

The Vital Role of a Dedicated
First-Year Conference in
Radiology Residency Training

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Disclosures -

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Background

- Our academic radiology residency program implemented a dedicated first-year noon conference series in 2012. These conferences take place for the first 7 mons of residency training. In these conferences, first-year residents meet daily with faculty or upper level residents at a venue separate from regular noon conference to discuss beginner level topics.
- 3 types of basic talks are given at first-year conference:
 1. Basic Survival Talks: These occur in the first few weeks and cover basic issues of adjusting to a new residency. Example topic may include: where to park at the various clinical sites, logging of duty hours, submitting vacation requests, and how make call trades.
 2. Resident Skills Talks: These occur over the first few months and tackle the steep 1st-year radiology learning curve. There are talks on learning PACS, using reporting templates/dictation software, learning search patterns for common exams, & learning normal anatomy. There are also talks on protocolling, contrast reactions, and departmental electronic resources.
 3. Case Conferences: Later in the series, first-year residents get several months of practice taking basic cases in front of their peers.

Purpose

- The purpose of this presentation is to analyze our institution's long standing first year conference: both to underscore the importance of these conferences, and to evaluate for potential improvements in the early first year residency curriculum.

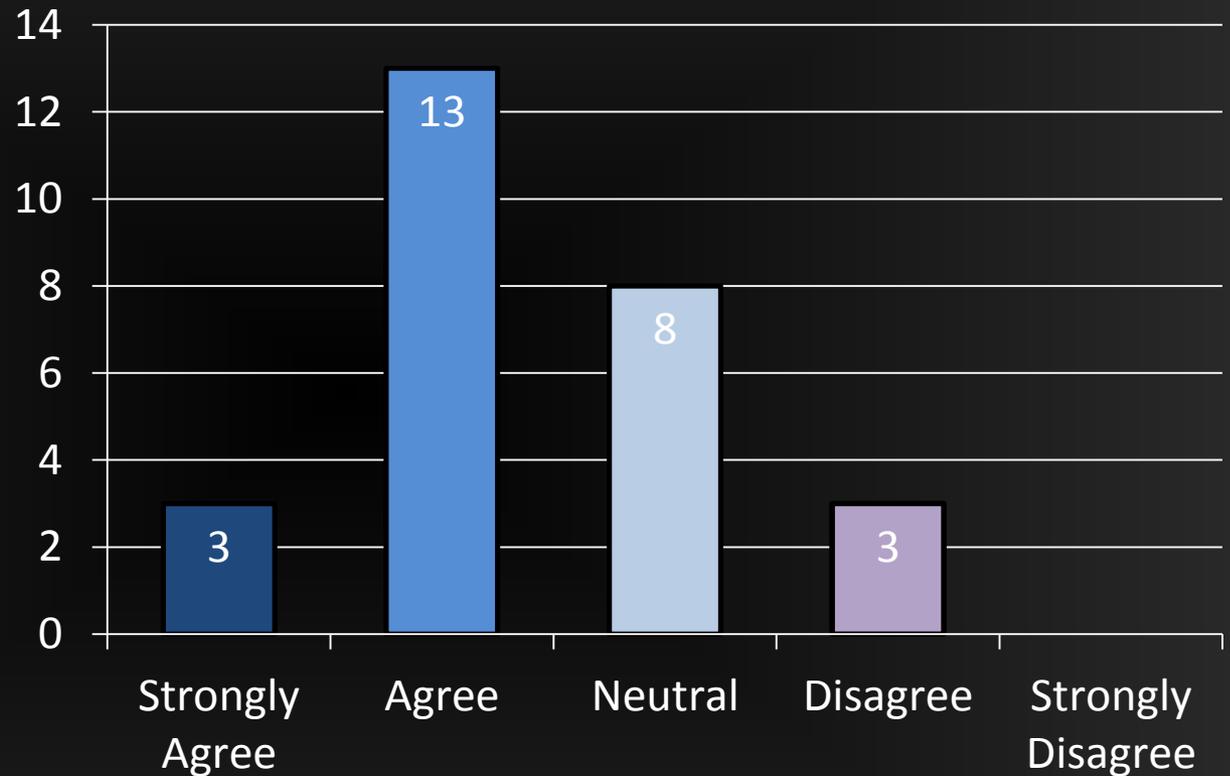
Materials/Methods

- In December 2017, an 8-question Likert-style survey was sent to all 56 current radiology residents at our institution to elicit feedback regarding our 1st year conference.
- 27/56 (48%) of residents responded to the survey.
 - Breakdown of survey respondents by residency year:
 - 44% first year
 - 22% third year
 - 26% second year
 - 7 % fourth year

“I feel that the overall number of dedicated first-year noon conferences is adequate.”

- 16/27 (59%)
agreed or strongly
agreed that the
overall number of
first year
conferences is
adequate.

- 8/27 (30%) were
neutral.

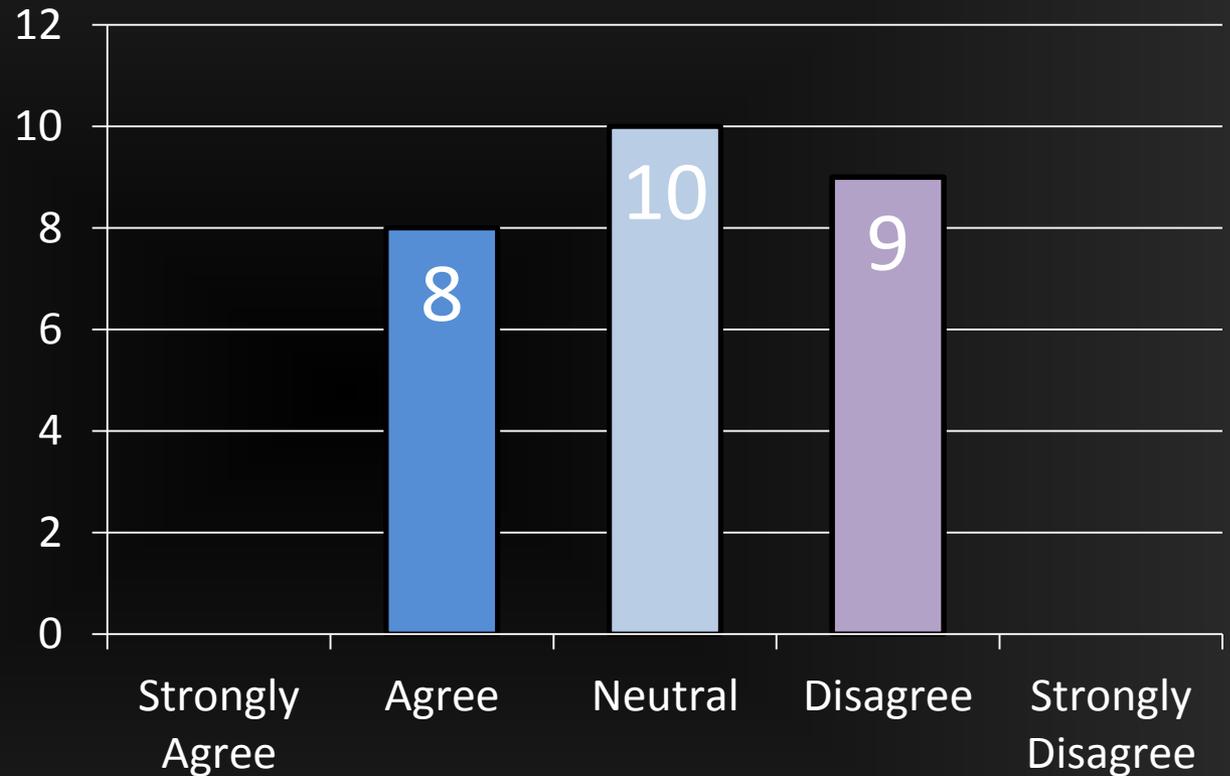


■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral
■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

“I feel that the number of NON-INTERPRETIVE first-year conferences is adequate.”

