

# NCCAOM<sup>®</sup> Activity Report for the CCAHM Meeting

Spring Update 2021



PUBLIC PROTECTION THROUGH QUALITY CREDENTIALS

**Submitted by NCCAOM CEO, Mina M. Larson, M.S. MBA, CAE  
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## Introduction

This report serves as an update to CCAHM members on activities of the NCCAOM®, to include governance, certification policy changes, exam administration activities, advocacy and public education campaign efforts, and other current activities affecting applicants, Diplomates and other stakeholders.

The [NCCAOM Mission Statement](#) is to assure the safety and well-being of the public and advance the professional practice of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine by establishing and promoting national evidence-based standards of competence and credentialing.

## NCCAOM Governance Update

The NCCAOM Board of Commissioners (BOC) appointed for 2021 through February 2022 are:

- Iman Majd, MD, MS, EAMP, Dip. ABFM, ABolM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)® DABMA, - Chair
- Daniel Jiao, DAOM, Dipl. OM (NCCAOM)® – Vice Chair
- Matthew Stanley, CAE - Secretary - **Public Member**
- Afua Bromley, MSOM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)® - Treasurer
- Janet Zand, O.M.D., Dipl. Ac., C.H., O.M. (NCCAOM)® - Member At Large
- Zonglan Xu, MD (China), Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)® - Commissioner
- Jayne Tsuchiyama, D.A.O.M., D.Ac., Dipl. O.M. (NCCAOM)® - Commissioner
- Nicholas Dougherty, DAOM, Dipl. Ac. (NCCAOM)® - Commissioner
- P. Divya Parikh, MPH, CAE – Public Member
- Beverly L. Black, MHSA, CAE – Public Member
- Mina M. Larson, M.S., MBA, CAE - CEO

Bios and photos of all current NCCAOM Board of Commissioner members can be found on the NCCAOM website: [NCCAOM 'About': Governance](#).

### Call for Nominations: 2022 NCCAOM Board of Commissioners

The NCCAOM Board of Commissioners is a diverse body of volunteers committed to the advancement of our profession and public safety through the certification of our diplomates.

We're excited to announce that we are inviting nominations for Professional Member positions to the Board for service commencing in February 2022. Professional Members bring critical real-world experience and insights to the Board and shape policy to the betterment of the profession. This is a wonderful opportunity for NCCAOM Board-Certified Acupuncturists to deepen their professional involvement. We encourage all to apply: our Board is diverse, comprising of a broad range of ethnicities, ages, and experience and we welcome your nominations or enquiries.

**Please note**, previous experience serving on a government or nonprofit board is required. The full [NCCAOM® Call for Nominations for Professional Member Commissioners and Position](#)



[Description](#) details the additional needed skills and the time commitment to serve on the BOC. To access the *Commissioner Application* and *Board of Commissioner Position Description*, go to the [Volunteers section of the NCCAOM website](#) or contact [Melissa Dow](#), Manager of Volunteer Development and Special Projects at [mdow@thenccaom.org](mailto:mdow@thenccaom.org). [Deadline for applications July 1, 2021](#)

## Professional Development (PDA) Program



In coordination with the NCCAOM Diplomate Digital Badges, the PDA program was excited to introduce the *NCCAOM PDA Provider Digital Badge* in April 2021. The digital badges and the new CE Banking feature for Diplomates complete the PDA increased benefits and marketing campaign that began in 2020. The new PDA initiatives include the quarterly *NCCAOM® PDA Newsletter with featured Providers in each issue*, the new advertising service *NCCAOM® PDA Highlights* for Providers, and a reorganization of the PDA portion of the NCCAOM website.

## NCCAOM Chinese Herbal Compounding and Safety (CHCS) Certificate of Qualification (COQ)



**Launched September 2020** - The CHCS COQ is a voluntary online course consisting of 10 assessment-based modules. The program provides FDA Good Manufacturing (GMP) Guidelines, review of FDA regulations, as well as many helpful resources. The CHCS COQ is open to all licensed acupuncturists and herbalists, students, lab technicians, herb pharmacy compounders and any other office staff who compound herbal formulas in their office or retail dispensaries. For successfully completing this herbal program, enrollees receive ten (10) PDA points and the *NCCAOM® CHCS COQ Badge* for displaying their additional education in Chinese herbal safety. For more information please watch the [Chinese Herbal Compounding and Safety \(CHCS\) COQ webinar](#) or sign-up today at <https://www.nccaom.org/education/professional-development/>.

