



National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM®)'s NCCAOM Job Analysis (JA) Survey and the Acupuncture and Oriental (AOM) Medicine Profession Fact Sheet:

This fact sheet is prepared for NCCAOM stakeholders to become more familiar with the essential NCCAOM job analysis survey process which is used for examination content development and will provide demographic and clinical practice characteristics for the AOM profession. If you need additional information or have additional questions, please contact Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, Chief Executive Officer at kwardcook@thenccaom.org.

Q 1. What is a job analysis (JA) survey and what is the difference between a JA and an occupational survey?

A. According to standards of NCCAOM's certification programs' accreditor, the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), a **job analysis (also referred to as a practice analysis or role delineation study)** is one of several methods *used singly or in combination to identify the performance domains and associated tasks, knowledge, skills and/or abilities (KSAs) relating to the purpose of the credential and providing the basis for validation.* This type of study is conducted by an organization or entity that sets certification or licensure standards for validation of examinations used to assure that candidates for certification or licensure have met the identified competencies for safe and effective practice. To validate these competencies, information on the number of years in practice, practice setting and practice location are data collected.

An occupational survey, which is most often performed by an association representing a profession, surveys the professionals in a particular field to provide an occupational profile. Data such as income, demographic information (age, race, age, etc.) and practice methods and settings are also included in the survey. An example of an occupational survey performed by the federal government is the Occupational Employment Statistics (OES) survey performed by the U.S. Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS), a semiannual mail survey, which examines employment characteristics and income by industry.



Q (2). *How is the data collected by a job analysis survey used?*

A. The results of the job analysis survey are used to develop the blueprint or outline for the credentialing examination (used for licensure or certification or both). The primary purpose of the NCCAOM® Job Analysis Survey is to update each examination content outline to reflect current practice of an entry-level practitioner in the profession of AOM. Content decisions for the examination content outlines are directly linked to the results of the JA. Best practice in validation of examination content is to perform a JA a minimum of every five years. Since the field of AOM is evolving all the time, it is extremely important to continually review and update the content of the examinations.

Q (3). *How is the data from an occupational survey used?*

A. According to the BLS, The following are some examples of useful applications of occupational employment and wage data:

- Detailed occupational data are used by job seekers or employers to show wages for workers in certain occupations and to assess wage variation within, and across, occupations. Wage variation within an occupation can result from several factors, including industry, geographic location, or a worker's particular experience or qualifications. Useful data for job seekers include information on the industries or geographic areas that have the highest employment or the highest average wages for an occupation. Career and guidance counselors use occupational survey data to examine possible occupational choices by field of study or training.
- Human Resources professionals use industry specific occupational data in salary negotiations or to ensure that their wages are competitive with those of other businesses in their area or industry. Information on the types of jobs within an industry can be used to compare average staffing patterns with that of one's own company. Occupational employment by industry may be useful in assessing the impact of shifts in technology and other macroeconomic trends on the types of jobs available. A state's employment projections programs use this data as an input to their employment projections, to predict training and education demands.



- Geographic area information is used to assess labor market features of a particular area. State level data can be used to make assessments about the diversity of a state's economy or to make comparisons among states. Differences in both occupational composition and occupational wage rates also help explain differences in average wages across states. For example, states with high average wages may have larger employment shares of high paying occupations, higher wages within each occupation, or some combination of both factors.
- Like state data, metropolitan area data can be used to study the diversity of local area economies. Businesses can use data to see whether it might be beneficial to relocate to a particular area. Occupational employment data may indicate whether workers are available in occupations that the business will need. For example, businesses that require computer specialists or skilled production workers may want to identify areas that have high employment in these occupations. Businesses may also use the data to compare wages between alternative areas.

Q (4). I have heard that the data for the NCCAOM Job Analysis is used for other purposes. Is there a secondary purpose for the NCCAOM JA?

