

NCCAOM[®] Activity Report for the CCAOM Meeting

Final
October 2015





Introduction

This report serves as an update to the CCAOM members on the numerous activities of the NCCAOM® to include governance, certification, testing and PDA services; legislative activities; and NCCAOM policy and procedural updates, as well as other activities on behalf of the AOM profession that have occurred during the months of May 2015 through October 2015.

NCCAOM Governance Update

The NCCAOM Board of Commissioners appointed its 2016 officers at its October meeting. The 2016 slate of officers will begin their first term at the February 2016 Board of Commissioners meeting. The NCCAOM is pleased to announce the slate of officers as follows:

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

David Canzone, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)®, Dipl. NBO, DOM - Vice-Chair

Steve Kazmierczak, Ph.D., DABCC - Treasurer

F. Afua Bromley, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)® - Secretary

Carl Jew, M.A., A.B. - Member-at-Large

You can find the bios and photos of the current [2015 NCCAOM Board of Commissioners on the NCCAOM website under About Us, NCCAOM Governance.](#)

The NCCAOM is planning to appoint two new *Professional Members* to the Board of Commissioners in 2017. The Board Development Committee encourages nominations from current NCCAOM volunteers who are interested in applying to be a candidate for an open position on the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners. Please contact Melissa Dow, Coordinator of Volunteer and Executive Services at the NCCAOM [Executive Office](#) if you would like further information.

Strategic Planning



As a reminder during 2014 the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners updated its mission and vision statements, following a comprehensive SWOT analysis.

- **NCCAOM Mission Statement:** *To assure the safety and well-being of the public and to advance the professional practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine by establishing and promoting national evidence-based standards of competence and credentialing.*
- **Vision Statement:** *Acupuncture and Oriental medicine provided by NCCAOM credentialed practitioners will be integral to healthcare and accessible to all members of the public.*

Below are the strategic goals adopted by the NCCAOM for the next three to five years:

- **Integrate** NCCAOM credentialed providers into healthcare in the United States.
- **Distinguish** NCCAOM as the expert source for AOM credentialing and competency standards.
- **Expand** the value of NCCAOM credentials to assure and advance professional opportunities for NCCAOM Diplomates.

In an effort to meet these new goals, the NCCAOM has created two taskforces for the purposes of executing and promoting its strategic goals. The title, charge and update on these activities follows:

The Public and Professional Recognition Awareness Taskforce was created with the charge to:

- Conduct a situational analysis of past, current, and proposed public information and awareness activities in the AOM profession.
- Provide recommendations to the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners on what specifically the NCCAOM can do, independently and/or as a strategic partner with other organizations, to promote our Diplomates and the AOM profession.

Currently this taskforce is working with an outside consultant PR firm to develop the 2016 NCCAOM Branding Campaign and to begin to identify tool kits for Diplomates to assist them in their careers.



The Hospital-Based Practice Taskforce (HBPT) was created with the charge to:

- Develop credentialing and privileging guidelines for acupuncturists and administrators for employment in hospitals and/or integrative practice settings.
- Identify skills needed for licensed acupuncturists to become credentialed and privileged providers in inpatient and outpatient hospital settings.
- Provide recommendations to the Board of Commissioners on need for developing a post-entry certificate program for acupuncturists desiring to be more prepared to be employed in hospitals and/or integrative practice settings.

The CCAOM's Strategic Goal 4: *To support the advancement and integration of the AOM profession within U.S. healthcare* contains overlapping strategies which overlap with the NCCAOM's HBPT work. The CCAOM states that it will be developing *standard credentialing and contract materials for the Council's member colleges to assist in their creation of acupuncture internships in hospitals and other tertiary care settings, including the Veterans Administration and the Department of Defense.*

The NCCAOM provided a \$10,000 grant to ACCAHC to work on a credentialing tool kit for acupuncturists. This partnership project will result in a project report and tool kit that will be published soon. In addition, the NCCAOM aims to publish a separate situational analysis on the status – challenges, barriers and recommendations for acupuncturists becoming credentialed and privileged in hospital settings. The 14-member HBPT team will also provide a set of recommended guidelines for acupuncturists and hospital administrators to use to facilitate more expedient employment of acupuncturists in both the private, nonprofit and public hospital healthcare systems.