- 8/27 (30%)
agreed or strongly
agreed that the
number of non-
interpretive
conferences is
adequate.

- 10/27 (37%)
were neutral.

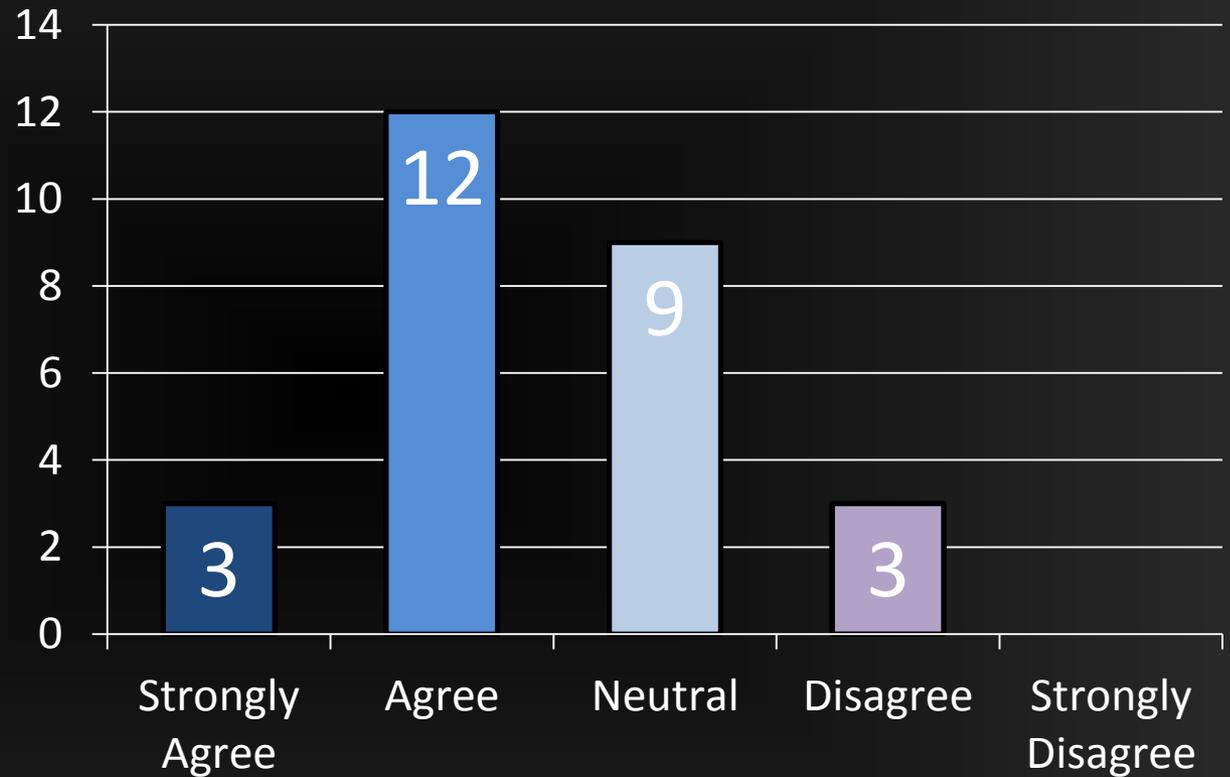


■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral
■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

“I feel that the number of first-year CASE CONFERENCES is adequate.”

- 15/27 (56%)
agreed or strongly
agreed that the
number of case
conferences is
adequate.

- 9/27 (33%) were
neutral.

