

NCCAOM[®] Activity Report for the CCAOM Meeting

May 2017



Public Protection Through Quality Credentials



Introduction

This report serves as an update to the CCAOM members on activities of the NCCAOM®, as requested, to include governance, policy changes, status of the *NCCAOM® Academy of Diplomates*, an update on the NCCAOM support for the state associations, a status report on the NCCAOM Job Analysis, and other activities on behalf of the AOM profession that have occurred during the months of November 2016 through April 2017. Also included are updates related to 2017 exam administrations.

NCCAOM Governance Update

The NCCAOM Board of Commissioners (BOC) appointed its 2017 officers and two new Commissioners at its October 2016 meeting. The NCCAOM is pleased to announce the 2017 officers, who began their term at the February 2017 BOC meeting:

Afua Bromley, MSOM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)® - Chair

Eugene London, DAOM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)®, L.Ac. – Vice-Chair

Steve Kazmierczak, Ph.D., DABCC - Treasurer

Carl Jew, M.A., A.B. (NCCAOM)® - Secretary

Iman Majd, MD, MS, EAMP, Dipl. ABFM, ABoIM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)®, DABMA,
ABIHM, Certified GUNN-IMS - Member-at-Large

Both a new *Professional* member and a new *Public* member of the BOC began their first term as NCCAOM Commissioners at the February 2017 meeting. Janet Zand, O.M.D., Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)®, L.Ac., has over 25 years of private practice experience in acupuncture, herbal medicine, homeopathy, and nutrition. Dr. Janet Zand was the co-founder and Chairman of the Board of Zand Herbal Formulas, Inc. and is the co-author of *Smart Medicine for a Healthier Child, A Parent's Guide to Medical Emergencies, and Smart Medicine for a Healthier Living* (Avery Publishing, 1994, 1997, 1998, respectively).

Matthew P. Stanley is a Government Affairs Consultant, Association Management Executive, and Engaged Community Leader. He is currently the Vice President of Government & Association Relations at the AEGIS Associates, LLC. The NCCAOM



Board of Commissioners and staff welcomes Zand and Stanley to the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners.

The bios and photos of all NCCAOM Board of Commissioners members on our website [2017 NCCAOM Board of Commissioners on the NCCAOM website under About Us, NCCAOM Governance.](#)

The NCCAOM bid farewell to David Canzone and Jan SteGermaine, outgoing Professional Member Commissioners, at its February Board meeting. Canzone and SteGermaine each served nine years on the NCCAOM Board and will be sorely missed for their many contributions to the NCCAOM Board.

The NCCAOM is planning to appoint a new *Professional Member* to the Board of Commissioners in 2018. The Governance Committee encourages nominations of current NCCAOM Diplomates, who are interested in applying to be a candidate for an open position on the NCCAOM BOC. The NCCAOM is continuously searching for and recruiting dedicated volunteers to serve on NCCAOM Committees and Taskforces. To request an application for nomination as a Commissioner or for further information on the nomination process, as well as qualifications to serve as a *Professional* member of the BOC, please contact Melissa Dow, Coordinator of Volunteer and Executive Services at the [NCCAOM Executive Office](#).

2017-2018 Job Analysis

The NCCAOM Job Analysis (JA) study is underway. In the fall of 2016, a JA Blue Ribbon Panel was formed, comprising 14 acupuncturists experts representing various educational and experience backgrounds from throughout the country. With the assistance of test development and psychometric experts, the NCCAOM performed an exhaustive literature review of topical information about the role and responsibilities of an Acupuncturist, and conducted one-on-one phone interviews with a diverse collection of licensed acupuncturists regarding their practice. This information was synthesized and used to develop an exhaustive list of core competencies for each of the four NCCAOM examinations: Foundations of Oriental Medicine, Biomedicine, Acupuncture with Point Location, and Chinese Herbology.



