



National Emergency Training Center
16825 S. Seton Avenue
Emmitsburg, MD 21727-8998

FEMA

R0139

Dear National Fire Academy Student:

By now you should have received your acceptance email notification from the National Emergency Training Center (NETC) Admissions Office for this course. If you have not, you are not enrolled in this course.

Congratulations on your acceptance into the U.S. Fire Administration's/National Fire Academy's (USFA's/NFA's) *Hot Topics Research in Emergency Medical Services* (HTREMS) course.

Enclosed is a pre-course assignment for you to complete before the first day of class. Initial activities will relate to this information. You should be prepared to do a large amount of reading and computer work during the class.

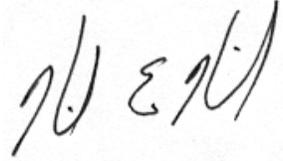
End-of-class graduation ceremonies are an important part of the course, and you are expected to attend. Please do not make any travel arrangements to leave campus until after you and your classmates graduate.

The course materials for this course are now available in a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) format which will function on any electronic device. If you own an electronic device (laptop computer, tablet, etc.) and are familiar with its document reader functions, we are asking you to download the Student Manual (SM) **before you travel to Emmitsburg** and bring the preloaded device with you. Please see the page following this letter for complete instructions on successfully downloading your course materials. Please note: If you plan to bring/use an iPad, you may experience issues saving/storing/printing course assignments since there is no USB/thumb drive capacity for these devices.

For your information, the NFA classroom environment is PC based. As increasing numbers of students and instructors are bringing laptop computers or other electronic devices to campus you alone are responsible for the security and maintenance of your equipment. The Academy cannot provide you with computer software, hardware, or technical support to include disks, printers, scanners, etc. Classrooms are outfitted with surge protectors at each table for your convenience. Thumb drives or external hard drives used to bring course materials to class cannot be connected to FEMA property without being scanned for viruses. Due to time limitations for scanning, these devices cannot be larger than 8 GB. Anything over this amount will not be scanned and cannot be used. A Student Computer Lab is located in Building D and is available for all students to use. It is open daily with technical support provided in the evenings. This lab uses Windows 7 and Office 2013 as the software standard.

Should you need additional information related to course content or requirements, please feel free to contact Mr. Michael Stern, Emergency Medical Services Training Specialist, at (301) 447-1253 or email at michael.stern@fema.dhs.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kirby Kiefer". The signature is written in a cursive style with some stylized flourishes.

Dr. Kirby Kiefer, Acting Superintendent
National Fire Academy
U.S. Fire Administration

Enclosures

National Fire Academy Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Course Materials/Download Instructions

The **first step** is to download ADOBE Reader to your device. This will enable you to read and manipulate the course materials. ADOBE Reader can be used to comment and highlight text in Portable Document Format (PDF) documents. It is an excellent tool for note-taking purposes.

For Laptops and Computers

ADOBE Reader can be downloaded from www.adobe.com/downloads/. It is a free download. Please note that depending on your settings, you may have to temporarily disable your antivirus software.

For Tablets and Other Similar Hand-held Devices

ADOBE Reader can be downloaded onto devices such as iPads, android tablets, and other hand-held devices. ADOBE Reader for these types of devices can be found in the device's Application Store using the search function and typing in "ADOBE Reader." Follow the instructions given. **It is a free application.** Note: In order to have the editing capabilities/toolbar, the document needs to be "opened with ADOBE Reader." There should be a function on your device to do this.

After you have successfully downloaded the ADOBE Reader, please use the following Web link to download your R0139, *Hot Topics Research in Emergency Medical Services* (HTREMS) Student Manual (SM). (You may copy/paste this link into your Web browser.)

http://nfa.usfa.dhs.gov/ax/sm/sm_r0139.pdf

Note: Please make sure you download the ADOBE Reader first. To open the SM, you will need to open the ADOBE Reader and then open the SM through the ADOBE Reader in order for the note-taking tools to work properly.

If you need assistance, please contact nfaonlinetier2@fema.dhs.gov.