## The Official NCCAOM® Exam Prep Center

The NCCAOM offers the [Official NCCAOM® Examination Prep Center](#), the one-stop hub to help students and candidates prepare for the NCCAOM exams. The [Official NCCAOM Practice Tests™ for all NCCAOM exams](#) have now been upgraded on a new learning management platform which provides:

- A new updated, user friendly interface for multiple choice questions
- The opportunity to purchase a package of practice test attempts that can be used to take different Practice Test modules as well as to take the same Practice Test module more than one time.

This allows candidates to access more questions to better prepare for the Board exams. Please refer to the [Frequently Asked Questions](#) and [Step-by-Step instructions](#) for details.

## Practice Tests Packages

New pricing allows a user to pay for a number of Practice Test ATTEMPTS. The Practice Test module (ACPL, FOM, BIO, CH)\* is chosen by the user at the start of each test attempt.

Package	Price
1 Practice Test attempt	\$70
2 Practice Test attempts	\$133
3 Practice Test attempts	\$190
4 Practice Test attempts	\$239

**Faculty Members:** It is recommended that ACAOM Approved Schools Faculty members sign up for these practice tests to familiarize themselves with the process.

**Diplomates:** These practice tests are also open to NCCAOM Diplomates who can earn 5 PDA points for successfully passing one practice test per recertification cycle. To access the NCCAOM Official Practice Tests, please follow the link: <http://www.nccaom.org/nccaom-exam-preparation-center/>. Do not hesitate to contact Olga Cox at [ocox@thennccaom.org](mailto:ocox@thennccaom.org).

## NCCAOM® Exam Administration



### English Language Certification Exams Administration:

The NCCAOM is offering the English language certification exams in all Pearson VUE locations as many testing centers are now opened at 100% capacity. Please note all exam candidates will have to follow protocol and precautions based on COVID-19 state laws concerning safety measures. Candidates are encouraged to check with the Pearson VUE testing center that they have scheduled their exams for specific requirements.

All exam candidates are encouraged to review the [2020 Exam Content Outlines](#) (based on the 2017 Job Analysis). Recently, the NCCAOM published an article titled "[Creating National Exam Content: The Importance of a Job Analysis Study](#)" in Acupuncture Today that explains the job analysis and exam development process for a national certification exam.

**Foreign Language Exams (FLEs) Canceled for 2021:** The NCCAOM canceled the administration of the 2021 Chinese and Korean language exams due to the inability to predict the number of candidates taking these exams along with the ability to offer them in other countries because of the unpredictable, imminent, ongoing coronavirus (COVID-19) situation going on across the world.

## NCCAOM Policies Update Reminder



### [Continuation of the COVID-19 Graduating Student Assistance](#)

Understanding the difficult situation that many graduating students face in light of interruptions to on-campus and in-person educational activities, the NCCAOM is continuing to work with ACAOM-approved and ACAOM-candidate school administrators to provide the temporary exception for all students graduating on or before December 31, 2021. By making this option available, we hope to expedite the graduate's opportunity to obtain a state license during this challenging time. It is important to note that the candidate will not become NCCAOM-certified until the school has submitted their official graduation transcript along with successfully passing of all required NCCAOM exams and submitting the CNT certification from CCAOM. The NCCAOM will only work directly with school administrators and will not grant this exception directly to students. Once again, this exception is temporary due to the current situation and will end at the extension date of **December 31, 2021**.