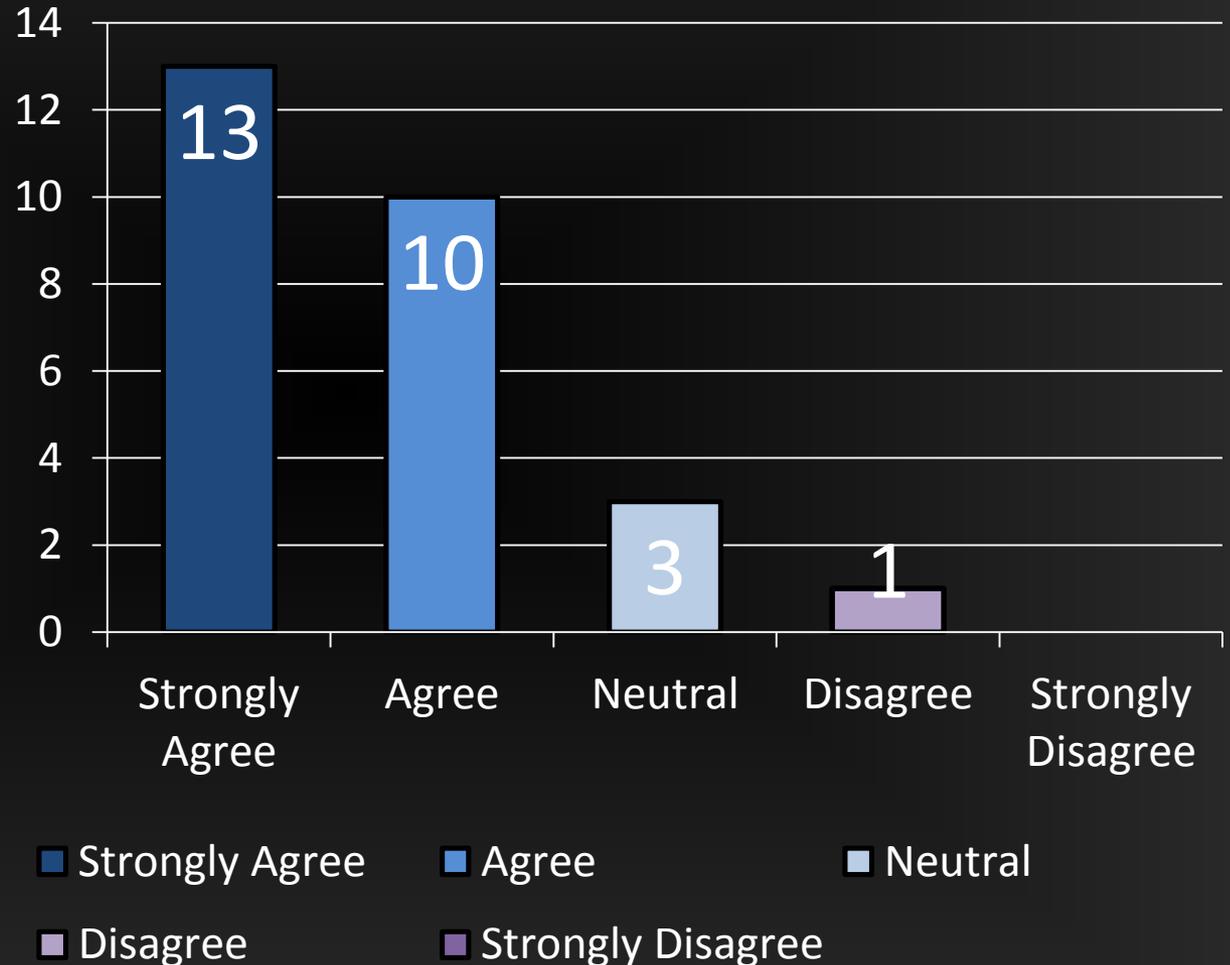


■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral
■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

“I appreciated the opportunity to get some practice taking cases in first-year conference before moving on to regular noon conference.”

