

# **Application Guidelines for Fellow of the American College of Radiology**

**Committee on Fellowship Credentials  
Revised December 2020**

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## I. PREAMBLE

Fellowship is one of the most prestigious formal recognitions available to long-time ACR members. It symbolizes professionalism and exceptional achievement in the fields of diagnostic radiology, interventional radiology, nuclear medicine, radiation oncology, and/or medical physics. ACR Fellows have distinguished themselves through one or more domains: (1) service to the ACR and/or organized radiology/medicine, (2) outstanding teaching of radiology, and/or (3) significant scientific or clinical research in radiology and/or significant contributions to the literature. To date, ACR Fellowship has been bestowed on approximately 10% of active ACR members.

Nominations for ACR Fellowship may be initiated by one or more current Fellow(s) or by a chapter for one of its members. Members who qualify for Fellowship based on the number of years of membership may apply independently; however, chapter approval is required for a successful application.

These guidelines are provided to members and chapters to ensure consistency in the nomination process, and are applied by the Committee on Fellowship Credentials to ensure consistency in the evaluation process. The Committee performs its annual evaluation process in a manner designed to preserve the distinct honor associated with Fellowship. The Committee considers each nominee's cumulative body of work and contributions in the domains of service, teaching, and/or research. To ensure the best possible outcome, chapters and nominees should provide complete documentation of achievements in the applicable domain(s) commensurate with the category (years of membership). The [Nomination Criteria](#) for ACR Fellowship relates achievements within each domain to the appropriate years of membership category. Active duty military ACR members should refer to the [Military Nomination Criteria](#) for ACR Fellowship chart. Endorsement letters (samples below) should highlight the specific achievements within those domains.

## II. PURPOSE

In accordance with the ACR Bylaws and the 2015 Digest of Council Actions regarding professionalism, these guidelines are designed to help chapter officers and ACR members understand and comply with the ACR Fellowship nomination process. Specifically, they outline the administrative policies and procedures related to: (1) Eligibility, (2) Membership Status, (3) Criteria for Nomination: Years of Membership Category, (4) Criteria for Nomination: Domains, (5) Criteria for Nomination: Professionalism (6) Timelines & Deadlines, (7) The Nomination Packet, (8) The Nomination Process & Chapter Roles, and (9) Letters.

## III. POLICIES & PROCEDURES

### (1) Eligibility

In accordance with ACR Bylaws and compliance with the 2015 Digest of Council Actions regarding professionalism, Article II, Section I, a candidate for Fellowship is, *"A member in good standing of the College who has evidenced significant accomplishments in service, research, or teaching may be elected a Fellow by the BOC."*

- Physician Member or Member in Physics:

- Completion of ten (10) years as a Physician Member or a Member in Physics of the ACR and a Chapter.
- When there has been a lapse in ACR membership, the cumulative years of membership are still quantified to meet the minimum eligibility of ten (10) years of post-training membership for an FACR application.
- Associate Member or Associate Member in Physics:
  - Completion of twenty (20) years as an Associate Member or an Associate Member in Physics of the ACR and a Chapter.
- Military Service or Public Health Service:
  - A Member who is serving, or has previously served, in the military or public health service within the last ten (10) years may be exempted from the Chapter membership requirement.
- International Member:
  - A Member who previously practiced radiology in the United States or Canada and who is currently certified by the American Board of Radiology (ABR), the American Osteopathic Board of Radiology (AOBR), the American Board of Nuclear Medicine (ABNM), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC), and/or the College des medecins du Quebec (CMQ).
  - A Member who previously practiced medical physics in the United States or Canada and is currently certified (or equivalent) in medical physics or a related field by the ABR or the Canadian equivalent.
  - An International Member must also provide the required endorsement letters. See section 8 for additional information.
- Retired Member:
  - Retired members are not eligible to apply. In accordance with the ACR Bylaws, “*Members who are fully retired may be eligible to be elected as Fellow Emeriti under extraordinary circumstances.*” If the requirement for “extraordinary circumstances” is met, an online application must be submitted for consideration.