The CCAOM's Goal #4 also states that the Council also plans to conduct training for its member colleges concerning credentialing and privileges at integrative facilities and collaborative care. The materials developed by the NCCAOM should be useful to the Council in facilitation of this proposed strategic effort.



Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) Update

The NCCAOM still expects the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) to release a second Federal Register notice in 2015 with the proposed 2018 SOC structure. The NCCAOM will be posting further updates as we receive them. Please watch for ongoing updated information posted to our [NCCAOM BLS Information Page](#).

NCCAOM Certification Policies Update

U.S. Pre-graduate Eligibility for Exam Approval

The NCCAOM surveyed school officials, from U.S. schools offering ACAOM accredited programs, concerning their understanding of, and perceived user friendliness of, the NCCAOM pre-graduate process for exam eligibility and approval. The responses to the survey lead the NCCAOM to the conclusion that the process is working and is well accepted by a majority of the school officials responsible for handling the procedure; therefore the procedure will remain unchanged at this time. However, subject-matter-experts (SMEs) worked with the NCCAOM psychometrician to defined entry-level hours needed for each candidate, for testing on each exam module. The hours were also considered when conducting the cut score exercises for the current exam modules. The resultant minimal academic hours identified by the SMEs are higher than are currently required for pre-graduate students applying for NCCAOM certification. The NCCAOM must change the pre-graduate policy (The 2016 NCCA accreditation standards for approval of certification programs now require that requirements for candidate eligibility routes be documented) for the number of hours a pre-graduate student must complete prior to receiving exam approval to match those determined by the SMEs doing the job analysis and the cut scores for the exams. The purpose of this notification is to inform ACAOM school liaisons and registrars as well as applicants applying for certification under the United States Formal Education Pre-Graduation Eligibility Route the number of essential minimal academic hours (didactic and clinical training) which will be required for exam approval as of January 1, 2016. See the detailed information in the table below:



Required Examinations	Completed Hours
Foundations of Oriental Medicine Biomedicine Acupuncture with Point Location	1,600 (to include 410 clinical hours)
Chinese Herbology	2,500 (to include 410 clinical hours)

Eligibility for Graduates from a First Professional Doctorate Program

The NCCAOM proactively requested feedback from Diplomates, school officials, and acupuncture and Oriental medicine (AOM) leaders for their input to this proposed new NCCAOM eligibility route to qualify for certification and examination candidate status. The stakeholder survey was available on the NCCAOM website for a period of sixty (60) days. We want to thank all respondents for their input.

A total of 50 responses were received during the allotted time frame. Forty-Six (46) percent of the respondents were in favor of the NCCAOM creating a new eligibility route for graduates from a FPD program. Thirty-six (36) percent stated they were against the new FPD program; and therefore, stated that the NCCAOM should not allow individuals graduating from the FPD program to take the exams. The remaining respondents were non-committal and questioned many aspects of the FPD program and organizational institutions that are involved in educating and licensing AOM practitioners. Because of the varying views, NCCAOM would like to clarify our purpose in requesting stakeholder input and the proposed new eligibility route for FPD students.

The NCCAOM is the organization that provides the AOM profession’s entry-level certification and examinations which verifies that an individual has the basic core competencies to practice acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine safely and efficaciously. 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). The NCCAOM does not set academic standards nor approve institutions or curriculums. Also, NCCAOM’s certification exams are based on the results of a Job



Analysis and are not influenced by school curricula or the types or programs offered by individual U.S. schools.

To accommodate all qualified applicants for certification, the NCCAOM offers several eligibility routes to certification. In response to requests from FPD program officials, the NCCAOM initiated the stakeholder input request in order to receive feedback from the profession to determine if a separate eligibility route to certification should be developed for that applicant type. After careful review and input from the profession, the NCCAOM plans to maintain *Route 1: Formal Education* and intends to modify this route's description to be more generic and state that the applicant must hold a minimum of a Master's level education, in Acupuncture or oriental Medicine, from an ACAOM accredited or candidate school, to be eligible to sit for the requisite NCCAOM exams. By keeping the eligibility language more general, the specifics such as degree titles (e.g., FPD, DAOM, etc.) will not be necessary. The NCCAOM will post updates, on our website and in our *2016 NCCAOM® Certification Handbook*. We continue to welcome comments. Please send any comments to info@NCCAOM.org.

