



The Alliance of Medical Student Educators in Radiology (AMSER) Distinction in Radiology Track (DIRT) Program Distinction in Radiology Track Instructor (DIRTI) Guide

This guide is intended for faculty serving as Distinction in Radiology Track Instructors (DIRTIs) for the AMSER Distinction in Radiology Track (DIRT). It provides clear expectations, roles, and practical guidance for mentoring medical students through successful completion of the program while maintaining national alignment and academic rigor.

DIRTIs play a critical role in mentoring, advising, and verifying student progress, while reinforcing the expectation that students take primary ownership of their learning and portfolio.

Program Purpose

The AMSER DIRT equips students with foundational radiology knowledge, promotes responsible imaging decision-making skills, and offers exposure to leadership, service, and scholarly activity regardless of whether they plan to pursue radiology as a career. The track emphasizes:

- Imaging literacy applicable to all specialties
- Appropriate imaging utilization using ACR resources
- Patient safety, contrast use, and sustainability
- Scholarly and educational engagement

The curriculum leverages high-quality, nationally recognized resources developed by the American College of Radiology (ACR) and AMSER.

Instructor Appointment & Initial Student Assignment

When a medical student expresses interest in pursuing the AMSER DIRT, the AMSER DIRT Director will assign the student to a DIRTI.

Once assigned, the DIRTI should:

- Initiate contact with the student within 2–3 weeks of assignment.

- Schedule a virtual or in-person introductory meeting.
- Serve as the student's primary faculty mentor for the duration of the track.

The DIRT is not required to be an AMSER or AAR member. Eligible participants in the AMSER DIRT must be medical students enrolled in a U.S. or Canadian allopathic medical school or a U.S. osteopathic medical school.

A DR/IR resident or fellow must receive approval and confirmation of good standing from their Program Director or Fellowship Director to serve as a DIRT.

Initial Introductory Meeting: Recommended Agenda

The initial meeting is essential for setting expectations and ensuring a shared understanding of roles. During this meeting, the Instructor should:

1. Review Program Requirements
 - Provide a high-level overview of the AMSER DIRT.
 - Review the 100-point minimum requirement and required components.
 - Emphasize required courses, assessments, and scholarly activity.
2. Clarify Roles and Responsibilities

Instructor Role:

 - Serve as an advisor, mentor, and reviewer.
 - Review and approve the scholarly project to ensure adequate academic rigor and feasibility, without assuming the role of research mentor.
 - Provide feedback and academic oversight.
 - Verify completion of requirements.

Student Role:

 - Take ownership of tracking progress and meeting deadlines.
 - Complete required coursework, exams, and projects.
 - Communicate proactively and request guidance when needed.
 - Maintain a complete portfolio of deliverables.
3. Discuss Scholarly Project Options
 - **Review and approve** scholarly project (i.e. scientific research, case report, QI, educational project, informatics).
 - Discuss scope, feasibility, and anticipated timeline.
 - Address IRB considerations when applicable.
4. Answer Questions and Address Concerns
 - Clarify time commitment and expectations.
 - Address career interests (radiology vs non-radiology).
 - Reinforce flexibility while maintaining standards.

Ongoing Mentorship Responsibilities

Distinction Track Instructors are expected to:

- Meet with students at least twice per academic year.
- Review progress toward point accumulation.
- Provide feedback on scholarly product, presentation, and reflection.
- Help identify opportunities for dissemination (posters, presentations, publications).
- Reinforce alignment with AMSER and ACR educational standards.

DIRTIs are not expected to manage logistics or reminders on behalf of students; students are responsible for maintaining momentum and documentation.

Guidance on Scholarly and Educational Projects

Acceptable Project Categories

- Clinical or educational research related to radiology
- Case reports or case series
- Quality improvement projects involving imaging utilization or safety
- Educational curriculum or teaching tool development
- Informatics or decision-support projects related to imaging

Scholarly Project Oversight Expectations

- Ensure the scholarly project has clear objectives and deliverables.
- Approve the scholarly project before student begins the project and/or approve a scholarly project having met the DIRT requirements.
- It is not expected or encouraged that a DIRTi also serve as the student's research mentor, as doing so may create additional time commitments beyond the intended scope of the role. The DIRTi's primary responsibility is to provide mentorship and oversight to support successful completion of DIRT requirements. However, individual DIRTIs may choose to serve in both roles at their discretion.
- Confirm whether IRB approval is required; many educational or de-identified projects may be IRB-exempt.
- Encourage early dissemination planning.
- May review abstract, poster, manuscript, or presentation prior to submission.