- A vast majority of residents, 23/27 (85%) agreed or strongly agreed

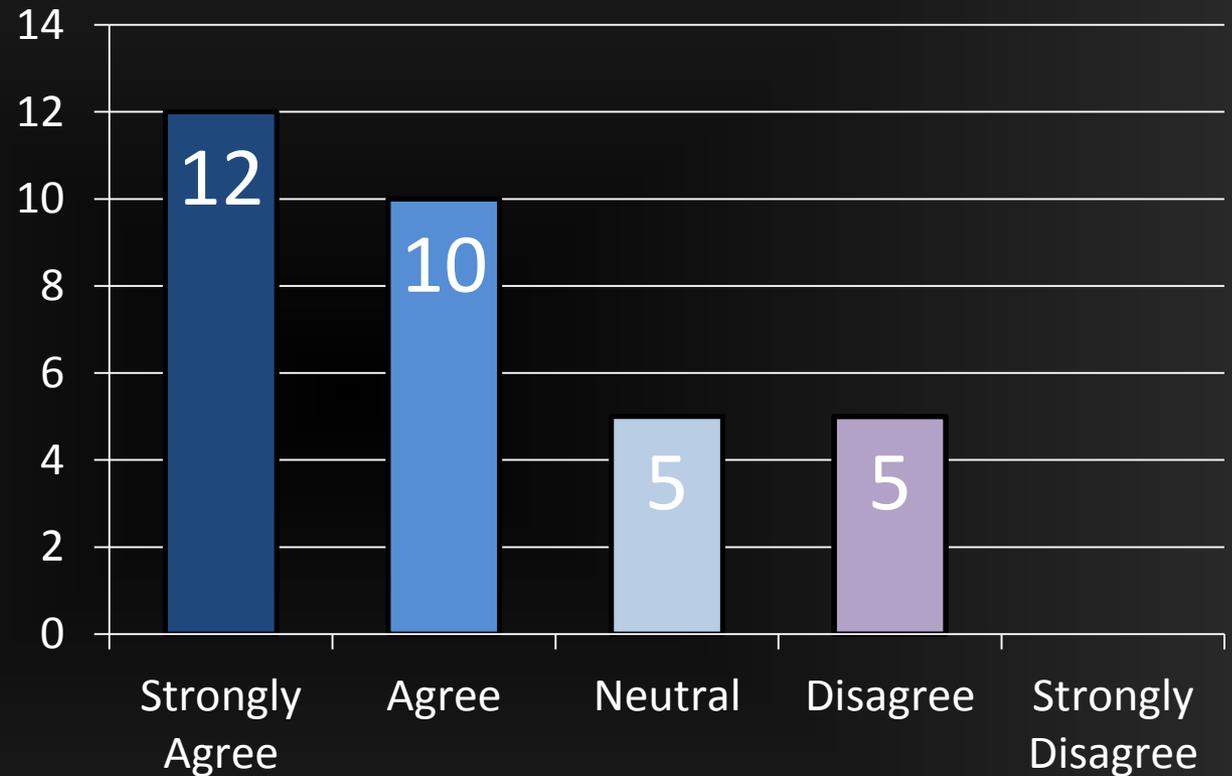
- 3/27 (11%) were neutral



“I think that having upper level residents give many of the first-year conferences is a great idea.”

- 22/27 (81%)
agreed or strongly
agreed that
having upper level
resident teach the
conference was a
good idea

- 5/27 (19%) were
neutral.