HOT TOPICS RESEARCH FOR EMS
PRECOURSE ASSIGNMENTS

Precourse Assignment List

1. Complete the following worksheets, to be turned in on the morning of the first day of class.
 - Questionnaire
 - Hot Topics Research for EMS Topic

2. Complete the following readings:
 - National EMS Research Agenda
National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
<http://www.ems.gov/pdf/EMSResearchAgenda.pdf>
 - A Guide to the Research Process
Elizabeth A. Criss
www.pcrf.mednet.ucla.edu/pcrf/resources.shtml

3. Complete the following online Independent Study courses: (Both can be found at NFA Online, www.usfa.fema.gov/nfa/nfaonline.)
 - *Designing an Applied Research Proposal* (Q0171)
 - *Data Gathering Instruments to Support Applied Research Projects* (Q0170)

4. Prepare a 10-minute hot topic presentation from your agency to share with your classmates.

Questionnaire

Name: _____ Your Title: _____

Name of Your Organization: _____

Size of Your Organization

Total Number of Responses Per Year: _____

Total Number of EMS Calls Per Year: _____

of EMS Transport Units: _____ # of EMS Non-Transport Units: _____

Personnel: Career/Volunteer/Combination (circle one)

Location of Organization: _____

What is your past and current experience with EMS research? Please include both training and educational coursework.

Is this your first NFA resident class? Yes/No (circle one)
If not, what other classes have you attended at NFA?

What are your expectations, if any, for this class?

Hot Topics Research for EMS Topic (Problem/Issue/Improvement)

Select a topic that you would like to research, in order to address a problem, issue, or improvement in your agency. Think of topics that are within your realm of influence to address. Do not eliminate topics based on your initial thought of quantity of existing research. Write a short description of your topic in the space provided below.

You will need to turn in this worksheet within the first hour of class; therefore, it is important to have this done prior to class. Your problem/issue/concern will become the basis of the quality management plan you will develop in this course.

Your problem/issue/improvement must be:

- Of appropriate scope
- Addressable by researched evidence with a timeline of **6 months to 1 year**

As you consider which problem or opportunity to bring to class, we would like to offer some guidance. It is hard to pick a topic that is *too* small for a research project. On the other hand, it is very easy and tempting to pick something too big or complicated. Try to avoid the temptation to choose a topic that is too big or complex. It is strongly suggested that your first several projects be small, straightforward, and within your own span of control. This may not always be possible, but have a bias toward these more manageable projects. Your early projects should be as much about learning the process of research as the project itself. As you and your organization's management team get more comfortable with the tools and processes of research, you can take on progressively larger projects. Even then, organizations that are very successful and mature in their learning and implementation of research know that it is better to eat an elephant one bite at a time. Big projects are often more successful when they are broken down into a series of smaller 'bite-sized' projects.

So what might a big topic broken down into bite-sized projects look like? Consider an elephant-sized topic of response intervals on medical calls. Smaller bite-sized projects that work to this ultimate goal might include:

- Existing standards on response time intervals
- The impact on patient outcome of:
 - Response time intervals
 - Response time interval of basic life support (BLS) versus advanced life support (als)
 - Response time interval of tiered responses
- The impact of response time interval on patient outcome for trauma patients versus medical patients, or specific injury/illness presentations
- The effect on response time interval of varied 911 call-taking and dispatching processes
- The effect on response time interval of varied system management methods
- The accuracy of response time interval data collection

(over)

Statement of Hot Topics Research for EMS Topic (Problem/Issue/Improvement)

Name: _____

Date: _____

Hot Topic Presentations

During the course, each student is required to give a 10-minute presentation on a topic that illustrates addressing a “hot topic” to other class members. The intent of these Hot Topic Presentations is to expand the networking environment formally, while facilitating the sharing of useful ideas and the processes that your agencies used to address the ideas.

Students should consider a hot topic that was addressed by their agency. Elements of the presentation should include how the topic was identified, what resources were used to research the topic, examples of identified valid and potentially invalid data found, outcome path determined, and the results of addressing the hot topic. Students are requested to bring to class a brief handout (electronic pdf file preferred) summarizing their presentation. The handout should include their contact information. They also are told to prepare visual aids as appropriate for their presentations (no more than 5 to 10 PowerPoint slides) and to practice and time their presentations prior to arrival. Students should allocate approximately 5 minutes for the presentation and 5 minutes for questions and answers.

This hot topic should not be the same topic identified to research during the course.