A. In addition to its primary purpose of assuring that the content for NCCAOM certification examinations is based on current practice as explained in Question 2, the NCCAOM JA also provides a snapshot of the profession of AOM as it is being practiced today. This JA report, therefore, additionally serves as a useful resource for AOM community leaders, educators, and policy makers concerned with public safety and/or the practice of AOM. Some specific uses for validation of competencies for AOM practitioners are as follows:

- To track changes in the job tasks performed by professional acupuncturists and practitioners of Oriental medicine, Chinese herbologists and Asian bodywork therapists over time.



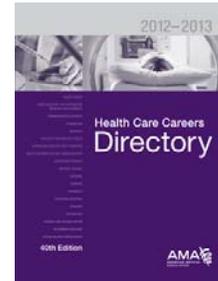
- To provide information on competencies to program and school officials at AOM educational institutions for curriculum development for entry-level and advanced professional training.
- To inform state association leaders and regulators who enter into discussions concerning changes in state regulations and scope of practice.
- To provide the AOM community leaders, federal agencies and the public with a snapshot of current demographic parameters and practice characteristics of Diplomates of Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology, Oriental Medicine and Asian Bodywork Therapy. In 2013, this snapshot will also describe licensed acupuncturists in the U.S. overall.

Additionally, the NCCAOM[®] Job Analysis final report should provide policy makers with information necessary to contrast the depth and breadth of AOM competencies between licensed acupuncturists and those health care professionals who desire to practice AOM after an abbreviated training program laid on top of their foundational degree in another health related discipline (e.g., Medical Doctor, Chiropractic Doctor, Naturopathic Doctor).

The NCCAOM will continue to utilize some of the demographic and clinical practice characteristics from the results of the JA survey to better define and track the AOM profession. This data was used to provide the BLS required information needed to track the profession for the purposes of classifying acupuncture as a separate profession. As a result of the NCCAOM's last job analysis survey (See [NCCAOM 2008 Job Task Analysis Survey: A Report to the Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Community](#)) data was submitted to the BLS and currently the [O*Net-Online](#) occupational search engine provides the following occupational code: **29-1199.01 – Acupuncturists**. Acupuncturists are now being tracked by the BLS and have been identified as a **Bright Outlook** occupation which means that the need and growth of Acupuncturists is *expected to grow rapidly in the next several years, will have large numbers of job openings, or are new and emerging occupations.*



The data generated from the NCCAOM 2008 Job Task Analysis (JTA) also provided information for several publications. One of the most significant of these publications was the 2011 -2012



[American Medical Association's Health Care Careers Directory.](#)

An NCCAOM poster was presented at the Society for Acupuncture (SAR) Conference titled [Practice Characteristics of NCCAOM: Diplomates: Implications for Ongoing Research, Curriculum Design and Continuing Education Activities](#) in 2010. In addition, NCCAOM Chief Executive Officer, Dr. Kory Ward-Cook, presented some of the demographic and practice characteristics results of the 2008 JTA in the presentation [A National Practice Analysis of Traditional East Asian Medicine](#) at the American Public Health Association (APHA) Conference in 2008.

Q (5). How has the data from the Job Analysis helped with bringing federal recognition to the AOM profession?

A. Within the last four years significant progress toward this goal was made. [The United States Department of Labor's Bureau of Labor and Statistics \(BLS\)](#) defines each profession through its standard occupational classification (featured in the [Bureau of Labor Statistics Occupational Handbook](#)) and monitors and tracks each profession. NCCAOM collaborated with the American Association for Acupuncture and oriental Medicine (AAAOM), Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM), Council of Colleges of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM), Federation of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine Regulatory Agencies (FAOMRA), and the National Acupuncture Foundation (NAF) to submit a request to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics to have "Acupuncturists" classified as a unique profession under the [Standard Occupational Classification \(SOC\) codes](#). The NCCAOM subsequently contacted the BLS office and was told that "Acupuncturists" was not granted a separate classification for 2010; however, the BLS office, in conjunction with the [Occupational Network Information \(O-NET\)](#) has



begun the necessary first step process of gathering workforce data on the profession with the intention of a possible future separate classification beginning in 2013. In the meantime, NCCAOM submitted the name “Acupuncturists” and a specific correlating code for the *Direct Match Title File* which would classify acupuncturists under the correct matching code in the BLS search engine. Now “Acupuncturists” are listed as a new and emerging profession that will be monitored by the Bureau. The table below illustrates how Acupuncturists are listed on O*Net, along with 159 other emerging professions, as of June 2009.

