MEDI7281: Foundations of Medical Research

Information for prospective supervisors

About this course

The *Foundations of Medical Research* course (MEDI7281) is designed to enable students in the second year of the University of Queensland (UQ) Doctor of Medicine (MD) program to complete a health-related research, translational or development project over a 16-week semester. This could range from laboratory-based research, to development of an e-Health or medical education tool, to evaluating the implementation of a new health service. **Health-focussed researchers and innovators from across a broad range of disciplines and settings are invited to submit a project proposal** as an expression of interest to supervise one or more students as part of this course.

Rationale for course

Understanding the research process and developing critical thinking and analytical skills is vital to doctors in the evidence-based and ever-changing practice of medicine. The UQ MD program has a diverse student cohort with varying levels of prior research experience. This course will provide students with practical experience conducting an individual project.

Learning activities

The course duration is 16 weeks (5 July 2021 to 29 October 2021). **Students are expected to commit an average of 8 hours per week to an allocated project across the 16 weeks** (i.e., total time commitment of ~128 hours)**.** Each student's primary contact will be with their project supervisor, but students will be kept on track by authentic assessments designed as project milestones. All assessment will be managed by the course coordinator. Students will be provided with online learning resources, report templates and optional tutorials to assist them in meeting their project milestones.

Assessment

Assessment	Description	Due Dates (2021)
Project milestones	• Project synopsis (2 pages, template provided) • Progress report (1 page, template provided) • Abstract (max 350 words) • Oral presentation (7 min talk, 3 min questions)	30 Jul 25 Aug - 15 Sep 18 Oct 25 Oct
Supervisor feedback	• A short checklist and opportunity to provide feedback to the student	TBA

Role of the supervisor

We wish to thank you in advance for your interest in supervising a student. This course is designed to allow students to experience what it is like to work as part of a research team. Please note that while all students will have learnt about research concepts during the first two years of the MD, most students will be new to actually "doing" research. **For students to benefit from this experience, it is critical that they have regular access to their supervisor(s) for guidance during their project.** Supervisors are expected to spend approximately **30 minutes per week (or 1 hour per fortnight)** with each student or group of students. Depending on the nature of the project, students may require additional training from their supervisor or another mentor. It is a good idea to discuss your expectations with your student at the beginning of the project and explain how you would usually work with a novice researcher, such as a summer scholarship student. Enlisting post-docs and PhD students to assist with supervision is beneficial as professional development of your team and can provide students with adequate guidance.

What type of projects are suitable?

Projects should provide students with a meaningful learning experience by enabling active participation in an ongoing project or the opportunity to undertake their own small piece of supervised research. Eligible projects include:

- Observational studies (e.g., surveys, chart reviews)
- Secondary data analysis
- Laboratory research
- Literature reviews (e.g., systematic review)
- IT development projects
- Digital health projects
- Interventional studies
- Social science methods (e.g., interviews, qualitative research)
- Data-linkage studies
- Translational projects (e.g., implementing evidence into practice, knowledge translation)

Who can supervise a project?

Supervisors must have a Higher Degree by Research or equivalent research experience. Supervisors must be able to guide students' projects and support them in completing their project milestones.

Role of the student

Students are expected to commit ~8 hours per week to their project across 16 weeks. Due to timetabling pressures in the MD program, students may not have a whole day free and may need to work on their project over multiple part-days. Please note that many students will be new to research and so expectations on deliverables should be realistic. For example, it is unlikely that a single student working alone will be able to complete a systematic review during the semester, but they should be able to make significant progress towards that end.

Frequently asked questions

Can supervisors host multiple students?
Yes. Supervisors can host as many students as they believe they can support based on available projects, resources and contact time. Most supervisors choose to host 1 to 3 students.

Can multiple students work on a single project/study?
Yes. However, students are expected to engage in individual scholarship and so larger projects should be broken into smaller sub-projects that enable identifiable individual work, as well as collaboration where necessary.

What is the expected time commitment for students and supervisors?
Projects are 16-weeks long. Students are expected to spend ~8 hours per week working on their project and associated assessments (128 hours total). Supervisors are expected to spend ~30 minutes per week (or ~1 hour per fortnight) with each student or group of students.

Do proposed projects need to be covered by an ethics approval?
If the project you are involving a student in requires ethics, then ethics approval must be in place before the student begins.

Is there funding available to cover project costs?
There is no funding available for student projects. Projects will need to be short and contained, therefore, "sub-projects" of already funded studies that are up and running, or projects that require minimal resource costs, would be suitable.

More information

For more information and for **key dates**, please visit the Foundations of Medical Research website or contact the Course Coordinator, Dr Megan Steele via med.yr2projects@uq.edu.au

Submit a project proposal by clicking on this link