



NCCAOM® Certification In Oriental Medicine



Achieving Certification

Certification in Oriental medicine equates to certifications in Acupuncture and Chinese Herbology along with education in all of the five branches of Oriental medicine (acupuncture, Chinese herbs, bodywork, dietary therapy, and exercise). Apprenticeship is NOT a route of eligibility for initial certification in Oriental Medicine.

In addition to meeting the requirements specified in *The Application Process* (see page 25 of the *NCCAOM® Certification Handbook*) the applicant must successfully:

1. Pass the following examinations:
 - A. Foundations of Oriental Medicine
 - B. Acupuncture with Point Location
 - C. Chinese Herbology
 - D. Biomedicine

- 2) Proof of completion of the CCAOM Clean Needle Technique (CNT) course. Refer to page 19 of the *NCCAOM® Certification Handbook* for the CNT requirements. Full NCCAOM Certification will not be awarded until this requirement is met.

Note: The CNT course completed date, as noted on the CNT certificate, must be completed within six years prior to the award of NCCAOM certification.

Eligibility Routes

- Route #1: Formal Education: Graduate from ACAOM accredited program - United States applicants

- Route #2: Formal Education – International applicants

- Route #3: Current Diplomates of Acupuncture, Chinese Herbology or both



Route 1: Formal Education: Graduate or Pre-graduate from an ACAOM accredited program - United States Applicants only

Applicants using this route must be a graduate or pre-graduate from an academic program accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM) or an academic program in candidacy status with ACAOM. ACAOM's requirements are described in the ACAOM Accreditation Manual available at www.acaom.org/manuals.htm. Table 4 below indicates the minimum number of hours of academic course work that must be completed to be eligible to sit for each required exam.

Applicants for NCCAOM certification in acupuncture are allowed to test on a pre-graduation basis after completing the required hours based on the date the applicant entered the academic program as shown in Table 4 below. All pre-graduation applicants must have their pre-graduation application form (available at the applicant's school) signed by their designated school official.

Table 4: Pre-graduation Hour Requirements For Taking Examinations Required for Certification in Oriental Medicine

Examination	Matriculation (Enrollment) Date	Completed Hours
Foundations of Oriental Medicine Acupuncture and Point Location Biomedicine	Prior to July 1, 1999	1,350
	On or After July 1, 1999	1,490
Chinese Herbology	Prior to July 1, 1999	1,700 (350 clinical hours)
	On or After July 1, 1999	2,050 (410 clinical hours)

Pre-graduation applicants are advised to consult with the school's program director regarding the best time to take the national certification examination(s). Each school may have their own internal policies regarding when they will submit the transcript on behalf of their students. Once the applicant has



completed the minimum hours (as listed above), the transcripts and approval of each examination must be received directly from school (signed by the program official).

Note: Candidates must graduate, meet the ACAOM graduation hour requirements and have sent their official graduation transcripts to the NCCAOM before achieving full NCCAOM certification. Please refer to the ACAOM graduation hour requirements chart on pages 16-17 of this handbook.

Route 2: Formal Education: International Applicants

Important Notice – Beware!

The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM) does not accredit any colleges or institutions. The NCCAOM does not have a formal affiliation or licensing agreement with any colleges or institutions. The NCCAOM is aware that misleading and inaccurate information has been posted on certain websites claiming a special relationship between the NCCAOM and some non-government approved institutions. The NCCAOM has ordered these institutions to remove the misleading and erroneous information from their websites but some of this information is still found on the web. If you see such claims on any institution's web site, please send the website link, to Irene Basore at [info @ theccaom.org](mailto:info@thenccaom.org) so that the NCCAOM can take appropriate action. Thank you.

Applicants using this route must have graduated from academic institutions outside of the United States that meet the following requirements:

A) Approval by a foreign government's Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, or equivalent foreign government agency.

OR

B) Approval by a foreign private accreditation agency that has an accreditation process and standards substantially equivalent to that of ACAOM, and that is recognized for that purpose by the appropriate government entity in that foreign country.

