

Research Education Core (REC) Annual Retreat

The 2018 REC research retreat will take place at the University of Michigan on Thursday and Friday, May 31st -June 1st, 2018. (300 North Ingalls, Room 906, Ann Arbor, MI). REC Director Neil Alexander is the retreat coordinator.

The goal of the retreat is to assist talented junior faculty members to learn more about current problems and progress in this area, and to provide these scientists with some candid feedback about their own research ideas. Relevant areas can span clinical, epidemiological, and health care research. Based on the needs and interests of the junior faculty participants, we will invite external reviewers and speakers, to complement our local U-M experts. The retreat will feature research seminars presented by two external keynote speakers, as well as presentations by U-M OAIC senior faculty.

Much of the workshop will be devoted to "mock" study sections at which junior faculty members will have the opportunity to have their own grant proposals reviewed by colleagues and by experienced senior faculty scholars. By reviewing projects of their peers, and hearing the critiques of experienced reviewers, participants get valuable insights into the peer review process that may help them improve their own grant-writing skills. This is also an outstanding opportunity to network with leading senior and up-and-coming junior researchers. We frequently hear later how much the feedback and insight from these sessions impacted getting ultimately funded.

Each junior faculty member who is selected for this workshop will be expected to provide by mid-April a copy of a grant proposal on which he or she wishes to receive advice. Participants usually provide an application currently under review or in the late stages of preparation. The form of the application is flexible (NIH, NSF, VA, foundation), but must contain at least five pages of scientific narrative describing the background, preliminary data, and research goals of the proposed scientific program. An abstract and explanation of the type of proposal submitted are also required.

Each junior faculty participant will receive from us, by early May, 2-3 applications submitted by his or her colleagues, and will be asked to prepare a written critique (at least one page, usually 2-3 pages) to help the applicant, pointing out strengths and possible weaknesses. These critiques will then form the basis for the mock study sections at the retreat itself.

Junior faculty interested in participating in this program should contact Dr. Neil Alexander at nalexand@umich.edu. Please submit a copy of your CV, and describe how participation would be beneficial to your research, and the type of grant to be submitted.