the action taken on their applications
- **October – Clinical Congress**
Approved applicants become Fellows



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May 15 - due date for reports from committee

After you have conducted your interviews and reports have been received -

May & early June – The names of applicants recommended by the Committees are submitted to the Board of Regents for their approval. Applicant names are sent to the Regents in groups – as we get enough reports from committees to warrant sending a group of names to the Regents, we do so. As soon as applicants are approved by the Regents, they are notified of their acceptance and they become Initiates. This means that some applicants may receive their notification as early as mid-May.

July 31 – Our deadline to complete notifying the applicants – all applicants should be notified of the action taken on their application by this date. This may seem early but we need to complete the notifications as early as possible so that the applicants have time to prepare for Clinical Congress.

October, Clinical Congress – The last step in the process is in October at Clinical Congress when, at the Convocation, the Initiates become Fellows

Fellow Applications - Growth



Before we go on to discussing conducting the interviews, I'd like to share some data with you. The number of applications for Fellowship that we receive each year is continuing to grow.

This year we had a total of 2,038 applications for Fellowship. 1,392 of those were from the United States and Canada. Of the 1,392 US & Canada applicants, 1,359 were accepted into Fellowship this year. That's a 9% increase over 2017. We don't have final numbers for 2019 applications yet but, so far, it appears that the number will be higher than 2018.

As you know, all of the applicants do not become initiates. Generally about 3% of applicants are postponed to another year or have applications that are incomplete or are not yet eligible to apply.

The numbers on your screen are for the US and Canadian initiates only. The total number of accepted applicants continues to grow for both domestic and international applications.

In 2016 we had 1823 applicants who became Fellows,

In 2017, it was 1827

This year, 2018, we had a record number of applicants who became Fellows – 1972 (1359 domestic, 671 international).

As the number of applicants grows, the process of getting them all interviewed also grows.

Conducting the Interviews



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As our credentials analysts complete the processing of each committee's applicants, information will be sent to the chairs of the committees (from late January through March). Each Chair is sent an email which includes an Excel spreadsheet and a PDF document. The information provided to the chair will include:

- A list of the names and contact information for the applicants who are to be interviewed
- A biographical summary for each applicant
- A PDF document with a link to each applicant's surgical list
- Interview Guidelines
- The Report Form

We will also include contact information for your committee members.

Each member of your committee will also be sent the biographical summaries and the surgical lists for the applicants.

Conducting the Interviews

Applicant's Biographical Information

FACS Applicant		ID# 111111 Northern Florida Credentials 4 06/16/2017	
Personal Information			
Address	123 Anywhere St	State/Province	FL
City	Tampa	Zip/Postal Code	33167
Phone	(727) 767-4170	Country	United States
Birthdate	07/05/1973	Email	FACS@applicant.edu
	Gender	Male	
Licensure			
Name of State/Province	License	License Number	Original Issuance Date
FL	Full	ME12345	07/10/2007
GA	Full	78961	03/04/2011
Certification			
Certified By	Certifying Board	Certificate #	Date
American Specialty Boards	Surgery	57841	01/30/2013
American Specialty Boards	Pediatric Surgery (ABS)	001283	03/12/2014
Surgical Practice Information			
Type of Practice:	Full-time Academic		
Composition of Surgical Practice:			
Percent	Specialty		
100	Pediatric Surgery		



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We will provide you with a biographical summary for each applicant. This summary is created using the information provided by the applicant on their application.

This summary includes information about the applicant's certification, surgical practice, medical training, current and past hospital appointments, professional activities, publications, and other pertinent information.

Conducting the Interviews

References

Name/Specialty	Contact	City	State	Chief?
Marcus Jones, MD FACS General Surgery	208 111-2222 mjonesn@gmail.com	Coeur D Alene	ID	
Timothy T. Jones, MD FACS General Surgery	208 111-2222 TJones@gmail.com	Coeur D Alene	ID	
Edward G. Jones, MD FACS General Surgery	208 111-2222 dejones@gmail.com	Coeur D Alene	ID	Chief
Katelyn Jones, MD FACS Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	509 111-2222 kjones@abcde.com	Spokane Valley	WA	
Olivia Jones, MD FACS Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery	509 111-2222 Jones @abcde.com	Spokane	WA	



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The names of the references and their contact information are listed on the biographical summary.

We require that the applicant provide the names of five references:

These references must be Fellows of the College

Two should practice in the applicant's specialty

At least three should practice in the same geographic location as the applicant

Must not be family members

Should be aware of the applicant's current practice

ACS staff will ensure the references listed meet this criteria and we will send a reference request to each referee. However, due to confidentiality rules, the ACS cannot provide the information received from the references to the committee. It is safe to assume that the references listed on the biographical forms have been contacted by the College and returned the reference form. We encourage you to contact the references if you need more information or verification. If, after we receive responses from the references, we feel that the you should contact a specific reference, we will notify you of the reference's name.