Exam Results and Certification Verification Form

Students must request that the NCCAOM send their exam results and/or certification status to a state when applying for licensure. The [Exam Results and Certification Verification Form](#) (as required for State Licensure Application) is currently located on the NCCAOM website. Click on the "Forms" tab and scroll to the bottom of the page to find the link to the PDF form. The NCCAOM is creating a means to request this information through an online process. The fee is presently \$35.00 per state and will increase to \$45.00 per state as of January 1, 2016.

School Liaison Contact Information

Jennifer Nemeth, Associate Director PDA and External Relations, is continuing as the NCCAOM School Liaison – the staff contact for your program(s). Many of you have met Jennifer over the past year and a half when she visited your school and worked with you to provide learning seminars for your students concerning the NCCAOM certification process. Jennifer can be reached by phone at 904-674-2474 and by email at jnemeth@thenccaom.org or by emailing [School Liaison](#) from the "Contact Us" page of the NCCAOM website www.nccaom.org.

Self-Directed Learning: A New Recertification Professional Enhancement Category



In an effort to encourage Diplomates use of evidence-based medicine, to stay current in their practice, and to foster greater research literacy, the NCCAOM Board of Commissioners approved a new *Professional Enhancement* activity, *Self-Directed Learning*, which offers one PDA point with a maximum of four points per recertification cycle for reading research articles and case studies. The NCCAOM [created a template form](#) to be completed and submitted by the Diplomate in order to receive PDA points for this area. Additional information is [posted on the website](#) and in the [NCCAOM® Recertification Handbook](#) (see pg. 25 of this handbook for instructions and documentation requirements).

A Look Ahead to What's Coming As of January 1, 2016 for the Recertification Program:

- CPR will be required as a stand-alone requirement in addition to 60 PDA points.
- Two (2) PDA points will be required in each of the core domains of **Safety and Ethics**. (Reminder: 2015 remains unchanged. Four (4) PDA points are required in the domains of Safety and/or Ethics.)
- Diplomates certified in both Acupuncture and Chinese Herbology prior to 2004, who apply for conversion to Oriental Medicine certification, will be required to either pass the Biomedicine certification examination or submit **60** (an increase from the previous 45 hours) of biomedicine continuing education units or coursework earned within four years of the application date. Please note, however, some states many states now require passage of the Biomedicine exam for licensure.

The NCCAOM encourages Diplomates to complete a mix of online and face-to-face professional development classes in order to foster more exchange of information with colleagues, meet with other AOM professionals and healthcare providers with similar professional interests, and foster a sense of community and networking among AOM practitioners.

As always, please visit the NCCAOM website under “*What’s New*” on the homepage to stay current with NCCAOM policy and procedure changes and other news pertinent to AOM professionals. Please encourage your school liaisons to pass along these NCCAOM updates to the students and faculty at your school.



Exam Administration and Development

Acupuncture with Point Location (ACPL) Exam Administration Changes

As previously announced, in the interest of getting more questions with updated point location images and to increase the number of updated exam items which can be used for scoring on the ACPL exam, the NCCAOM will be administering computer-based fixed form (linear) Acupuncture with Point Location (ACPL) exams starting November 2015 and continuing through 2016, which will accomplish these goals more quickly. The ACPL exam module will be offered in a fixed form (linear) format starting with a **November 9-21, 2015** administration. Registration is now open for the November administration period and will close on November 20, 2015.

There are four, 2-week exam administration periods scheduled throughout 2016. Below are the dates of the four ACPL exam administration periods as well as the date each registration opens and closes.

Exam Name	2016 Exam Dates	Registration Opens	Registration Closes
Acupuncture with Point Location – Linear	February 1-13, 2016	11/20/2015	2/12/2016
	April 25 – May 7, 2016	2/12/2016	5/6/2016
	August 1-13, 2016	5/6/2016	8/12/2016
	November 10-23, 2016	8/12/2016	11/22/2016

[Click here](#) to access the NCCAOM website page which provides additional information, such as a link to *Frequently Asked Questions* concerning the changes to the ACPL exam administration or a table that shows a comparison of the adaptive and linear format administrations.

