

Fellows of the Aerospace Medical Association

Warren Silberman, D.O.

Any AsMA member actively working in aviation or space medicine should consider striving to become a Fellow of the Aerospace Medical Association (AsMA). Fellowship represents the highest level of organizational membership, an honor that reflects not only activity but also fidelity to and alignment with the principles and mission of AsMA. Fellows are ambassadors of everything our Association stands for.

Fellowship Mission Statement

“AsMA fellowship denotes recognition as the highest level of organizational membership. It is not simply a matter of checking boxes but is based on a foundation of activity, strengthened by intangibles that demonstrate dedication to AsMA’s principles.”

The selection process is therefore designed to align directly with AsMA’s mission and values.

Out of a total membership of approximately 2000, there are 438 Fellows. The voting process for the fellowship was modified in 2007. Under the guidance of the then-Chair of the Fellows Group, GEN George Anderson, a committee was formed that recommended the items that the committee felt were important in becoming a Fellow. The conclusion came down to five categories: AsMA Activity with subcategories: Meeting Attendance, AsMA Committee Work, AsMA Leadership, National & International Leadership, ASMA Awards, and Journal Service; Communication, which included: Presentations, Teaching, Education & Experience in Aerospace Medicine, Education, Additional Degrees, Internship, Residency & Fellowship, Coursework, and Board Certification; and the last general category: Extreme Environments and Related Activities, which included the subcategories: Scuba Diving, Cold Environments, and Aviation with its subcategories: Certification as a pilot, Maintenance Work, Parachuting, and Additional Aviation Activity.

The final decisions as to who becomes a fellow ultimately fall to the Chair of the Fellows Group, and they have two committees that make the recommendations. They are the Fellows Evaluation Committee (FEC) and the Fellows Nominating Committee (FNC). The FEC reviews each candidate’s application to make sure that they placed the appropriate responses in each item and, at the same time, are not taking credit for items that are not. Each candidate is now expected to provide a copy of their current curriculum vitae. The FNC performs one final check, ensuring that none of its committee members are aware of any adverse information. They have the option to move any candidates with a close score into the approved column. Currently, the minimum score to make a fellow is 130.

The call for nominations generally occurs after the AsMA Council meeting in November of each year. The Chair of the FEC will ensure that each nominee has several committee members review their application. The current Open Water system that AsMA

uses for the application scores the candidate as they complete their applications. The FEC chair averages the scores of each nominee and then emails their results to the FNC chair. Each nominee is given 30 days to complete their application, but this is generally extended. Once the FNC has reviewed each nominee, the final list is emailed to the Chair of the Fellows, who then forwards it to all current Fellows. It is at this point that the actual AsMA Fellows can speak with the Chair should they have any objections to a candidate. The FNC generally completes its task by March or April. This process reduces the likelihood of objections to the final slate at the Monday evening Fellows Meeting.

To ensure transparency, the points chart and the entire process are located in the Fellows section of the Members website: <https://www.asma.org/members-only/member-services/fellows/>.

The Associate Fellows group sends the Fellows Chair a list of their membership who they feel have enough points and are ready to be considered. Each Fellow can nominate up to two individuals each year. These individuals do not have to be from the Associate Fellows group.

The Fellows have firmly fixed several items in the scoring process. Each nominee must have at least 7 years of continuous membership in AsMA, and a minimum of 5 points total from AsMA meeting attendance and committee participation.

Here are some pitfalls and recommendations for completing the application. First, a nominator should ensure that their nominee has a minimum of 7 years of AsMA membership and that their membership is up to date at the time of recommendation. Any AsMA member who contemplates becoming a Fellow must maintain accurate personal records of their committee membership, all aerospace organizations they belong to, the aerospace medicine presentations they give, the teaching they conduct, the dates, and the aerospace coursework they complete, along with the dates and details of each. Regarding the articles that an individual writes, they must be related to aerospace medicine, as an article that a FEC committee member feels is not relevant will be rejected.

At the end of the online application, there is a place to write an 800-word statement. I advise people to ensure they list items that are not accounted for in the application itself. Some examples include serving as commander of one of the aeromedical laboratories or being the flight surgeon in charge during deployment.



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CONTACT DETAILS:

Email: President@asma.org • **Website:** www.asma.org • **Facebook:** Aerospace Medical Association • **X:** @Aero_Med • **YouTube:** @Aero_Med