## NCCAOM Board Approves a new Exam Retake Policy

In December 2020, the NCCAOM launched the new [NCCAOM Exam Retake Policy](#). This new policy eliminates the 5-Time Rule that limits a candidate to 5 lifetime attempts for each exam module allowing candidates to take the NCCAOM exams more than five times based on meeting criteria. This criteria for eligibility are based on the length of time since the last failed attempt and the number of failed attempts. NCCAOM has created a calculator where candidates can enter information based on their specific circumstances and will be directed to the eligibility criteria, they must meet to retake the failed Board exam module. For more information email [examattempts@thenccaom.org](mailto:examattempts@thenccaom.org).

## NCCAOM Route 8: Route to Certification for California Licensed Acupuncturists



**The deadline to apply has been extended to September 30, 2021 for - Route 8: Route to Certification for California Licensed Acupuncturists!**

Due to the hardships caused by COVID-19 the NCCAOM has extended the deadline to submit an application for the Route to Certification for California Licensed Acupuncturists from December 31, 2020 to **September 30, 2021**.

The eligibility criteria remain unchanged: *Candidates for CA Route certification must hold an active free and clear CA Acupuncture license and pass the California Acupuncture Licensing Exam (CALE) no later than January 12, 2020. If CA Acupuncture License was obtained after January 12, 2020, applicant must provide proof of having completed the CALE before January 13, 2020.*

The NCCAOM [Route to Certification for California Licensed Acupuncturists](#) was created for California licensed acupuncturists who meet eligibility requirements. This route creates more opportunities for those who hold an active license to practice in California, whether a resident of California or another state and do not currently have NCCAOM National Board Certification. NCCAOM Diplomates are eligible for employment and referrals from the VA system, as well as potentially the Department of Defense (DOD), most hospital in-patient and out-patient centers, as well as other private practice/clinical settings, and certain cruise lines. Applicants who meet all requirements of Route 8 will be granted NCCAOM Oriental Medicine certification without taking the NCCAOM examinations.

[Frequently asked questions and answers](#) about Route 8 are available on the NCCAOM website and was last updated December 29, 2020. As state licensing requirements differ, this route may or may not allow successful CA Licensed Acupuncturists applicants who become NCCAOM Diplomates to apply for licensure in other states. Licensure requirements vary from state to state; therefore, it is important to contact the state licensing board before applying for licensure. Some states require that candidates for state licensure send their NCCAOM exam results, while other states only require demonstration of NCCAOM Certification; therefore, the NCCAOM cannot guarantee portability to practice in any other state for individuals who achieve NCCAOM certification through the California Licensed Acupuncturists Route. For details on each state's regulatory requirements for licensure as an acupuncturist, please see the interactive [NCCAOM State Regulatory Map](#) for all state licensing requirements.

The NCCAOM has also created an [informational page for all California Stakeholders](#) to include schools and students as the state explores options of using NCCAOM exams as a pre-requisite for state licensure.

### **NCCAOM Time-Limited Reinstatement Route to Active Certification**

The [NCCAOM Time-limited Reinstatement Route](#) has been extended until **June 30, 2022** due to the impact of COVID-19. Anyone who was once certified by the NCCAOM and allowed their certification to terminate is eligible to apply. A Reinstatement Taskforce worked together with input from NCCAOM's accreditor, the National Commission of Certifying Agencies (NCCA) to create this Route in order for NCCAOM former Diplomates to be able to return to active status through demonstrating competency maintenance by submitting PDAs/CEUs coursework in the [Core Competency categories](#).

The NCCAOM staff have created a [Reinstatement requirement calculator](#), available on the NCCAOM website, to help calculate the number of points and fees for each applicant. Continuing education credit obtained for state licensing can be submitted for this route. For more information a *NCCAOM® Time-limited Reinstatement Route to Active Certification* [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQ\)](#) has been developed to assist in this process.

## Advocacy Highlights



The NCCAOM continues to partner with American Society of Acupuncturists and our professional government relations and advocacy team to advance the recognition and career advancement of NCCAOM National Board-Certified Acupuncturists™ nationally. The GR team serves as liaison for all advocacy-related matters for the NCCAOM. The most recent Advocacy update concerned the inclusion of acupuncturists by CMS. This topic will continue to be a primary focus of the GR team. The GR team is also the primary contact for NCCAOM Diplomates' advocacy-related questions. For details on NCCAOM advocacy activities [click here](#).

