ABSTRACT
Postgraduate medical education leads to increased levels of stress for trainees. Recently, there has been increased emphasis placed on safety and quality of life factors during residency by the ACGME. To date, no studies have evaluated perceived stress by orthopedic residents while learning new surgical techniques. The author believes that a dedicated educational module for teaching arthroscopic shoulder surgery will lower residents' perceived stress during their shoulder surgical elective. The experimental design includes using a survey to test stress levels prior to and during the shoulder elective. The aims of this study support the ACGME desire to improve patient care by decreasing the variability of resident training. The educational module will combine a combination of shoulder diagrams/schematics, arthroscopic pictures and videos, and education materials. Measurable outcomes include anxiety levels from all residents during the study. We postulate that the use of the module will decrease stress levels in the Group One. Potential biases include small sample size, individual extramural stressors on the residents, resident's perceived importance of shoulder surgery during their future careers, and innate psychomotor ability that allows some residents to acquire these skills easier. Stress assessment data will be collected by an independent research assistant (CK) in the resident's lounge at the Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Institute (OSMI). The educational module will be hosted on the College of Medicine's intranet which is secured via password.

RESULTS
To date, five residents have completed the Perceived Stress Scale. Due to the educational structure and small size of orthopedic surgery residencies, we anticipate that it will take at least two years for a comparison of approximately five subjects in each group. The educational module is complete for basic surgical shoulder arthroscopy skills, but will be added to on a continual basis as a method for asynchronous education. Since this study has shown only preliminary results, there have been several interesting findings to date. First, the author now realizes that the development of an online educational module can be challenging. The greatest difficulty arises with the digital media used to create case studies. Many of the surgical pictures and videos are large and in various formats, making them difficult to manipulate for insertion into an online format. Textbooks are now readily available with excerpts of high quality digital media on DVD. The advantage of online educational tools is that they are easily portable and integrate nicely into the fast pace, multi-tasking learners that presently fill residency programs. The second interesting finding is the low score on the PSS for this group. Residents are typically known as large stressors for individuals. Interestingly, this group had less perceived stress than would be seen on average for individuals in a similar age group. However, with this small group of individuals, it is difficult to make any meaningful conclusions.

REFERENCES