In January 2017, the Panel convened via a three-day focus group to review and approve the four core lists and convert them into a survey format for distribution to the acupuncture and Oriental medicine (AOM) community. A demographic questionnaire was also created, which will allow the NCCAOM to develop a practice-profile of licensed acupuncturists and ensure representativeness of the survey sample. After answering the demographic questions, respondents will be presented with the four lists of knowledge elements (associated with each examination) and asked to indicate if they perform the task or use the knowledge in their practice, and if so, they will be asked *how important it is to competent, effective AOM practice that protects the public*. Respondents are also asked to provide feedback on the relative importance of the major job domains, and to indicate if any knowledge elements were omitted from the survey. After a sufficient and representative sample of AOM practitioners has responded to the survey, extensive data analyses will be performed.



Watch for the survey invitation, which will be sent on June 30, 2017. For more information about the JA study, please email: JASurvey@thenccaom.org. There will also be an article about the study featured in the June 2017 electronic edition and July 2017 printed edition of *Acupuncture Today*. We encourage all acupuncturists, from each state, who are actively practicing, to participate in the NCCAOM JA since the examinations are used for licensure in most all states in the U.S.

The NCCAOM expects to publish the 2017 JA Survey Report on the NCCAOM website, in December 2018. The NCCAOM expects to post the new examination content outlines and *NCCAOM® Study Guides* in the Spring of 2018. The new content outlines will go into effect in 2019.

The Public Relations and Education Campaign

As a result of a needs assessment of Diplomates performed by SmithBucklin conducted this year, NCCAOM learned that a public education campaign promoting NCCAOM Diplomates and national credentials are the most desired service requested by Diplomates. In response, the NCCAOM in partnership with Echo Media Group, a PR and marketing communications agency, is actively engaged to increase the awareness of



AOM services and the visibility of the NCCAOM certified Diplomates to the public, the media, and other healthcare practitioners. The public education campaign is already underway with press releases and media advisories garnering more media attention and continuous social media awareness postings. [Click here](#) to view the *Public Education Campaign* page on the NCCAOM's new website launched in February 2017. If your school is sponsoring an event or have newsworthy item to promote, please contact PublicRelations@thenciaom.org.

A New Resource for School Officials

Our new NCCAOM website also includes a page specifically [for school officials](#) where you can find the 'Helpful Resources' box with hot links to 'Forms and Applications' as well as 'Important Documents'. We encourage you to look at the tiles under the 'School Administrator's Tool Box' for *NCCAOM Policy Changes* and much more. We welcome your feedback on this new landing page for our updated website.

NCCAOM® Academy of Diplomates



The NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates Board elected the 2017 Academy Officers at the October 2016 Board of Commissioners meeting:

- Iman Majd, MD, MS, EAMP/L.Ac., Dip. ABFM, ABoIM, Dipl. ABMA, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)®, – Academy Chair
- Zonglan Xu, MD (China), Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)® - Secretary
- Steve Kazmierczak, Ph.D., DABCC – Academy Treasurer
- Kory Ward-Cook, Ph.D., CAE - Academy CEO

The NCCAOM has developed an [NCCAOM® Academy of Diplomates Fact Sheet](#) that answers questions about the Academy. The fact sheet will be updated as additional information becomes available. All NCCAOM Fact Sheets can be found in the ['Press Center'](#).



As all active NCCAOM Diplomates are a member of the Academy, School Officials should remind their graduating students that the NCCAOM offers benefits to Academy members such as complete online access to the current and past issues of *Meridians: The Journal of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (JAOM)*. *Meridians: JAOM* is a peer reviewed, quarterly journal featuring scientific research that adheres to a Medline compliant format. It also includes commentaries on notable, current topics; book reviews of new releases that are written by and for practitioners or researchers; short “clinical pearls” on topics that are treated at clinics; and case reports that more extensively discuss treatments that are assessed by acupuncture colleagues.