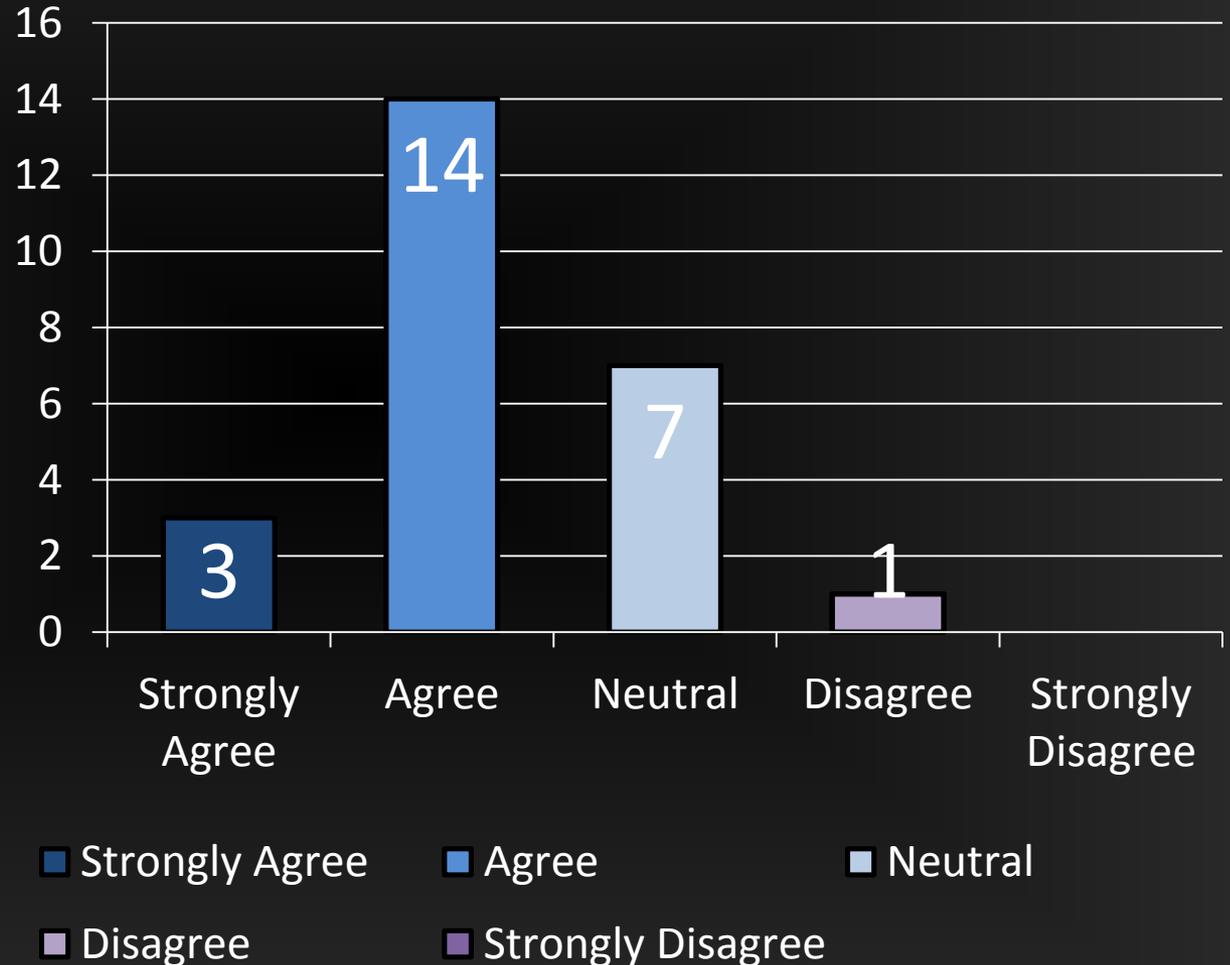


■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral
■ Disagree ■ Strongly Disagree

“It is easy to stay informed of the location of first-year conference.”

- 17/27 (63%)
agreed or strongly
agreed.

- 7/27 (26%) were
neutral.