## (2) Membership Status:

- Qualifying membership begins in the year after completion of training, except when a member-in-training declines membership by failing to pay the first dues invoice, by failing to join a local chapter when required, or by declining membership in writing.
- For members joining at any other time immediately after completion of training, membership begins in the year in which the member actually joins the ACR. Note: time as a member-in-training does **not count** toward the ten (10) years requirement.
- The ten (10) years of ACR membership requirement is **not restricted** to the ten (10) years immediately preceding the nomination.
- Please email [FACR@acr.org](mailto:FACR@acr.org) for confirmation of **Years of ACR Membership**, particularly if there has been a lapse in membership and/or uncertainty as to how to calculate the total number of years.

## (3) Criteria for Nomination: Years of Membership Categories

- Nominees for Fellowship must fulfill criteria under a **category** based on years of membership:
  - **10-11 Years: Extraordinary**  
For this level, very strong endorsement letters supporting the nominee’s extraordinary accomplishments and credentials are essential.
  - **12-14 Years: Outstanding**

- Endorsements should be strong, highlighting specific achievements.
- **15-17 Years: Exemplary**  
The criteria are more rigorous for those applying at this level compared to those at 18-19 years; endorsements should take this into account.
- **18-19 Years: Commendable**  
Endorsement letters should address appropriate specific achievements.
- **20 or More Years: Above and Beyond**  
Longstanding record of service and contributions above and beyond daily practice; endorsements should explain how the nominee meets the criteria.

#### (4) Criteria for Nomination: Domains

- Nominees for Fellowship must fulfill criteria under **one or more domains**:
  - **Service** to the ACR at national or chapter level(s) and/or organized radiology/medicine at national, regional, state, or local levels;
  - Outstanding **teaching** of diagnostic radiology, interventional radiology, nuclear medicine, radiation oncology, and/or medical physics;
  - Significant **scientific or clinical research** in radiology or significant contributions to the literature.
- While it is not necessary to have qualifications in all domains, nominees are encouraged to list all relevant activities for committee evaluation.
- Meeting these criteria does not guarantee that a nominee will be granted Fellowship.
- Awards earned while on current or prior active duty military service. Please reference Military Nomination Criteria for ACR Fellowship chart.

#### (5) Criteria for Nomination: Professionalism

- Definition: Professionalism represents a duty to those we serve, our patients; a duty to those at whose pleasure we serve, our society; and a duty to those with whom we serve, our colleagues and thus our profession itself (Digest of Council Actions; 2015; Res. 13).
- Professionalism is a required component of the application whereby a nominee provides evidence of having demonstrated behavior reflective of a professional of radiology. Characteristics include ethical behavior, altruistic attitude, responsible conduct, intellectual development, skills and knowledge competence, demonstrating respect for self and others, empathy, compassion for others, appropriate response to patients and family members, integrity, and demonstrating a calm and compassionate demeanor.
- All nominees will attest to these areas within the Code of Ethics section of the application. Fellows endorsing your application will also be required to illustrate your professionalism in their letters of endorsement.

#### (6) Timelines & Deadlines

- **Before June 30:** Please check with specific chapter regarding its deadline for submission of Fellow nominations. A chapter requires time to review and act on nominations before the June 30 ACR deadline.
- **June 30:** Hard deadline for ACR receipt of Fellow nominations **from chapters** for induction at next ACR meeting (e.g.,

receipt by June 30, 2020 for induction in May 2021).

