

COMMISSION ON OSTEOPATHIC COLLEGE ACCREDITATION
James M. Lally, DO, MMM, Chair

This report is for the period from June 1, 2005 through May 31, 2006. During this period the AOA Commission on Osteopathic Accreditation (COCA) met three times: August 27, 2005; December 3-4, 2005; and April 29-30, 2006. A workshop for colleges of osteopathic medicine was conducted on June 21, 2005.

COCA meeting in August 2005

The COCA met for a retreat on August 26, 2005 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel in Chicago, IL. The retreat was the first time that the COCA, in its current composition, reviewed its goals and objectives. The retreat concluded with an open forum in which the commissioners had the opportunity to identify those areas of "successes" and areas "needing improvement".

The COCA met on August 27, 2005 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel (Chicago, IL). An orientation session was conducted for newly appointed members. Accreditation action items for the agenda included:

- ❑ One report from on-site evaluation for full survey review of accreditation was accepted, with approval of continuing accreditation for the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine in PA.
- ❑ There were no requests for substantive changes.
- ❑ Five progress reports were reviewed and accepted: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, Independent Study Program (ISP) –PA; Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton –FL; Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine-Nevada – Henderson; West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine – Lewisburg; and Georgia-Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Suwanee.
- ❑ Annual Reports for 2004-2005 were reviewed from all 20 colleges of osteopathic medicine. Follow-up was requested from three colleges.

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Revised language to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* was reviewed and approved for submission for public comment.
- ❑ Potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* were reviewed in three areas. The COCA denied a request that procedures be written for a branch campus becoming an independent college of osteopathic medicine. The COCA gave staff direction for development of language in the areas of review of additional locations, and use of a nationally recognized accounting / management firm for preparation of feasibility studies.
- ❑ The COM Accreditation Appeal Panel appointments for the 2005-2006 year were approved.
- ❑ One individual was approved for admission to the Evaluators Registry.
- ❑ Revisions to the Annual Supplemental Report Form were approved.
- ❑ Revisions to the Annual Report Tabular Data form were approved.
- ❑ Revisions to the 2005-2006 Class Size Survey Form were approved.

COCA meeting in December 2005

The COCA held its fall meeting on December 3-4, 2005 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel in Chicago, IL. The meeting began with an orientation session two new COCA members. Accreditation action items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Two reports from on-site evaluation of applicants for pre-accreditation were accepted, with approval of initial pre-accreditation for: Lincoln Memorial University DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine – Harrogate, TN; and A.T. Still University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine-Mesa –AZ.
- ❑ One report from on site evaluation of an applicant for pre-accreditation was accepted, with deferral of a pre-accreditation decision, pending submission of an acceptable progress report: Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine – New York, NY.
- ❑ Four progress reports were reviewed and accepted from: West Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Lewisburg; Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine-Bradenton –FL; Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine-CA – Vallejo; and Midwestern University Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine – Downers Grove, IL.
- ❑ One request for substantive change / class size increase was approved for the University of North Texas Health Science Center at Fort Worth-Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- ❑ One request for substantive change / unplanned class size increase was approved for the New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology – Old Westbury.
- ❑ Two reviews of complaints were heard for the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences-College of Osteopathic Medicine –MO.
- ❑ Follow-up responses on the Annual Reports from three colleges were reviewed. Additional follow-up was requested from one college.
- ❑ A request for re-calculation of the approved class size was denied for the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine –PA.

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ A request for the COCA to intervene in competition for clinical education training positions was denied.
- ❑ Potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* -- based on the U.S. Department of Education staff analysis of the COCA's petition for continuing recognition -- were reviewed and authorized for circulation for public comment. An ad hoc subcommittee was appointed to review additional potential revisions to this document.
- ❑ A staff analysis of potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* – received from within the profession's leaders – was reviewed.
- ❑ Revisions to the *COCA Handbook* – based on the U.S. Department of Education staff analysis of the COCA's petition for continuing recognition – were approved.
- ❑ The COM class size survey report was approved.

