

# Perceptions for Academic Success: Assessing Prior Academic, Personal and Learning Factors for Educational Success at Emory School of Medicine

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## Abstract

Emory University School of Medicine (EUSOM) has six health professions programs under its umbrella (Doctor of Medicine, Doctor of Physical Therapy, Physician Assistant, Anesthesiology Assistant, Genetics Counseling, and Medical Imaging). Each program has individual resources for academic support, remediation, and wellness. We hypothesize that the resources health professions students perceive as necessary for their academic success is similar across programs. We will administer an on-line survey to incoming, first year health professions students at EUSOM exploring the influences educational, personal, and social resources have had on their previous academic success. The results of this needs assessment survey will help inform the creation of a centralized academic success center at EUSOM with common resources for learners across all health professions programs.

## Background & Purpose

Succeeding in health professions programs can be quite challenging as students are required to learn a high volume of information, develop adaptable problem-solving skills, and high-level reflective thinking processes. It is essential for health professions programs to have tailored support strategies to promote academic success. Health professions students under the umbrella of Emory University School of Medicine regularly require academic and social support. Despite common academic needs, EUSOM does not currently have a centralized support or remediation process for students. The purpose of this study is to identify resources first year health professions students across programs perceive as necessary for their academic success. Our primary objective is to better understand common areas of need for a future centralized student support center with educational and wellness resources for students enrolled in EUSOM health professions programs.

## Methods

This study is a needs assessment conducted via an online survey. The survey is adapted from an academic needs survey the Emory Physician Assistant program used to identify student perceptions of academic influences that contributed to their past educational success. The Emory School of Medicine Academic Needs and Learning Assessment survey was proposed to all Program Directors within the School of Medicine as a method to better understand academic needs of the entire student body, and as a step towards standardizing and/or pooling resources. After review by each Program Director, the survey questions were adopted, and the study submitted to the IRB under an exempt status. The survey will be distributed by Qualtrics to new matriculants within the first semester of their Emory health professions education by an identified program stakeholder.

Responses will be collected anonymously. The study investigators are the only collectors of survey responses. The data collected is de-identified. Participants will be recruited via email. Written informed consent will be obtained electronically, on the first page of the survey prior to the start of survey questions. Basic demographic information will be collected including gender, age range, race/ethnicity, and type of health professions program. Questions will cover the topics of academic resources, social support resources, and learning environments that have been beneficial to students in the past. It will take respondents approximately 10 minutes to complete the survey.

Survey results will be kept confidential by enabling Secure Sockets Layer (SSL) encryption and disabling IP address tracking. Aggregate data will be shared with Emory School of Medicine education leaders. The research design does not require subjects to be deceived.

## Results

Data and results are currently pending. We expect to identify common themes of academic, personal, and social resources and influential learning environments that contributed to past educational success among the incoming School of Medicine health professions student body. We will also explore similarities and difference of themes by program and demographic that may allow the Emory health professions leadership to both target resources to higher needs students but also to unify resources of academic assistance across programs.

## Conclusion

Identifying the common academic, social, and personal needs of health professions students at Emory University School of Medicine will allow for pooling of resources and creation of a centralized academic support center.

## References

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