Conducting the Interviews

Surgical Lists



First Name	Last Name	ACS Spec ID Name	Email 1	Web URL
John	Baker	General Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Brian	Baker	Otolaryngology	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Rachael	Baker	General Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Lei	Baker	General Surgery Cardiothoracic	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
David	Baker	Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Jeffrey	Baker	Urological Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Stephen	Baker	General Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id
Emily	Baker	Vascular Surgery	email@abc1.com	https://web4.facs.org/ebusiness/acs/acsattachmentdownload.aspx?id



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All applicants are required to provide a surgical list to the Chicago office.

ACS will provide the committee with a PDF document which includes a link to each applicant's surgical list. To access each list, you will click on the link. You will be required to login to the ACS website only once to be able to access all of the lists.

The requirements for the surgical list are that it must:

- It must cover a recent twelve-month period (i.e., within the last two years)
- It must not contain confidential patient information (must be HIPPA compliant)
- It should contain a description of the procedure (NOT a list of codes only) and the number performed for each procedure
- It may be on forms supplied by the College, on forms generated by the applicant, or may be a Board list
- Board lists are acceptable as long as they meet the above criteria – that is within the last two years, HIPPA compliant, and contain a description of the procedures and the number performed

The College does not provide parameters for case volume; the Committee should evaluate the case volume and variety based on community standards for that specialty and characteristics of the applicant's practice (solo, group, hospital-based, office-based).

Conducting the Interviews

After you receive the applicant information:

- **Prepare for the interviews**
 - **Notify committee members of date, place, time**
 - **Notify applicants of date, place, & time**
 - **Review applicants' information**
- **Conduct the interviews**
- **Submit the reports**



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There are three things that need to be done after you receive the information from us: prepare for the interviews, conduct the interviews and submit the reports.

To prepare for the interviews, you will need to notify the committee members of the date, time and location of the meeting. As mentioned, we are sending your committee members the applicant's biographical summaries and links to surgical lists but you will need to notify them of the details of the interview meeting.

You will also need to notify each applicant of the date, time and location of their interview - Even though we are putting the dates of the interviews on the applicants' profiles, we don't provide them with the details. You will need to provide them with those details – the location and time of their specific interview.

Next, the applicants' information needs to be reviewed, either by you or by a member of your committee.

Conducting the Interviews

Interview Guidelines

- **All applicants must be interviewed**
- **In-person interview preferred**
- **Length of interview**
- **Conflict of interest**
- **If an applicant is unable to attend their scheduled interview**



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The American College of Surgeons requires that all applicants for Fellowship be interviewed. An in-person interview is preferred, but telephone or Skype interviews are acceptable. The applicant should be interviewed by at least two committee members.

The length of each interview is determined by the committee and is usually based on the individual applicant and their practice. Typically, the interviews last about 15 – 20 minutes each.

If a committee member has a conflict of interest with an applicant or is related to an applicant, that committee member should recuse themselves from the interview for that applicant.

If an applicant is unable to attend their scheduled interview, we request that if at all possible you interview that applicant separately. You do not have to arrange for your entire committee to meet again to accommodate these applicants, they can be interviewed by as few as two committee members. Also, keep in mind that interviews can be via Skype or telephone.

Conducting the Interviews

CoA Report Form

fellows AMERICAN COLLEGE OF SURGEONS
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Instructions: Download form to your computer. For multiple choice questions, click to select response. For text fields, click in the field, and then type your response.

Email each Report to: **Candace Church** with the applicant's last name and first initial as the file name. For example, "Johnson, F – ACS Report Form"

EACH APPLICANT'S REPORT MUST BE SAVED SEPARATELY.

Report of the Committee on Applicants

Applicant's Name:
City/State:

1. Applicant's surgical experience:

Yes No Is the surgical list volume acceptable?
 Yes No Is the surgical list variety adequate for the designated specialty?
 Yes No Are the procedures within the scope of practice for the applicant's specialty and training?

Comments:

2. Applicant's ability and judgement:

Yes No Were any deficiencies discovered regarding the applicant's surgical ability and judgement?
 Yes No Did the applicant respond satisfactorily to questions regarding their general clinical knowledge and experience?

Comments:



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We provide a report form which you will need to fill out and submit for each applicant. It is a fillable form – for multiple choice questions, you click to select your response, for the Comments sections, you click in the field and type your response.

Remember to include the applicant's name on the report and, if the applicant's current address is different than the one provided on the biographical summary, please provide the new address.

The form includes questions to help you evaluate the applicant – for example, questions about the applicant's surgical ability, judgement, and professional standing – so that you may determine your committee's recommendation as to whether or not the applicant is eligible for Fellowship.