Assessment, Verification, and Portfolio Review

The Distinction Track Instructor collaborates with the AMSER Distinction Track Program Director in reviewing the student's completed portfolio.

Instructor Responsibilities Include:

- Verifying completion of required coursework and exams. If a student does not pass an exam on the first attempt, they may retake the exam until a passing score has been achieved.
- Confirming scholarly activity and dissemination claims.
- Reviewing reflection essays and project summaries.
- Ensuring the student has met the minimum 100-point requirement.

Final Determination:

- The AMSER DIRT Director and the DIRTi jointly review the student's portfolio.

- Confirmation is based on documented completion and minimum point thresholds.
- Final annual survey must be submitted prior to awarding the AMSER Distinction in Radiology.
- Final approval is required prior to awarding the AMSER Distinction in Radiology.

Students will be formally awarded the AMSER Distinction in Radiology upon successful completion and verification of all requirements.

Suggested Instructor Oversight Timeline

Years 1–2

- Introductory meeting
- Scholarly project ideation and planning
- Early service or leadership involvement

Years 2–3

- Completion of AMSER DIRT Medical Student Radiology Curriculum
- Progress check on scholarly work
- Begin TEACHES modules

Years 3–4

- Completion of TEACHES modules and AMSER DIRT Exam assessment
- Scholarly project completion

Year 4

- Completion of clinical radiology elective/experience
- Final portfolio review and verification

Professional Expectations & Mentorship Standards

DIRTIs should:

- Maintain consistent communication and timely feedback.
- Model professionalism and academic integrity.
- Encourage inclusive mentorship regardless of student career goals.
- Uphold AMSER values of education, collaboration, and excellence.

Continuous Improvement & Feedback

DIRTIs are encouraged to:

- Provide feedback on curriculum effectiveness.
- Share best practices and mentorship strategies.
- Participate in ongoing refinement of the Distinction Track.

Program Administration & Contact

For questions regarding program requirements, verification, or student eligibility, contact:

Biren A. Shah, MD

AMSER DIRT Director

Email: biren.shah@wmed.edu

APPENDIX A: Instructor Initial Outreach Email Template

Subject: Welcome to the AMSER Distinction in Radiology Track (DIRT)

Dear [Student Name],

I hope this message finds you well. [Name of AMSER DIRT Director] has assigned you to me as your Distinction in Radiology Track Instructor (DIRTI) for the AMSER Distinction in Radiology Track (DIRT).

I would like to schedule an initial meeting (virtual or in person) to review the program requirements, clarify our respective roles, discuss potential scholarly project ideas, and answer any questions you may have as you begin the track.

Please let me know your availability over the next 1–2 weeks, and I will do my best to accommodate.

I look forward to working with you.

Best regards,
[Instructor Name, MD/DO, other degrees (if applicable)]
AMSER DIRTI

APPENDIX B: Distinction Track Instructor Sign-Off Checklist (Binary, Administrative Tool)

Purpose: Verification & compliance (“Did the student complete everything that is required?”)

Use this checklist during final portfolio review. All items should be verified prior to recommendation for distinction.

- Initial introductory meeting completed and documented
- Student understands roles, responsibilities, and point requirements

Required Coursework & Assessments

- AMSER DIRT Medical Student Curriculum completed
- ACR Radiology TEACHES modules completed (minimum required modules)
- Self-reflection essay reviewed and satisfactory
- AMSER DIRT Exam assessment completed ($\geq 70\%$ passing score verified)
- Clinical Radiology Elective/Experience completed (2- or 4-week rotation)

Scholarly Activity

- Scholarly project completed
- Project scope appropriate for radiology distinction
- IRB determination addressed (if applicable)
- Scholarly product reviewed (poster/oral/manuscript)
- External dissemination verified (if claimed)

Service & Leadership

- Participation in radiology-related service or leadership activity verified (if claimed)

Portfolio & Points

- Portfolio complete and organized
- Documentation provided for all claimed activities
- Minimum 100-point threshold met

Instructor Attestation

- I attest that the student has met the requirements of the AMSER Distinction in Radiology Track.