- ***Nominations (a) not approved by chapters or (b) not submitted prior to the deadline will not be eligible for consideration by the Committee.***
- **July-October:** Committee conducts its annual evaluation process and makes recommendations to BOC.
- **November-December:** Nominees receive official notification from ACR Office.
- **May:** New Fellows are inducted at a special ceremony (“Convocation”) during the annual ACR meeting ACR2020.
  - Inductees must be present at Convocation to receive Fellowship.
  - Inductees have up to three (3) years to participate in a Convocation ceremony or lose eligibility for Fellowship.
- Inductees cannot use FACR in their appellations until formally inducted in a Convocation ceremony.
  - The [Pathway to FACR](#) document contains an outline of the application process
  - Chapter [Deadlines](#) for FACR Application Submission provides deadlines for initial review (varies Feb-June, confirm your deadline).

## (7) The Nomination Packet

- Complete an online [application](#).
  - ACR does not accept paper applications. Any member who has a limiting condition that requires assistance in completing the application online should contact [FACR@acr.org](mailto:FACR@acr.org) for assistance.
- Check applicable experience as outlined in the [Nomination Criteria](#) chart.
  - Although one nomination criterion meets minimum eligibility to apply, only one accomplishment, in and of itself, may not yield approval to become a Fellow.
- Active duty military members should reference the [Military Nomination Criteria](#) chart for their branch of service.
- Attest to professionalism among other significant areas in the Code of Ethics section within the application.
- Provide richly-detailed and complete documentation of achievements in **one or more** domain(s) commensurate with years of membership category.
- Update curriculum vitae (CV).
- Update list(s) of presentations and/or publications.
- Document any unusual circumstances that should be considered by the chapter and Committee.
- Format attachment(s) in PDF and upload under appropriate tabs.
- Request and receive a minimum of two (2), maximum of four (4) letters of endorsement from current ACR Fellows:
  - At least two letters from current Fellows not in practice with nominee or one letter from a current ACR Fellow in practice with nominee and at least one letter from a current Fellow not in practice with nominee,
  - Must be typed and submitted in PDF format.
  - Should explicitly describe how nominee fulfills domain criteria matching appropriate years of membership category.
- Proofread application to assure the application is complete. Incomplete fields will be highlighted in red.
- Once the application has been submitted to the chapter or ACR, it is considered **FINAL** and no changes can be made.

## (8) The Nomination Process & Chapter Roles

Nominations for ACR Fellowship may be initiated by one or more current Fellow(s) or by a chapter for one of its members; members who qualify for Fellowship based on the number of years of membership may apply on their own, however, chapter approval is required for a successful application.

- The chapter determines whether to approve the applicant as a “**Chapter Nominee**” or to “**Concur with Fellows**”
  - Committee gives extra weight to “**Chapter Nominee**” approvals
  - If a Chapter Officer (e.g. President, Secretary, Fellowship Chair) provides an endorsement letter for the applicant; that officer is not be eligible to vote for that nominee (either the officer writes an endorsement letter or approves the applicant, not both).
  - If applicant is **Not Approved**, the chapter provides a detailed letter of explanation to ([FACR@acr.org](mailto:FACR@acr.org)) and indicates whether nominee is eligible to reapply at a later date. The chapter is expected to notify the applicant in such cases.
  - If a nominee transfers to another chapter between the time of nomination and BOC action, nomination must be referred to new chapter **for concurrence** prior to a decision.
- All applications, including those not approved by the chapter, must be submitted to the ACR. The applications **not approved** by the chapter, the chapter must notify the applicant of its decision and should upload a letter of explanation addressed to the Chair of the Committee; however, the Committee cannot override the chapter’s decision.

## (9) Letters

- **Endorsement Letters** must be submitted by **at least two but no more than four** current ACR Fellows; Fellows outside the nominee’s chapter may write the letters. Only one letter may be submitted by a current Fellow with whom the candidate practices or is employed by the same entity.
- Regarding nominees in active military service or the Public Health Service:
  - If not a member of a chapter, nomination shall be submitted directly to the Committee for consideration.
  - Fellows outside military/US Public Health Service and/or residing in another state may submit endorsement letters for the applicant.
  - Include awards as outlined in Nomination Criteria for Military

### Letters SHOULD:

- Be **specific**. A compelling letter highlights specific achievements as known by the writer. Refer to the Sample Letters below for guidance.
- **Support** applicant by referencing the appropriate years of ACR membership and pointing out how the nominee fulfills **one or more** of the domains; specific examples carry greater influence.