To enjoy all of the Academy benefits as an NCCAOM Diplomat, please visit [the Academy Benefits page](#) via the new [Academy website](#) launched earlier this year. NCCAOM is particularly pleased to have two major resources for credentialing and hiring acupuncturists in hospital-based practice as part of the NCCAOM Academy Benefits.

Government Relations Update

The NCCAOM is very pleased to announce that **Wyoming** is now the 47th state to enact an AOM practice act. NCCAOM’s support and assistance to the Wyoming Acupuncture Society (WAS) has been extensive and spanned several years, including trips by Executive Deputy Director, Mina Larson to assist WAS with the drafting of their practice act bill. Other support from NCCAOM included providing written and in-person testimonies and funds provided to the association to help with local lobbying and other efforts to enact a practice act to include NCCAOM standards, and the most recent support of providing WAS with a grant to complete the work necessary to write and codify the Wyoming acupuncturists licensing rules and regulations. For more information on this exciting achievement, please read the NCCAOM press release about Wyoming on [our website](#).

In addition, the NCCAOM is continuing to support the Kansas Association of Oriental Medicine (KAOM) by meeting with the Kansas Board of Healing Arts to finalize the rules and regulations process for their practice act, which was enacted last year. NCCAOM awarded KAOM a grant as well to assist them with finalizing their rules and regulations for their first practice act.



NCCAOM Deputy Executive Director Mina Larson (second from left) along with KAOM Officers and Legal Counsel attend meeting at Kansas Board of Healing Arts office in Topeka, KS in January 2017

The NCCAOM is also actively working with South Dakota and Alabama, on obtaining a practice act.

NCCAOM® Exam Administration and Development

Acupuncture with Point Location Exam Administration (ACPL): The NCCAOM is pleased to announce that the Acupuncture with Point Location exam module is now offered year-round in adaptive format as of February 1, 2017, which means that candidates who have received their authorization to test letter (ATT) from NCCAOM certification services, can schedule to take this examination year-round.



Foundations of Oriental Medicine (FOM) Exam Administration Changes: The Foundations of Oriental Medicine exam is required for all three certification programs. In the interest of increasing the number of updated exam items to be used for scoring on the exams, the NCCAOM will be administering computer-based, fixed form (linear) Foundations of Oriental Medicine (FOM) exams during the second half of 2017 which will accomplish the goal more quickly.

The FOM exam module will be offered in a fixed form (linear) format for two, 2-week exam administration periods during **August 14-26, 2017 and November 6-18, 2017.**



Administration of the year-round, **adaptive FOM exam module will conclude after June 30, 2017.**

Registration and rescheduling for all FOM adaptive exam dates will close on May 31, 2017.

Register as soon as possible for dates up through the end of June 30, 2017.

Exam Name	2017 Exam Dates	Registration Opens	Registration Closes
Foundations of Oriental Medicine Adaptive (Exam Code: 841110)	January 1 – June 30, 2017	Now open	May 31, 2017
Foundations of Oriental Medicine Linear (Exam Code: 841010)	August 14-26, 2017	April 1, 2017	August 25, 2017
	November 6-18, 2017	August 25, 2017	November 17, 2017

[Click here](#) to access the NCCAOM website page which provides additional information such as a table that shows a comparison of the adaptive and linear format administrations. The NCCAOM offers an [Exam Frequently Asked Questions](#) which includes information concerning the changes to the FOM exam administration.