NCCAOM® Foreign Language Exams (FLEs):

Although the number of candidates requesting Foreign Language Exams (FLEs) continues to remain low, the NCCAOM will continue to offer the FLEs again in 2016. See below for the 2016 FLE administration periods and exam registration dates:



Exam Name	2016 Exam Dates	Registrations Begin	Registrations Complete	Exam Fees
Chinese	June 13-25, 2016	11/02/15	06/24/16	\$400
	Sept. 26 - Oct. 8, 2016	11/02/15	10/07/16	\$400
Korean*	June 13-25, 2016	11/02/15	04/30/16	\$400

*A sufficient number of candidates must register in order to move forward with the Korean administration.

The NCCAOM Examination Content Outlines study tool has been translated into Chinese and Korean for your benefit and is now posted on the NCCAOM website under the [Forms](#) tab.

NCCAOM® Reinstatement Exams: The NCCAOM® Reinstatement Examinations administration periods are scheduled for:

- March 7-19, 2016
- June 13-25, 2016
- September 26 – October 8, 2016

NCCAOM Certification and Examination Metrics

The most current mid-year (January 1 – June 30 comparison of 2014 and 2015) [NCCAOM® Comprehensive Examination Statistics Report](#) is, broken down by certification route. The data shows all testers educated in formal education programs in the United States, testers educated in formal education programs outside the United States and testers educated through apprenticeship training. For previous full-year reports click on the [NCCAOM® Comprehensive Examination Statistics Report](#) fly-out.

Update on Products and Services from the NCCAOM




AOM Day:

The NCCAOM established, and continues to maintain the AOM Day website www.aomday.org. In 2015, the NCCAOM partnered with several organizations. A full list of partners can be found on the AOM Day website homepage. While reflecting on the 2015 AOM Day celebration, it's important to look at the bigger picture of the impact made throughout the nation and worldwide by this special day. As a result, we thank every participant for being a part of this great movement in bringing to light the amazing benefits of AOM.

Please visit the [AOM Day website](#) to view the following activities:

- [Free marketing tools](#) developed by the American Society of Acupuncturists (ASA) and Acupuncture Media Works, were offered for the benefit of practitioners;
- A video contest "*Because It Works*";
- A [Facebook](#) page dedicated to AOM Day;
- An interactive [Patient Testimonials](#) page on the AOM Day website;
- A national [press release](#) sent to media outlets to promote AOM Day events;
- An enhanced [AOM Day events directory](#) searchable by state;
- A designated area to promote AOM Day [state associations](#) and [school AOM Day events](#);

The video contest "[Because it Works!](#)" educates the public about the efficacy of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. The contest winners were announced on AOM Day, October 24, 2015. To view the videos [click here](#).

NCCAOM Social Media Sites: The NCCAOM continues to promote its Diplomates and the AOM profession via its [Facebook Page and LinkedIn Page](#). 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.

Diplomate Satisfaction Survey Results



The Diplomate Satisfaction Survey results will be featured in the Fall edition of the *NCCAOM® Diplomate E-news You Can Use*, which will also be sent to school liaisons and state associations by the end of October.

NCCAOM on the Go: Each year NCCAOM continues its concerted effort to improve outreach to our valued Diplomates, the AOM schools and state associations. One example of our out-reach program is to attend state and regional AOM conferences where NCCAOM staff host an exhibit booth. The purpose of attending these conferences is to provide applicants, candidates and Diplomates face-to-face access to NCCAOM staff, who are able to provide information about NCCAOM's work to advance the AOM profession and to demystify the rumors regarding NCCAOM exams and certification process.

You may have seen the NCCAOM banners at one or more of these events in 2015:

- February: Florida Acupuncture Education Day in Tallahassee, FL
- March: Great River (NWHSU) in Bloomington, MN
- May: Southwest Symposium (AOMA) in Austin, TX
- May: TCM Kongress in Rothenburg, Germany
- August: Florida Society of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine (FSOMA) in Tampa, FL
- November: Society for Acupuncture Research (SAR) and Society for Integrative Oncology (SIO) Joint Conference in Boston, MA

In conjunction with these external events NCCAOM staff, Jennifer Nemeth, Associate Director PDA and External Affairs and school liaison delivered presentations to students and faculty regarding the NCCAOM certification process at:

- Northwest Health Sciences Institute in Bloomington, MN
- AOMA in Austin, TX
- Academy of Five Element Acupuncture in Gainesville, FL
- Dragon Rises College of Oriental Medicine in Gainesville, FL

The NCCAOM is receptive to having staff present, in-person, at conferences and schools near you or within your area. To schedule a visit from NCCAOM staff, please contact Jennifer Nemeth, at jinemeth@thenccaom.org.