 **New and Emerging Occupations**
159 Occupations Approved for Data C
June - 2009

| N&E Occupational Title | Industry Sector | Definition |
|--------------------------------------|-----------------|---|
| Wind Energy Project Managers | Green | Lead or manage the development and opportunities, including environment construction of projects. |
| Wind Turbine Service Technicians | Green | Inspect, diagnose, adjust, or repair wi equipment including resolving electri |
| Acupuncturists | Health Care | Provide treatment of symptoms and d provide massage treatment. May also |
| Acute Care Nurses | Health Care | Provide advanced nursing care for pa respiratory distress syndrome, or sho perform advanced, invasive diagnosti |
| Advanced Practice Psychiatric Nurses | Health Care | Provide advanced nursing care for pa psychotherapy under the direction of |
| Allergists and Immunologists | Health Care | Diagnose, treat, and help prevent alle system. |
| Anesthesiologist Assistants | Health Care | Assist anesthesiologists in the admini procedures. Monitor patient status an |

The Bureau of Labor and Statistics, through O*NET, has added “Acupuncturists” to the list of new and emerging professions to track.

It is now imperative that further demographic and clinical practice information be collected about acupuncturists, which includes **all licensed acupuncturists in the U.S.** This occupational data must be collected and be made available in the public domain in order for acupuncturists to be



independently recognized (i.e. be assigned a unique standard occupational code (SOC)) and be continually tracked by the BLS. The NCCAOM's 2008 Job Task Analysis survey played a vital role in the collection of data about the profession as will the NCCAOM[®] 2013 Job Analysis. The NCCAOM will, for the first time be collecting this occupational data on a stratified sample from the entire AOM profession which is **all licensed acupuncturists**. As mentioned earlier in this fact sheet, the NCCAOM[®] Diplomate demographic and practice characteristics data collected from the 2008 JTA study is now being used to provide descriptive information on the AOM workforce to the BLS as well as to various publication sources.

Q (6). Why does the NCCAOM need to collect contact information from all licensed acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners in every state?

A. As mentioned above, in order for the NCCAOM[®] 2013 Job Analysis to be truly representative of the entire AOM profession, **the NCCAOM must collect names and addresses for all licensed acupuncturists in the U.S. so that the survey can be sent to a stratified random sample of this entire population.** Stratified random sampling, also sometimes called *proportional* or *quota* random sampling, involves dividing your population (in this case licensed acupuncturists) into homogeneous subgroups and then taking a simple random sample in each subgroup (i.e. in each U.S. state). There are several major reasons why **stratified sampling** is preferred over other sampling methods such as simple random sampling. First, it assures that the sample will be able to represent not only the overall population, but also key subgroups of the population, especially small minority groups. This sampling also focuses on important subpopulations. It also allows use of different sampling techniques for different subpopulations and most importantly, it improves the accuracy and efficiency of estimation. This type of sampling will allow the NCCAOM to collect important demographic and clinical data that is truly representative of the entire profession. This is why it is imperative that the NCCAOM is able to collect the names, addresses and emails for all licensed and certified acupuncturists in all states. Since a list of licensed acupuncturists from every state is not available, the NCCAOM is asking for the assistance of all state regulatory agencies, school officials, and state association leaders in the AOM profession to submit names, addresses and email for practitioners affiliated with their state or institution.



Please contact Stephanie Mills at stategov@thenccaom.org if you can assist with providing this information. Once the initial list of acupuncturists in each state is created, a pre-survey postcard will be sent to all licensed practitioners on this list in December 2012. The purpose of the pre-survey postcard is to inform these licensed practitioners about the value of their participation in the important NCCAOM[®] 2013 JA Survey. It is hoped that this pre-survey postcard notification will encourage the licensed acupuncturists to submit their email and license number to the NCCAOM so they can be identified as potential survey participant.