NCCAOM® Foreign Language Exams (FLEs): Although the number of candidates requesting Foreign Language Exams (FLEs) remains low, the NCCAOM continues to offer the FLEs, if there are enough candidates to reliably score the exams. See below for the 2017 FLE administration periods and exam registration dates:

Exam Name	2017 Exam Dates	Registrations Begin	Registrations Complete	Exam Fees
Chinese	June 12-24, 2017	11/01/16	06/23/17	\$500
	Sept. 25 - Oct. 7, 2017	11/01/16	10/06/17	\$500
Korean*	June 12-24, 2017	11/01/16	04/30/17	\$500

***Note:** The **FOM, ACPL and CH Korean** language exams **will not be offered** during the June 12-24, 2017 foreign language exam administration period as there are not enough Korean candidates registered to move forward. **Only the Korean language BIO examination can be offered during the June exam administration.**



The NCCAOM Examination Content Outlines study tool has been translated into Chinese and Korean for the benefit of applicants and is now posted on the NCCAOM website on the [Exam Administration page](#) by clicking on the Foreign Language Exams tab.

NCCAOM® Reinstatement Exams: The NCCAOM offers Reinstatement Exams to former Diplomates who have let their certification in Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology, or Oriental Medicine terminate. For information on applying for certification through the Reinstatement Route, see our website for information on the [Reinstatement Process for Terminated Constituents](#). The remaining 2017 NCCAOM® Reinstatement Examinations administration periods are scheduled for:

Exam Name	2017 Exam Dates	Registrations Begin	Registrations Complete
All Reinstatement Exams	June 12-24, 2017	11/01/16	06/23/17
	Sept. 25 - Oct. 7, 2017	11/01/16	10/06/17

NCCAOM Certification and Examination Metrics

The most current annual [NCCAOM® Comprehensive Examination Statistics Report](#) (January 1 – December 31 comparison of 2014, 2015 and 2016) is broken down by certification route. The [order form and ordering instructions](#) are located on the new NCCAOM website by clicking on ‘Visitors’, and then ‘Schools’ where the link is located in the ‘Helpful Resources’ box .

NCCAOM Certification and Recertification Policies Update



NEW! FPD Program Graduates: At the February BOC meeting, the NCCAOM Board approved a motion to allow **graduates** of a First Professional Doctorate (FPD) Degree program (e.g. DACM), to apply for the NCCAOM examinations; however, the graduates **MUST** have graduated from an academic program that meets the following criteria:



1. The FPD program officials have applied with ACAOM for a substantive change request, if they currently have an existing accredited Master's Degree Program in Acupuncture or Oriental Medicine, and the existing ACAOM accredited program(s) are in compliance with ACAOM standards; and
2. The FPD Program has applied for candidacy of the FPD program with ACAOM.

All graduates of these programs must submit a graduation transcript prior to receiving an authorization to test from the NCCAOM. Please note, that at this time the NCCAOM is allowing these candidates to sit for the NCCAOM exams, but these candidates cannot receive certification until all requirements are met to include candidacy (i.e., pre-accreditation) status with ACAOM is achieved. The Eligibility Committee however, will be making a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners at the June Board Meeting to allow candidates of FPD programs, who meet the above criteria and have graduated from a FPD program that has received an approved curricular review, documented through a letter, from ACAOM, to the school officials, to become certified by NCCAOM in Acupuncture or Oriental Medicine, after all required examinations are passed and a current clean needle technique certificate is documented by the NCCAOM.

NOTE: NCCAOM is requesting that all academic deans of FPD programs who have students getting close to graduation, notify Ameera Ayubi, NCCAOM Credentialing Manager, at aayubi@thenncaom.org. If you have any questions about this new route of eligibility, please feel free to discuss it with either Ms. Ayubi or Dr. Kory Ward-Cook at kwardcook@thenncaom.org.

NEW! NCCAOM has selected **International Consultants of Delaware (ICD)** to exclusively perform academic credential validations and assessments for NCCAOM Certification applicants who were educated outside the United States.



NCCAOM requires a course-by-course credential evaluation from International Consultants of Delaware (ICD). Applicants can access the website at www.icdeval.com/nccaom/ to apply for a credential evaluation online. The application process requires that NCCAOM receive an original foreign language and an English translation of the graduate transcript. Applicants are advised to



apply to sit for National Board Exams **after** receiving verification that the evaluation has been delivered to NCCAOM.