The form is being updated for this year. We will provide the new form to you.

Conducting the Interviews

CoA Report Form continued...

The questions below are intended to assess quality improvement activities and are not meant to be asked or answered verbatim, but are to generate conversation.

- What quality improvement activities does the applicant participate in?
- How does the applicant fulfill regulatory requirements?
- What activities does the applicant participate in to self-evaluate and improve care?
- Does the applicant mentor or coach less experienced surgeons?
- Does the applicant make use of (or report to) database or registry program (such as NSQIP, National Cancer Database, etc.)? If so, which one/s?
- Does the applicant (or the applicant's hospital) participate in a quality improvement collaborative?
- What does the applicant do to foster quality improvement in his or her practice?

How do you rate the applicant's responses to the above questions?

Excellent Good Satisfactory Marginal Not Satisfactory

Comments:



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This is a section that is a recent addition to the forms. These questions are designed to assess the applicant's quality improvement activities. They are not meant to be asked or answered verbatim, but are to generate conversation. Your overall assessment of the applicant's responses is to be indicated at the bottom of the section.

Conducting the interviews

7. Does this Committee consider this applicant eligible for Fellowship?

Yes No Refer decision to Board of Regents

*If no, please provide the **FACTS** and **SOURCES** supporting this recommendation and submit a separate document with this report.*

Interview Information

Date of Interview _____

- Applicant interviewed in person
- Applicant interviewed via telephone/Skype
- Applicant did not appear for interview

Committee Name & District #:

Name of Chair:

Members present at interview:



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The most important question on the form is this one: Does this Committee consider this applicant eligible for Fellowship? This is where you indicate your committee's recommendation as to the applicant's eligibility for Fellowship. Be aware that the committee does not make the final decision, you make a recommendation, the final decision is made by the Board of Regents. If your committee responds yes, you consider the applicant eligible for Fellowship, and if everything else is complete in the application, the applicant's name will be sent to the Board of Regents for their approval.

If your committee's response is no, you do not consider the applicant eligible for Fellowship or if you refer the decision to the Board of Regents, you need to provide a detailed reason for that recommendation, including all of the facts that were considered before making the decision. Please do not select "no" or "refer to Regents" without providing a written explanation.

Each applicant that the committee does not recommend for Fellowship or refers to the Regents is presented to the Applicant Review Committee at ACS. The ARC will review the facts provided by the committee, as well as the applicant's surgical list, references, and other information, and, based on this review, will make a recommendation to the Board of Regents. If there are discrepancies between the recommendation made by the ARC and your committee's recommendation, you will be notified before the applicant is notified.

Lastly, the chair should sign the report, list the committee members who were present at the interview. Then – the most important part – submit the form to ACS electronically.

Next Steps

- **Deadline May 15**
 - Return to Candace Church via email
 - Any comments should be typed
 - Send a separate report for each applicant
 - Be sure to include names of interviewing members



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Next, you submit the report form to ACS.

One more important thing about the reports – we need to be able to read them. Some chairs print the forms out and fill them in by hand. It's okay to mark the check boxes by hand but anything in the comments should be typed. If you handwrite anything in the comments section, then also attach a separate page with the information typed.

Reports should be returned to me via email. My email address is on the bottom of the report form. Please send a report for each applicant, if they were NOT interviewed, you can indicate that on the form.

Deadline – May 15.

If you cannot meet that deadline, contact me to let me know and to let me know when we will be receiving your reports.

Next Steps

Please provide your feedback to:
Candace Church
cchurch@facs.org



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We ask that you let us know how the process is working for you. We need your feedback. Please send an email letting me know everything, good or bad, that you might have to say about our procedures.

Did everything work perfectly? Let us know. Are there changes you feel might be helpful to your committee? Let us know.

Each year, after the interviews have been completed and before we restructure the committees for the following next year, we review everything you have to tell us. Our primary goal is to make the entire process work better and more smoothly for the committees and the applicants. Your input can help us achieve this goal.

Questions?

STAFF CONTACTS

- **Candace Church** – Supervisor, Committee on Applicants
Email: cchurch@facs.org
Telephone: (312) 202-5274
- **Karen M. Freeman, FACHE, CAE** – Manager, Domestic and International Credentials
Email: kfreeman@facs.org
Telephone: (312) 202-5284
- **Credentials General Questions and Information**
Email: facsapplications@facs.org
Telephone: (800) 293-9623



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If you have questions at any time, please feel free to contact us at the email addresses or telephone numbers listed above.

Are there any questions?

A video of this webinar as well as a PDF version will be available on our website within the next two weeks. Thank all of you very much for serving as chairs of our committees. Your work is very helpful and very much appreciated. Thank you also for taking the time to attend our webinar.