

Fellowship Requirements

United States and Canada

The American College of Surgeons admits to its Fellowship only those surgeons whose professional activity is devoted to surgical practice and who agree without compromise to practice by the professional and ethical standards of the College.

The standards of practice established and demanded by the American College of Surgeons are contained in the Fellowship Pledge, Statements on Principles, and the Code of Conduct. All Fellows of the College and applicants for Fellowship are expected to adhere to these standards.

Surgeons voluntarily submit applications for Fellowship. In so doing, they are inviting an evaluation of their practice by their peers.

In evaluating the eligibility of applicants for Fellowship, the College investigates each applicant's surgical practice. Applicants for Fellowship are required to provide to the appointed committees of the College all information deemed necessary for the review and evaluation of their surgical practice.

Attainment of board certification in the appropriate surgical specialty does not, in and of itself, entitle a surgeon to Fellowship.

Fellowship Requirements

The College has designated December 1 of each year as the final date for acceptance of these applications. The completed applications (new or continuing) must be on file in the Division of Member Services in Chicago by this date. Only completed applications from surgeons who fulfill the following requirements will be considered for entry into Fellowship in October of the following year.

Applicants for Fellowship in the American College of Surgeons are required to have the following qualifications:

- Graduation from a medical school acceptable to the American College of Surgeons
- Certification which is appropriate to the applicant's specialty practice by an American Surgical Specialty Board which is a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, or an American Osteopathic Surgical Specialty Board, or an appropriate specialty certification by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.
- A full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in the respective state or province with no reportable action pending which could adversely affect the status of that licensure.
- One year of surgical practice after the completion of all formal training is required.
- A current appointment on the surgical staff of the applicant's primary hospital with no reportable action pending that could adversely affect staff privileges at that or any other health care facility.

- A current surgical practice that establishes the applicant as a specialist in surgery. All applicants are expected to be physicians who have primary independent responsibility for the surgical treatment of patients.
- Ethical fitness as well as professional proficiency. This determination is based upon information obtained from Fellows who were consulted as references and from other sources.
- Interest in pursuing professional excellence both as an individual surgeon and a member of the surgical community. Such interest may be evidenced by membership in local, regional, and national surgical societies; participation in teaching programs and on hospital committees; continuing medical education through attendance at professional meetings, courses, and seminars.
- The Member Services Liaison Committee determines whether the requirements for Fellowship are satisfied and may, at its discretion; defer any application until such requirements are met.
- The Board of Regents makes the final decision regarding the applicant's eligibility for Fellowship.
- The Board of Regents may, at any time, modify the requirements for Fellowship.

Process of Applying for Fellowship

All properly submitted and accepted applications for Fellowship are evaluated on a one-year cycle. The closing date for receiving completed applications is December 31 of each year.

- Surgeons who fulfill all of the requirements may submit an online application for Fellowship.
- A completed online application is required from each applicant. In addition to providing information regarding their surgical training and practice, applicants are requested to:
 - Abide by the bylaws, rules and regulations of the College and the Fellowship Pledge
 - Accept an Authorization to Release Information for hospital, medical organization, and others to release information deemed by the College to be material to its evaluation of the applicant.
 - Furnish as references the names of five Fellows of the College who can provide an evaluation based on their actual knowledge of your surgical practice. The applicant is to obtain verbal assurance from these Fellows of their willingness to serve as references.
- Each Fellow named as a reference will be asked by the College to complete a form about the applicant's qualifications as a surgeon, as well as the applicant's professional and ethical standing in the community. The chief of surgery at each applicant's designated primary hospital(s) will be requested to provide a letter of reference. The College may also consult others.

- Applicants are expected to compile and submit the most recent twelve-month summary listing of all surgical procedures they have performed after completion of all formal training. The appropriate forms and instructions will be provided. This surgical list is intended to serve as an index to the volume, variety, and character of an applicant's surgical experience.
- Applicants may be requested to present detailed case reports and related information as additional evidence of their professional proficiency.

Evaluation of Applicants for Fellowship

The evaluation of an applicant for Fellowship is based on information relating to the applicant's surgical judgment and experience, professional competence, ethical conduct, and professional standing in the local community. Such information is obtained from appointed College committees, references named by the applicant, and others.

- The College Credentials Division reviews each application for completeness and prepares a summary of the biographical information and other pertinent information for applicant review and evaluation by the appointed Committee on Applicants.
- The Committee on Applicants interviews each applicant and reports its findings regarding the applicant's eligibility for Fellowship to the Credential Division.
- The College Credentials Division appraises information and recommendations from all sources relating to Fellowship applications and make recommendations to the Board of Regents. The Applicant Review Committee (ARC) evaluates unusual practice situations to determine if the requirements for Fellowship have been met and recommends an action to the Board of Regents.
- After review and evaluation of all information, the Board of Regents makes one of three decisions:
 - Approved for Fellowship—In order to attain Fellowship, each applicant must receive the approval of three-fourths of the Board of Regents.
 - Postponed (for one or two years)—an applicant's postponement is not considered a denial of the application. It is designed to give the applicant an opportunity to acquire further knowledge or additional experience or to develop professionally. It also provides the College with an additional period for observation, investigation, and further evaluation of the applicant's eligibility for Fellowship. '
 - Denial of Application
 - Following a denial of an application, the applicant may submit a new application after a waiting period of three years.
 - Applicants who have received a denial of their application may request an appeal. To initiate an appeal, the applicant must submit a written request to the Director of the Division of Member Services. Appeals are heard under the direction of the Board of Regents.

- The Board of Regents may reverse a denial of an application at its discretion. However, the final decision of the Board of Regents, following an appeal, is binding.
- No action is taken when an application is determined by the College's Division of Member Services to be incomplete. Incomplete applications are deferred for consideration to the following year.
- Successful applicants (Initiates) are admitted into Fellowship during the Convocation Ceremony at the College's Clinical Congress in October of each year. Fellowship is conferred by the President of the College.
 - Initiates are notified by email of their acceptance prior to August 1.
 - Between the date of the acceptance notification letter and the Convocation, Initiates must notify the Division of Member Services of any changes in their location, practice situation, type of practice or hospital privileges since such changes may affect their admission into Fellowship.
- The College provides information concerning the status of an application for Fellowship only to the applicant or those individuals involved in the College's evaluation of the application.

The regulations for admission into Fellowship have been formulated by the Board of Regents and apply uniformly to all applicants. No other means of admission is available.

Fees

Application Fee - The fee must accompany every application for Fellowship and is paid at the time the application is submitted. The fee covers a portion of the cost of reviewing and processing the application and is not refundable. No application will be processed without the fee.

Initiate Fee - A statement for the Initiate Fee is sent to the applicants who are notified of their Initiate status. If this fee is not received at the College by September 1 of the appropriate year, the Initiate will not be awarded Fellowship in the College.

Annual Dues - Upon the recommendation of the Board of Governors, the Board of Regents determines the amount of annual dues.