International educational programs attempting to meet the eligibility requirements under either A or B above must ALSO be deemed to have equivalency in total hours and distribution of hours as required by ACAOM standards at the time of application.

The applicant's education will be reviewed using the NCCAOM international education criterion above.




Graduates from an international academic educational institution must first apply to either the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO) or the World Education Services (WES) for a course by course educational transcript evaluation. Foreign credentialing agencies do not “approve” foreign educational institutions but rather determine whether a school is recognized by a foreign governmental agency, such as a Ministry of Health or Ministry of Education.

- To apply to AACRAO applicants may download the Foreign Education Review Application (FERA) from the NCCAOM website (see “Educated Outside of the United States” found on the Site Map section). A completed FERA application, an official transcript and diploma/degree along with the current FERA fee should be mailed to:

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO)
International Educational Services
One Dupont Circle, NW
Suite 520
Washington, D.C. 20036-1135

For additional information please visit the AACRAO website at www.aacrao.org.

-  To apply to WES for a credential evaluation on-line, applicants should go to www.wes.org. Note that WES must receive the applicant’s documents as specified in the scroll-down menu at www.wes.org/required for the particular country where the applicant attained their degree/diploma. One evaluation will be sent to the applicant and the other to the U.S. organization indicated on the application. (Please request it is sent to the NCCAOM). WES typically completes its credential review within seven business days after receipt of the WES application and documents according to www.wes.org/required. In some cases, WES may have to contact a particular school abroad for verification of documents, and this may necessarily extend the length of the equivalency review.

To send documents to World Education Services please use the following addresses:

By Postal Mail:
World Education Services
P. O. Box 5087
Bowling Green Station
New York, NY 10274-5087
USA

By Express Courier
World Education Services
64 Beaver St. #146
New York, NY 10004
USA



For additional information please visit the WES website at www.wes.org.

The foreign education review process typically takes 8 weeks to complete; however, the NCCAOM does not guarantee this time frame. Please wait until notification from AACRAO or WES that the foreign education review is complete before submitting the NCCAOM application packet to NCCAOM.

Supplemental Education for Certification; Internationally Educated – All International applicants applying for certification, who have earned degrees/diplomas in acupuncture and/or Oriental Medicine but, who do not meet the ACAOM hourly requirements for biomedicine and/or communication/counseling/ethics/safety are allowed to take supplemental education at an ACAOM school or a U.S. College/University accredited by an agency which is recognized by the U.S. Department of Education or at a regionally accredited institution.

AOM supplemental hours and courses must be completed at an ACAOM accredited or ACAOM candidate school. The supplemental education may be obtained at more than one ACAOM accredited or ACAOM candidate school.

The supplemental education cannot exceed 660 hours. The supplemental education is subject to NCCAOM's Eligibility Committee approval. This policy applies to applicants denied certification eligibility based on insufficient course hours.

Route #3: Conversion from Acupuncture and/or Chinese Herbology Certification

NCCAOM Diplomates may obtain a new certification in Oriental Medicine by converting from Acupuncture and/or Chinese Herbology certification(s) and achieving additional competency verifications. Diplomates who wish to convert must meet the following requirements:

1. Be an active NCCAOM Diplomate or hold inactive status with the NCCAOM (former Diplomates in lapsed status are not eligible).
2. Submit the newly created *NCCAOM® Application for Conversion to Oriental Medicine* found on the NCCAOM website.
3. **FEE CHANGE** – Pay the reduced *NCCAOM® Application for Conversion to Oriental Medicine* fee of \$460.00 decreased from \$595.00.
4. To guarantee active status is maintained as a Diplomate of Acupuncture (NCCAOM) and/or Diplomate of Chinese Herbology (NCCAOM) while attaining certification in Oriental Medicine, professional development activities (PDAs) must be submitted towards recertification of currently held certification(s). PDA points (see 4b or 4c below) must include four (4) PDA points in Safety and/or Ethics, and documentation of a CPR course and additional PDA activities as follows:



4a. *NCCAOM® Application for Conversion to Oriental Medicine* form submitted within 1 – 12 months of the recertification cycle: PDAs are not required. During the first year of the recertification cycle, conversion to Oriental Medicine does not require recertification at the time of application to OM,

Or

4b. *NCCAOM® Application for Conversion to Oriental Medicine* form submitted within 13 – 24 months of the recertification cycle: submit 30 PDA points in the area of Competency Maintenance. Recertification processing extends the current expiration date by two years in Acupuncture and/or Chinese Herbology (as applicable),

Or

4c. *NCCAOM® Application for Conversion to Oriental Medicine* form submitted within 25 – 48 months of the recertification cycle: submit 60 PDA points as defined in the *NCCAOM® Recertification Handbook*. Recertification processing extends the current expiration date by four years in Acupuncture and/or Chinese Herbology (as applicable).

5. Depending on current certification(s) held, eligible Diplomates must have successfully passed the Acupuncture with Point Location and/or Chinese Herbology examination(s).

6. Demonstrate competency in biomedicine:

A. Successfully pass the Biomedicine examination

Or

B. Complete 45 hours in biomedicine continuing education units or coursework within six (6) years of the application date. If PDAs are required for conversion, the 45 hours in biomedicine can be applied towards the PDA requirement. The biomedicine hours must be documented as follows:

a. Submit hours in each of the four Biomedicine Exam content outline domain areas:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. 25 points minimum | Domain A: Western Medical Assessment |
| 2. 6 points minimum | Domain B: Pharmaceuticals and Supplementations |
| 3. 6 points minimum | Domain C: Safety |
| 4. 6 points minimum | Domain D: Practice Management Issues |

7. Diplomates who tested prior to 2004 must demonstrate completion of 21 educational units in bodywork, diet, exercise and/or patient education in bodywork, diet and/or exercise, attained at any point prior to applying for Oriental Medicine certification. If PDAs are required for conversion, the 21 hours can be applied towards the PDA requirement if earned within six (6) years of the application date.



8. Completion of the Council of Colleges for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (CCAOM) Clean Needle Technique (CNT) course within six years of the date of certification in Oriental Medicine.

Biomedicine Educational Units

Diplomates certified prior to 2004, who have not already passed the Biomedicine examination, may choose to demonstrate completion of 45 educational units in biomedicine in lieu of taking the Biomedicine examination.

Diplomates should use the following sources to determine what courses fall under the biomedicine category: ACAOM curricular standards in the biomedicine category and the *NCCAOM[®] Biomedicine Examination Content Outline*, as described under 6B above or which can be found on our website, www.nccaom.org. It is important to remember that all biomedicine courses must have been completed and verification sent to NCCAOM within six years of the date of application for Oriental Medicine certification and documentation of coursework is required. Valid documentation would include a transcript, course certificate, or letter from the organization or school offering the course.

Bodywork, Diet, Exercise and/or Patient Education in Bodywork, Diet, and/or Exercise Educational Units

Diplomates certified prior to 2004 are required to demonstrate a minimum of 21 educational units in at least **two** of the following four categories: bodywork, diet, exercise, patient education in bodywork, diet, and/or exercise.

The following categories are provided as a guide regarding acceptable education in each content area:

Bodywork: Body mechanics, ergonomics, acupressure, shiatsu, tuina.

Diet: Basic Oriental medicine dietary principles; basic nutritional principles.

Exercise: Basic stretching, movement, and exercise principles and techniques; basic breathing and relaxation principles and techniques; Qi Gong; Tai Chi.

Patient Education in Bodywork, Diet and/or Exercise: Self-treatment techniques; lifestyle implications and considerations; meditation; integration of Oriental medical theory and modern lifestyles; the healing process.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Effective January 1, 2013, the following policy change is adopted which requires all Diplomates certified in one certification with the NCCAOM (Acupuncture or Chinese Herbology) who apply for certification in Oriental Medicine to fulfill the biomedicine requirement by successfully passing the Biomedicine examination.