Q (7). Who will receive a JA survey?

A. The sampling process described above will select a random stratified list of all licensed and certified practitioners based on each subgroup represented. The practitioners in these subgroup samples will be sent a notification, by e-mail, which will tell them that they have been chosen to participate in the NCCAOM[®] 2013 JA Survey asking them to go to an online link to enter the NCCAOM[®] 2013 JA Survey. This survey will be conducted in mid to late January 2013 and will be hosted by Schroeder Measurement Technologies (SMT), NCCAOM's psychometric and examination development vendor.

Q (8). How can I access the results of the JA survey and when will they be ready?

A. Once the survey process is completed and the survey is collected, NCCAOM subject-matter experts will use the data gleaned from the survey to update the NCCAOM Examination Content Outlines for each NCCAOM exam. In addition, the NCCAOM will prepare a Job Analysis Report for the profession and the public that will be available in late 2013. The new examination content outlines will be published by July 1, 2013 and the examinations, based on the new content outlines, will be published and candidates will begin using the new exams based on the updated content outlines in January 2014.

Q (9). Who can help assure that the 2013 NCCAOM[®] Job Analysis (JA) survey process is representative of the entire population of acupuncturists and how can they help?

A. NCCAOM Diplomates – Diplomates can fill out the Job Analysis participation form located on NCCAOM's website at www.nccaom.org/jobanalysis.



Licensed Acupuncturists – If you are a licensed acupuncturist and not certified with the NCCAOM, please fill out the Job Analysis Participation Form located on NCCAOM's website at www.nccaom.org/jobanalysis. It is important that we include all licensed AOM practitioners in the survey to include those that are not NCCAOM certified. All contact information collected by the NCCAOM will only be used for the purposes of the JA survey so that the NCCAOM can sample the appropriate random stratified sample of licensed acupuncturists in the U.S.

Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine State Regulators – The NCCAOM needs the cooperation of all AOM state regulatory boards to assist with identifying the individual licensed acupuncturists in their state. Without a list of licensed acupuncture and Oriental medicine practitioners from each state, the NCCAOM will not be able to represent each state, and the sample may not completely be representative of the practice in their state. Currently, the NCCAOM has obtained the list of licensed acupuncturists in many of the states including California and Florida and others; however, the NCCAOM is still trying to get a list of licensed acupuncturists from states that represent a large number of licensed acupuncturists such as New York and Texas. State regulatory body officials can benefit from the results of the survey data since demographic and practice characteristics and other occupational data will be obtained and can be used to monitor and regulate the profession for their state compared to other states. If you are a state regulator, please contact stategov@thenccaom.org to assist with this very important national JA survey.

AOM School or Program Administrators – As a school official you can be a valuable part of the JA data collection process by ensuring that we have all names and contact information for your alumni and faculty who are licensed acupuncturists. The results of the JA will assist in defining entry-level tasks and competencies for acupuncturists and will additionally assist in gaining federal recognition as described above, which can open doors for participation in federal student debt forgiveness programs and provide data to AOM schools to help them meet the necessary requirements for the [Gainful Employment Regulation](#) introduced by the Obama administration. Under the Gainful Employment regulations, career training programs will continue to qualify for federal student aid if they meet one of the following three metrics in at least three out of four consecutive years:



- **Loan Repayment Rate:** At least 35 percent of the program's former students are repaying their loans;
- **Debt-to-Earnings Annual Ratio:** The estimated annual loan payment of a typical graduate does not exceed 12 percent of his or her total earnings;
- **Debt-to-Discretionary-Earnings Ratio:** The estimated annual loan payment of a typical graduate does not exceed 30 percent of his or her discretionary income.

Therefore, it is important for school or program administrators and their faculty to prepare their graduates to be successful in the workforce.

Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM) State Association Leaders – Providing names and contact information for AOM state association members will assist the NCCAOM to fully represent their state in the JA survey process. State association leaders and members will be able to use data to help track the AOM profession in their state or region. They can also use the data to strengthen their state's scope of practice based on the practice data from their state and or region.