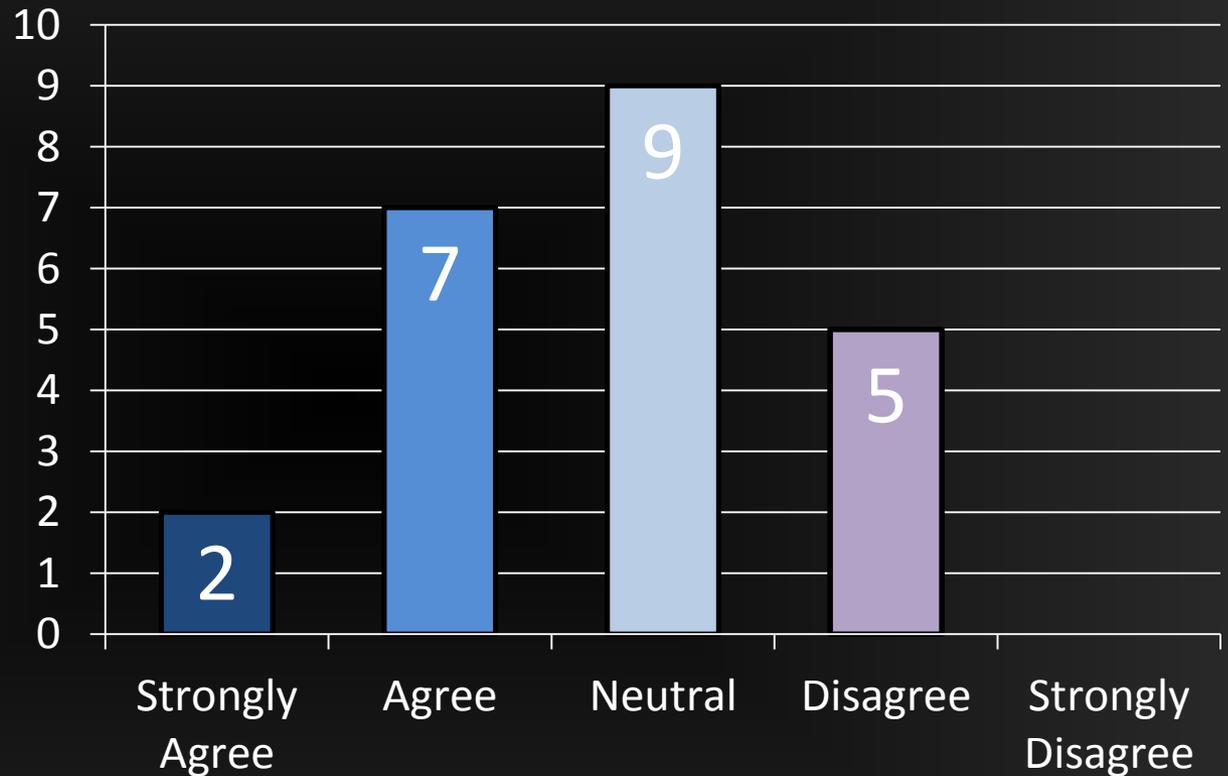


“I think that we should switch to a more structured format for first-year conference, like reading Brant & Helms together.”

- 9/27 (33%)
agreed or strongly
agreed.

- 9/27 (33%) were
neutral.

- 5/27 (19%)
disagreed.



Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Results Summary

- A majority of residents agreed that overall, the number of first year conferences and specifically, case based conferences is sufficient.
- Both the survey results and free text responses indicate that the number of non-interpretive skills based conferences may be lacking. With multiple free text responses calling for more "survival" and "resident skills" types of talks in the schedule.
- A vast majority of responding residents appreciated the opportunity to practice taking cases with their peers before moving on to regular noon conferences, in which cases may be taken in front of the residency as a whole.
- There was also a majority of resident who agreed that having upper level residents give the conference was beneficial.
- There was no convincing support either for or against changing the first-year conferences to a more structured format. (i.e. joint reading of radiology textbooks).

Discussion

- Our survey results, as well as the free text responses, indicate that the non-interpretive skills are among the most desired conference topics during the first month of residency, with multiple respondents requesting more of this content be added to the conference syllabus.
 - One example free text responses recommended “Dedicated PACS sessions with an upper level during the first month of training.” As well as sessions dedicated to, “Powerscribe template set up instructions.”
- Helping residents become proficient using a PACS system and dictation software early on may help facilitate easier day-to-day learning at the work station throughout residency.

Discussion

- Our results also suggest that it is worth the extra time investment of the faculty and senior residents in getting first year residents up to speed.
 - As one example free text response stated, ““I think an organized approach as to “how to read” common exams would be very useful. For example, for abdomen, an upper level could go over the search pattern and “normal” RUQ US, CT abd/pelvis, and pelvic US.”

Conclusion

- There is a vast amount of information to be learned at the start of radiology residency, whether it be in learning image interpretation, developing practical skills, or adjusting to a new clinical practice environment. This survey shows that a dedicated conference designed to help incoming residents navigate the first few months of training can be vital in setting the foundations for their future in residency.
- This may be especially important in the new accelerated radiology curriculum timeline, in which residents must be prepared to take the core exam by the end of the third year.