Discontinuance of the Apprenticeship Route: Due to the low volume of applicants enrolling for certification through Route 3: *Apprenticeship for United States and International Applicants* (less than 1% from 2012 – 2015) and the low pass rates of these candidates for certification, the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners (BOC) voted to eliminate Route 3 for certification as of **December 31, 2021**. The apprenticeship program must be completed and the application for certification through Route 3: *Apprenticeship for United States and International Applicants* must be received by the NCCAOM no later than December 31, 2021. Route 4: *Combination of Formal Education and Apprenticeship for United States and International Applicants* will remain in effect.

Also, as previously announced beginning **January 1, 2017** all applicants for NCCAOM certification applying through Route 3: Apprenticeship United States and International are required to satisfactorily complete at least two academic years (60 semester credits) of formal education (see the [NCCAOM® Certification Handbook](#) pg. 19 for details) in addition to the required apprenticeship contact hours. The 60 semester credits must be completed in areas such as healthcare related coursework or life sciences from a non-vocational institution of higher education accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education or an equivalent accrediting agency in the country in which the education was received. The academic transcript must be submitted, in English, to the NCCAOM directly from the academic institution. For information please see the NCCAOM [Apprenticeship Elimination Q&A Fact Sheet](#).

U.S. Formal Education Route - Pre-Graduation Requirements: School officials have the final say in approving their students to sit for the NCCAOM examinations prior to graduation. Please encourage your students to consult with administrators and faculty regarding internal school policies. The process for a pre-graduate to apply and be eligible for the NCCAOM certification exams are shown in the below:

1. The student completes the required hours listed in the table below.
2. The student submits the *NCCAOM® Application for Certification*.
3. The school submits the *NCCAOM® Pre-Graduation Verification Form* and the student's academic transcript to NCCAOM.



- Once the documents and school official verify that the student meets the pre-graduation requirements, the NCCAOM staff will approve the applicant to begin sitting for the examinations and the applicant becomes a “candidate” for Certification.

NCCAOM Examination Modules	Clinical Hours Required	Total Hours Required
FOM – ACPL – BIO (exams may be taken in any order)	410 hours	1,600 hours Includes clinical hours
CH	410 hours	2,500 hours Includes clinical hours

- Please remind your students that they must request their graduation transcript be sent directly to the NCCAOM by the school as one of the final steps to complete the certification process.

NEW! The NCCAOM Recertification Application fee is \$255 per certification program and the NCCAOM Application for Inactive Status fee is \$100 per certification program as of January 1, 2017.

Policy Change for Requirements of NCCAOM Diplomates of Acupuncture & Chinese Herbology Converting to Diplomate of Oriental Medicine: In order for NCCAOM to remain compliant with the new National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA)’s new standards for accreditation of certification programs, that NCCAOM had to modify Route #5 of Eligibility for Effective January 1, 2018, NCCAOM Dipl. AC. & C.H. candidates for O.M. certification must pass the Biomedicine examination. See pages 24-26 of the [NCCAOM® Certification Handbook](#) for more information.

School Liaison Contact Information

Jennifer Nemeth, Continuing Education Director, is the contact person for schools. Jennifer has visited schools, working to provide seminars for students concerning the NCCAOM certification process. Jennifer can be reached by phone at 904-674-2474 and by email at [jнемeth@thennccaom.org](mailto:jnemeth@thennccaom.org) or click on “[Contact Us](#)” from the School Officials page of the new NCCAOM website www.nccaom.org.



NOTE: The NCCAOM encourages all school officials to contact Jennifer if they have had a change in administration or school liaison staff or contact information to ensure accurate and timely communication regarding issues such as exam dates, etc.