AMSER DIRT Name: _____ Date: _____

APPENDIX C: Portfolio Review Rubric (Qualitative Tool)

Purpose: Evaluation & judgement (*“Is the quality and scope of the student’s work appropriate for the distinction?”*)

Use this rubric to guide final evaluation of the student portfolio.

Coursework & Assessments

- Complete – All required coursework and assessments completed and documented
- Needs Revision – Missing documentation or incomplete requirement
- Incomplete – Major requirements not completed

Scholarly Project

- Complete – Project completed with appropriate scope and dissemination
- Needs Revision – Project completed but dissemination or documentation incomplete
- Incomplete – Project not completed or insufficient

Service & Leadership

- Complete – Service activity documented and appropriate
- Needs Revision – Activity unclear or insufficient documentation
- None – No qualifying service activity

Overall Portfolio Assessment

- Pass – All requirements met; recommend awarding distinction
- Needs Revision – Minor gaps; revisions required prior to approval
- Incomplete – Does not meet requirements for distinction

AMSER DIRT Comments:

APPENDIX D: Distinction in Radiology Track Points Matrix

Distinction Track Points Matrix		Points
Activity	Description	
Service & Leadership <i>Limit: 5 points maximum in this activity</i>	Involvement in local, state, or national radiology organization (e.g., medical school radiology student interest group, local or state radiological society, AMSER, Association of Academic Radiology, American College of Radiology, American Association for Women in Radiology, Radiological Society of North American, American Society of Neuroradiology, Society of Interventional Radiology, etc.). Membership in radiological societies/organizations are often free for medical students with opportunities to serve on committees or possible service roles.	5 pts
Scholarly Activities <i>Limit: 35 points maximum in this activity</i>	<p>*Scholarly Product (required): Oral presentation, quality improvement initiative project, educational/scientific poster, or published manuscript related to radiology.</p> <p>External Dissemination Bonus (<i>optional, which can reduce number of Applied Learning Modules required by 2 modules</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poster presentation at local/regional/national meeting • Oral presentation or publication (peer-reviewed) at any level 	15 pts <div style="background-color: black; height: 20px; width: 100%;"></div> +10 pts +20 pts
Courses (*Required)	<p>*Clinical Radiology Elective/ Experience (2- or 4-weeks)</p> <p>*Core Knowledge (Foundation Course): AMSER DIRT Medical Student Curriculum Covers fundamentals of imaging, radiation safety, and imaging appropriateness.</p> <p>Deliverable: Completion of the AMSER DIRT Curriculum Questions (self-assessment). Completion of the end-of-course AMSER DIRT Exam (automatically scored, results emailed to Distinction in Radiology Track Director (DIRTI)). Must have reached a passing score of at least 70% upon one or more attempts.</p> <p>*Applied Learning (Case-Based ACR Radiology TEACHES) Modules:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Family & Community Medicine (appropriate use of imaging in primary care) (5 pts) • Contrast Safety (indications, contradictions, patient safety) (5 pts) • Pediatrics (common pediatric imaging scenarios) (5 pts) • Internal Medicine (acute imaging decisions) (5 pts) • Sustainability in Radiology (resource use & environmental impact) (5 pts) 	10 pts 40 pts 30 pts total

- Self-reflection essay: Student must submit a short (250-word) write-up on what they learned from one TEACHES module and how it applies to patient care. (5 pts)

Deliverable: Completion certificates (auto generated by TEACHES) + essay forwarded to the DIRTl.

***Assessment & Verification:**

The DIRTl notifies the DIRT Director when their student is ready to take the AMSER DIRT Exam. The exam covers chest imaging, gastrointestinal imaging, general radiology principles, neuroradiology, breast imaging, musculoskeletal imaging, pediatric imaging, head and neck imaging, ultrasound, vascular and interventional radiology, nuclear medicine, and imaging appropriateness. The exam will be automatically scored and results emailed to the student's DIRTl.

Deliverable: Completion report + score to the DIRTl as summative evaluation of comprehension. Must have reached passing score of at least 70% upon one or attempts.

10 pts