- Provide **substantive** and **candid** discussion of the nominee's qualifications.
- Address the applicant's professionalism as defined by the 2015 Digest of Council Actions:
  - Professionalism represents a duty to those we serve, our patients; a duty to those at whose pleasure we serve, our society; and a duty to those with whom we serve, our colleagues and thus our profession itself (Digest of Council Actions; 2015; Res. 13).
- **Highlight** significant information on the candidate's CV as understood by the author of the letter. For example, the candidate's CV may state that the individual chaired a committee for a charitable organization. The author may know the influence of the organization and the effect that the nominee's efforts had on the community. Similarly when Dr. Doe was Chair of Radiology at ..., she improved the standards of the Department, raising the profile of radiology among other services by ...; or her scientific publications include seminal articles which have led to ....

**Letters SHOULD  
NOT:**

- Be **generic**. "I have known the nominee for many years" or "The nominee has been a worthy member of the ACR and should be an ACR Fellow" or "Great guy!"
- Simply **reiterate** the information in the nominee's CV.

**ENDORSEMENT SAMPLE ONE:**

Committee on Fellowship Credentials  
American College of Radiology  
1891 Preston White Drive  
Reston, VA 20191

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This letter supports the nomination of Dr. John Doe for the honor of Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. I have known Dr. Doe for approximately XX years, beginning when ...

Dr. Doe has been a member of the ACR since XXXX, and is an excellent clinical radiologist with high moral and ethical standards. Dr. Doe is being nominated in the XX-XX Years of Membership Category. Having reviewed the criteria for this Category, I suggest he is worthy of Fellowship for the following reasons:

1. Service Domain – Dr. Doe has held several officer position including Secretary and Fellowship Chair in our local and state

radiological societies and is President-elect of his regional subspecialty society. He has served as a Councilor for the past five years and earlier as an Alternate Councilor to the ACR. He is currently President of the local medical society.

2. Teaching Domain – he has been a willing and popular teacher while in private practice and on a local faculty. Two years ago, he won the Teacher of the Year Award from XX University.

Regarding professionalism, Dr. John Doe exemplifies attributes of professionalism as demonstrated by.....

I highly recommend Dr. John Doe for Fellow of the American College of Radiology.

Sincerely,  
Jane Jones, PhD, FACR

ENDORSEMENT SAMPLE TWO:

Committee on Fellowship Credentials  
American College of Radiology  
1891 Preston White Drive  
Reston, VA 20191

Dear Sir/Madam:

This letter serves as my endorsement of **Jane Doe, MD** for Fellowship in the American College of Radiology. Dr. Doe has been a member of the ACR since XXXX, and is being nominated in the XX-XX Years of Membership Category. I have known Dr. Doe since XXXX and have been very pleased to observe her many accomplishments since that time. I believe Dr. Doe fulfills all criteria for FACR for the following reasons:

First, Dr. Doe has provided significant service to organized medicine at both the national, state, and local levels. In regard to national organizations, she has served on several committees of the RSNA. At the state level, she has been actively involved in the state radiological society serving both on the legislative and standards committees.

Second, Dr. Doe has performed outstanding service as a teacher of radiology. She is noted for her teaching skills and her devotion and enthusiasm to the medical students. She has been actively involved in education throughout her career, both during her appointment at XX University Hospital where she participated in seminars and medical school radiology clerkships and, more recently, in her position at XX Hospital where she has been leader in all levels of education for residents and medical students.



Third, Dr. Doe has contributed significant clinical research to the field of radiology and has made important contributions to literature. She has published over XX original manuscripts in peer-refereed journals. She has also co-edited a major textbook.