If the NCCAOM is not scheduled to come to your area this year we would be pleased to arrange a one-on-one live webinar presentation where students and faculty can dialogue with NCCAOM staff to ensure their questions are answered. Please remember that the recorded NCCAOM Webinars are always available on the [NCCAOM Website](#).

New Professional Development Activity (PDA) Categories



Please contact Jennifer Nemeth at jnemeth@thenccaom.org if your school's continuing education department wishes to provide PDA approved courses for Diplomates.

NCCAOM State Legislative Activity

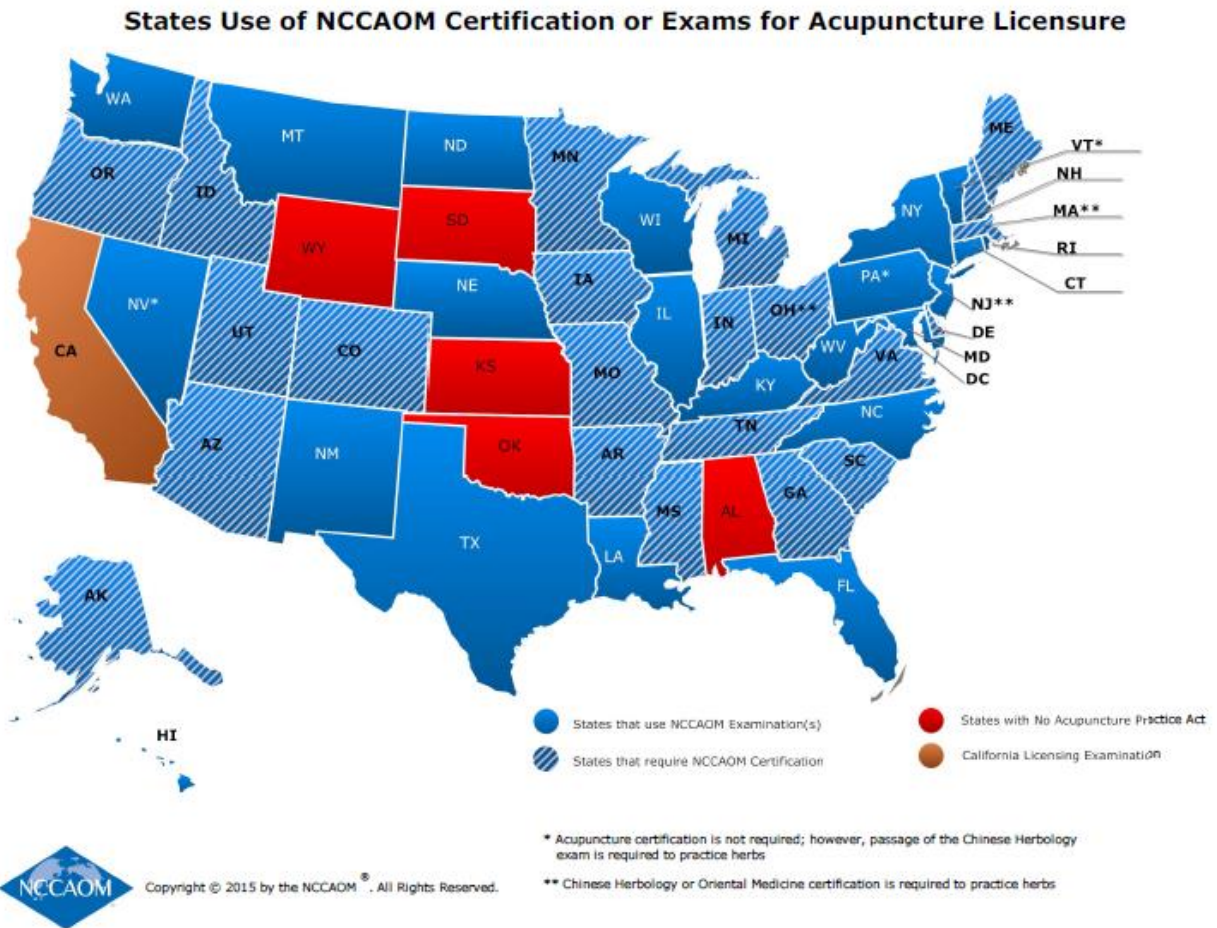
NCCAOM regulatory affairs staff continues to stay very busy providing information to state regulatory agencies to support national standards in AOM. All states that regulate acupuncture (with the exception of California) require at the least passage of the Foundations of Oriental Medicine (FOM) and Acupuncture with Point Location (ACPL) examinations for licensure. As of October 2015, 44 states plus the District of Columbia recognize NCCAOM certification or exams for licensure (See Map 1, below). North Dakota passed legislation to enact an AOM practice act in April 2015 (see [press release](#)) Eight states require passage of the Chinese Herbology (CH) examination for licensure. Map 2, below, shows the states that include Chinese herbal medicine in their scope of practice for acupuncturists. Currently, 32 states require the passage of the Biomedicine (BIO) exam in addition to the FOM and ACPL. There are currently 25 states that require full NCCAOM certification, minimally in acupuncture; some states require certification in Chinese herbology or Oriental Medicine as well.