The NCCAOM requests that the school liaisons encourage students and faculty at your school to visit the new NCCAOM website, [What's new in 2017](#) to stay current with NCCAOM policy and procedure changes. School officials are further encouraged to use the NCCAOM resources for [examination preparation](#). Often candidates for the NCCAOM exams do not know about the **NCCAOM® Examination Study Guides** which are available for free on the [NCCAOM website](#). Please share this information with your students.

Each new NCCAOM certified Diplomate earns the right to use the NCCAOM credential and service mark for their certification. New Diplomates will want to make themselves familiar with the [NCCAOM Trade Marks and Certification Marks Policy](#) (credential and service mark) to ensure proper use.

NCCAOM Updates and Events



NCCAOM Going Paperless: In an effort to increase efficiencies, reduce risk, and help the environment, the NCCAOM is moving to a paperless environment for all of its application processes to include certification, recertification and PDA Provider applications. This means that eventually only electronic applications and transactions through the NCCAOM website portal will be accepted and paper applications will no longer be accepted. Throughout 2017, NCCAOM will be partnering with technology experts to ensure that this process is a smooth and seamless one and there will be several notifications and updates regarding this initiative. We encourage you to alert school officials and students to start preparing for moving towards a paperless environment by visiting our website and getting familiar with our online application process.

External Relations Meetings: Since October 2016 the NCCAOM participated in the following meetings:



- Commissioners Canzone and Majd along with ASA representative Eric Buckley American Medical Association-Common Procedural Terminology (AMA-CPT) panel meeting held in New Orleans in February 2017;



- Dr. Ward-Cook and Commissioners Bromley and Majd presented at the American Society of Acupuncturists (ASA) meeting held in Philadelphia in March 2017. Dr. Ward-Cook's [2017 NCCAOM Update to the American Society of Acupuncturists](#) presentation can be found on the new NCCAOM website;
- NCCAOM staff hosted an exhibit booth at the Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR) meeting held in San Francisco in April 2017.

The NCCAOM Certification Program Reaccreditation: To assure that high standards for NCCAOM certification continue to be met, the NCCAOM's certification programs in Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology and Oriental Medicine are accredited through the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) and must renew their accreditation every five years. The NCCA updated their accreditation standards in 2016. The NCCAOM is in the reaccreditation process for all three programs at this time.

NCCAOM Handbooks and Applications: All NCCAOM handbooks and applications (Certification and Recertification) have been updated. They can be found by clicking on 'Find Resources' from the NCCAOM home page. The *NCCAOM® Certification Handbook* is located under '[Applicant Resources](#)' and the *NCCAOM® Recertification Handbook* is located under '[Diplomate Resources](#)'.

NCCAOM Website: The NCCAOM launched its new and much improved website which has been lauded for its user-friendliness and updated features such as School Officials and Regulators pages. Students have been excited about new features to include a much more visual and practical



guide for the NCCAOM application process. As mentioned above, this event also marks the launch of the new NCCAOM Academy of Diplomates website featuring benefits for Diplomates such as marketing tools to promote their practice. We encourage school officials and students to check out the new websites at <http://www.nccaom.org/> and <http://www.academyofdiplomates.org/>.

NCCAOM Social Media Sites: The NCCAOM continues to promote its Diplomates and the AOM profession via its [Facebook Page](#) and [LinkedIn Page](#) as well as its new [Twitter](#) and [YouTube](#) pages. Stakeholders can find events, news, research studies and activities related to AOM on these pages. The most viewed, liked (👍) and shared posts are links to articles on the use of AOM in treating illness and improving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Schools are encouraged to submit contents of interest to be considered for social media posting to Olga Cox at ocox@thennccaom.org.



The Official NCCAOM Examination Prep Center: We are pleased to announce that the NCCAOM will be featuring official practice exams for all NCCAOM exams as well as additional practice tools via our Examination Prep Center on our website this summer. This has been a much-requested service from students and we will be providing additional information to all schools in the coming months.

If you have specific questions about this Update, please contact Dr. Ward-Cook via email at executiveoffices@thennccaom.org.