The NCCAOM and ASA also partnered together to inform the acupuncture community during the challenging days of COVID-19. The GR team played a major role in the [NCCAOM/ASA COVID-19 Crisis: Working Together Town Hall Meetings](#) held weekly beginning in April through June 2020. The Town Hall meetings continue on an as needed basis. All Town Hall meetings were recorded, posted on the NCCAOM website and can be replayed. [Town Hall Meeting Recordings](#) are available [here](#).

In addition, NCCAOM has teamed with ASA to provide COVID-19 and economic relief helpful resources and information during the last several months, such as COVID-19 stimulus relief and PPP loans. Please go to our [COVID-19 Resources Page](#).

Watch [latest News](#) on the NCCAOM website home page for all upcoming and to catch-up on recently past events.

## School Resources and Public Education Campaign

All school liaisons and officials are encouraged to visit the [School Official Resources](#) page to stay updated on information regarding certification, exam services and procedures and latest news on policies that affect schools and students.

[The NCCAOM Press Center](#) is devoted to providing information to reporters and other interested parties for access to all information about the NCCAOM in one place. Information about our public education campaign and recent NCCAOM in the news can be found [here](#).

**NCCAOM Social Media Sites:** The NCCAOM continues to promote its Diplomates and the acupuncture profession via its [Facebook Page](#) and [LinkedIn Page](#) as well as on [Twitter](#), [YouTube](#), and our new [Instagram site](#). On these pages stakeholders can find events, news, research studies and activities related to Acupuncture Medicine. The most viewed, liked (👍) and shared posts are links to articles on the use of Acupuncture Medicine in treating illness and improving and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. School officials are encouraged to submit content of interest to be considered for social media posting to Olga Cox at [ocox@thenccaom.org](mailto:ocox@thenccaom.org).

**Acupuncture Medicine Day:** The NCCAOM partnered with ASA this year to celebrate [AM Day](#). We received [proclamations from multiple states and cities](#) and A Video Contest was launched to address healing powers of acupuncture services in body, mind and spirit through visual media. A winner was declared in each of the three categories below.

1. Acupuncture Safety During COVID (e.g.: Inform the public that acupuncturists are open and ready to treat safely)
2. Demonstrate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion in Acupuncture
3. Acupuncture Accessibility and Community Engagement

Please stay tuned for announcement on activities for AM Day 2021. We will be encouraging schools to sponsor events for this year's AM Day.

## NCCAOM School Liaison

The 2020 *NCCAOM® Program Performance Reports (PPR)* were emailed on March 26, 2021 to schools who had placed their order. School administrators are reminded they can still order the 2020 PPR and the 2021 mid-year and year-end PPR report may now be ordered, by submitting the form that is available from the School Officials page [found here](#) on the NCCAOM website.



Olga Cox, Chief Operating Officer and Jennifer Nemeth, Director of Education & Professional Development have developed a "Steps to NCCAOM® Certification" teleconference for graduating students. The presentation assists graduating students in how to create an online NCCAOM account, submit an application, and tips to sit for the exams. Working with the students has been very successful and rewarding. If a school is interested in working with NCCAOM to provide the teleconference for their graduating class, please contact Jennifer at [jnemeth@thenccaom.org](mailto:jnemeth@thenccaom.org).

## NCCAOM School Webinar – Coming Soon!

We are excited to announce the next NCCAOM School Webinar scheduled for Wednesday, May 19, 2021 at 8:00 p.m. ET specifically designed for school administrators, faculty and students. Topics presented will be updates on school and applicant related policies and resources available to students. The webinar will be recorded for those who will not be able to attend. To register, please visit [Registration \(gotowebinar.com\)](#).

**NCCAOM Diplomat Webinar** - For our Diplomates who missed the NCCAOM Diplomat webinar in March 2021, you can watch the recording [here](#). The webinar provided helpful information on the NCCAOM new recertification portal and latest policies and procedures update for our valued Diplomates.

**Thank you for your support!**