Fourth, regarding professionalism, Dr. Jane Doe exemplifies attributes of professionalism as demonstrated by.....

I am confident that Dr. Doe will continue to be a leader in the field of radiology and will contribute significantly to the ACR's mission. I endorse her nomination with great enthusiasm.

Sincerely,  
John Smith, MD, FACR

#### IV. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- Q.** Are private practice members at a disadvantage compared to those in academic practice?
- A.** Not at all. Members in academic practice must demonstrate achievements well above and beyond those of a typical academic faculty member to merit Fellowship. Many private practitioners can document a history of meaningful service to the ACR, organized radiology/medicine, and/or leadership in their practice and community.
- Q.** How does the Committee on Fellowship Credentials evaluate nominees with 20+ years of membership?
- A.** A nominee in this category should have a strong record of service and achievement that extends well beyond “an excellent professional and community reputation.” The committee believes that, while such a reputation is necessary for Fellowship at any level, it is not in itself sufficient for election. All nominees must demonstrate distinctive accomplishments in **one or more** of the three domains.
- Q.** How does service as a chapter president affect chances for Fellowship?
- A:** The committee is particularly respectful of individuals who have served as chapter presidents. Many chapters’ ascension systems are such that most chapter presidents can document years of statewide ACR service. Generally, they qualify at 12-14 Years of Membership Category. However, if one has extraordinary qualifications, approval at the 10-11 year mark would be typical. Council service, especially as a full 3-year Councilor, weighs in their favor.

**Q:** How will involvement in a chapter be weighted?

**A:** Depending on the chapter size and geographic location, nominees who live distant from the central chapter location or those in less active chapters will not be disadvantaged. In particular, it is recognized that medical physicists may find it difficult to participate in chapters. *The chapter should provide sufficient information to permit valid evaluation of chapter activity.*

**Q:** Are outcomes different when a chapter approves an applicant as “Chapter Nominee” vice “Concur with Fellows”?

**A:** A decision of “Chapter Nominee” means the chapter most-likely encouraged the nominee to apply for fellowship and fully endorses the applicant. Alternatively, a chapter may select “Concur with Fellows”, which means the chapter may not have been aware this nominee was applying for fellowship but agrees with the Fellows who endorsed the applicant.

Note: the Committee gives more weight to the “Chapter Nominee” than “Concur with Fellows.”

**Q:** What information does the Committee look to be included in an endorsement letter?

**A:** More weight will be given to letters that provide rich and specific substantive information as compared to those that are brief or *pro forma* letters. Although two letters from Fellows are required, up to two more letters are allowed, particularly if they can document significant or unusual experiences that could enhance the application.

**Q:** What are the possible outcomes of the Committee vote?

**A:** The Committee may reach one of three decisions on an application: **Approved** for the next convocation; **Approved but deferred 1, 2, or 3 years** for a future convocation; **Not approved**. Applications that are not approved may be accompanied with the recommendation to apply again at a later time.

**Q.** Why are some nominees for Fellowship not elected?

**A:** The Committee on Fellowship Credentials and the Board of Chancellors may not endorse all nominations for the following convocation. Some nominees will be approved, but deferred to a future year that better matches their accomplishments according to the domains and their years of membership category. Some nominees may fail to meet the burden of achievement according to their years of membership, or there may be inadequate documentation resulting in non-election.

Those who are neither elected nor deferred may re-apply in a future year without prejudice. Nominees should be mindful of the reasons for non-election and should enhance their profile before reapplying.

**Q:** How is professionalism defined?

**A:** Professionalism represents a duty to those we serve, our patients; a duty to those at whose pleasure we serve, our society; and a duty to those with whom we serve, our colleagues and thus our profession itself (Digest of Council Actions; 2015; Res.13).

**Best of luck with your application. For assistance, email [FACR@acr.org](mailto:FACR@acr.org) and contact your chapter for support.**