In order to continue to meet its mission of public protection, the NCCAOM works closely with state regulatory boards to add the requirement for passage of the Biomedicine exam, and for those states that have Chinese herbal medicine in their scope of practice, the NCCAOM encourages the licensing board to require the passage of the NCCAOM Chinese Herbology exam for licensure. NCCAOM is also actively working with regulatory boards to require NCCAOM certification and certification maintenance. Please note that state licensing boards set the prerequisite for licensure to practice acupuncture. It is up to states to set these requirements for the safe practice of



acupuncture and Oriental medicine. NCCAOM qualifies practitioner through its examination and certification process and states rely on this process to ensure that licenses are competent to practice safely. More information is available about our role with state regulatory agencies via our factsheet [NCCAOM's National Standards Fact Sheet: Meeting National Standards through its Examinations and Certification Process](#)

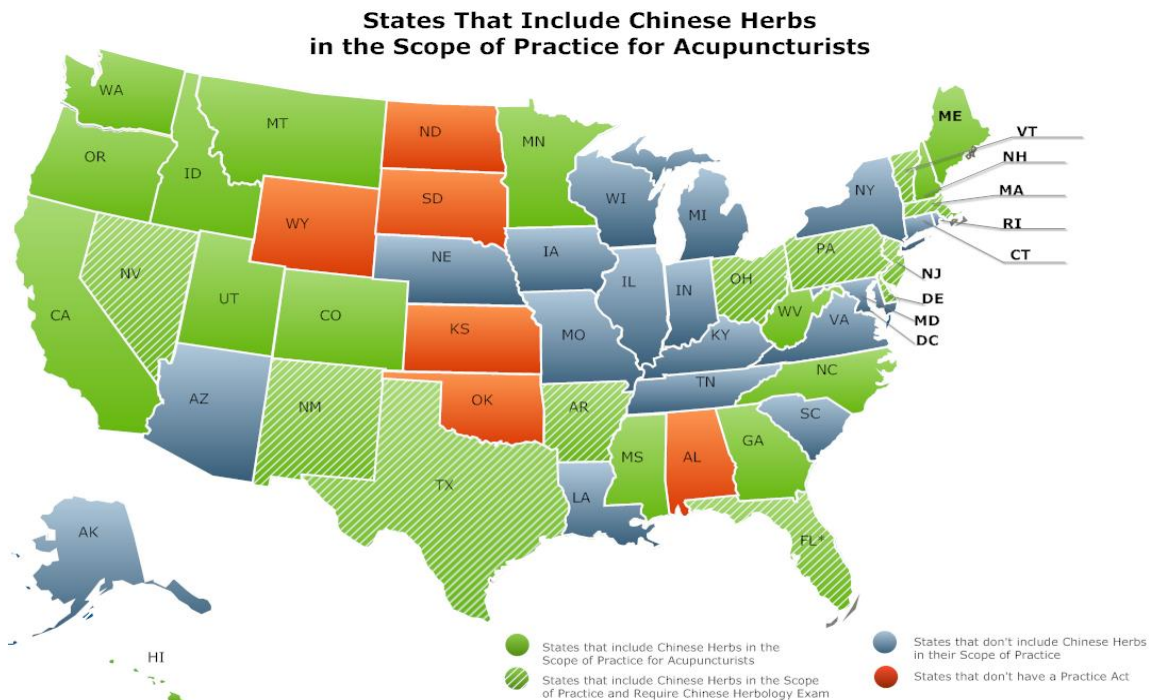
Map 1: States that Recognize NCCAOM Certification or Examination for Licensure (As of October 2015)



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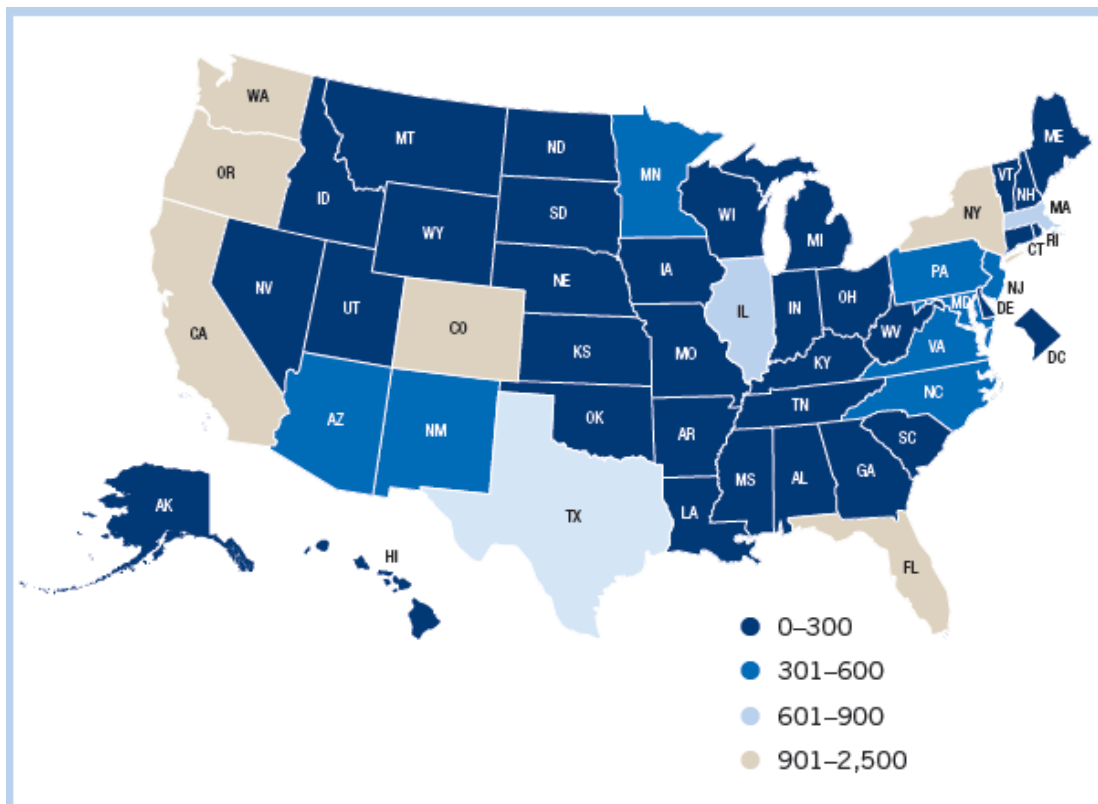
* Acupuncture certification is not required; however, passage of the Chinese Herbology exam is required to practice herbs
 ** Chinese Herbology or Oriental Medicine certification is required to practice herbs

Map 2: States that include Chinese Herbs in the Scope of Practice for Acupuncturists



Map 3, below, shows the number of active NCCAOM Diplomates per state and virtually all states are represented. [The NCCAOM® Find a Practitioner](#) is a useful tool to locate a certified Diplomate by city and state. By the end of 2014, the NCCAOM had over 18,000 active Diplomates worldwide. The NCCAOM maintains the [States Licensure Requirement Table](#) that shows each state in which the NCCAOM examinations are required for licensure and also which states require full NCCAOM certification for licensure.

Map 3: Number of NCCAOM Active Diplomates per State



The NCCAOM state relations department has been very busy with providing testimony, writing letters, and supporting states for the advancement of national standards and greater scope for AOM practitioners. NCCAOM has written letters or provided information against the practice of dry needling by physical therapists for the following states in 2015: Massachusetts, Iowa, Kansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee. The NCCAOM is also working with Alabama, Kansas, Louisiana, Rhode Island, South Dakota and Wyoming in providing information and services regarding the development of a first practice act or enhancing their practice act.