COCA meeting in April 2006

The COCA held its spring meeting on April 29-30 2006 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel. Accreditation action items from the agenda included:

- ❑ One report from an on-site evaluation of full survey review of provisional accreditation was accepted with approval of continuing provisional accreditation: Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Blacksburg.

- ❑ Two reports from on-site evaluations to branch campuses were accepted: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine, branch campus in Bradenton, FL; Touro University College of Osteopathic Medicine, branch campus in Henderson, NV.
- ❑ One report from an on-site evaluation to a branch campus was accepted with approval to add the branch campus into the accreditation of the parent college: Georgia-Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Suwanee.
- ❑ Five reports from focused on-site evaluations were accepted: Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Ft. Lauderdale, FL; Des Moines University College of Osteopathic Medicine –IA; New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology – Old Westbury (2 reports); and Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine – MO.
- ❑ One progress report was accepted with approval of initial pre-accreditation from the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine – New York, NY.
- ❑ Three progress reports were accepted from: West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine – Lewisburg; A.T. Still University of Health Sciences College of Osteopathic Medicine-Mesa –AZ; and Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences College of Osteopathic Medicine –MO
- ❑ Two substantive changes / curriculum were approved: New York College of Osteopathic Medicine of New York Institute of Technology – Old Westbury (Doctor-Patient Continuum Track); and Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine –PA (3-year primary care scholars pathway).
- ❑ One substantive change / class size increase was approved for the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine –PA (lecture discussion pathway at the Erie campus).
- ❑ One substantive change / unplanned class size increase was approved for the Midwestern University Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine – Glendale.
- ❑ One request for waiver of procedures was reviewed for the Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine – Athens.
- ❑ Annual Reports for 2005-2006 were reviewed from all 20 colleges of osteopathic medicine. Follow-up was requested from one college.
- ❑ The follow-up response on the Annual Report from one college was reviewed, with additional follow-up being requested.

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* -- based on the U.S. Department of Education staff analysis of the COCA's petition for continuing recognition -- and public commentary were reviewed. The public commentary addressed several areas outside those were reviewed in specific response to the U.S. Department of Education staff analysis. An ad hoc committee was appointed to review these comments and make its recommendations back to the COCA by the time of the AOA Annual Meeting in July 2006.
- ❑ An expanded list of potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* – received from the profession's leaders – was reviewed and directed to the ad hoc committee reviewing the standards.
- ❑ Further revisions to the conflict of interest policy in the *COCA Handbook* – based on the U.S. Department of Education staff analysis of the COCA's petition for continuing recognition – were approved.
- ❑ Revisions to several administrative and review documents were approved: Site Visit Reports; review of policies and procedures; Annual Report Review; Progress Report Review; and self-study analysis.
- ❑ Eleven (11) nominees were approved for admission to the Evaluators Registry.
- ❑ Joseph McNerney, DO, Chair, Council on International Osteopathic Medical Education and Affairs (CIOMEA) gave testimony on concerns of the CIOMEA regarding international medical education.

COCA - Executive Committee (COCA – EC)

The COCA–EC met via teleconference on June 27, 2005 and discussed the following:

- ❑ What procedures, if any, should be developed for branch campuses that wish to become freestanding colleges?
- ❑ Draft procedures for review of additional locations were reviewed.
- ❑ Potential revisions to the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* – received from the profession’s leaders.

The COCA–EC met via teleconference on July 8, 2005 and discussed the following:

- ❑ Preliminary review of a feasibility study for pre-accreditation from the Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine – New York, NY (executive session)

The COCA-EC met via teleconference on September 7, 2005 and discussed the following:

- ❑ Preliminary review of a feasibility study for pre-accreditation from the A.T. Still University of Health Sciences-Mesa –AZ (executive session)
- ❑ Preliminary review of a feasibility study for pre-accreditation from the Lincoln Memorial University-DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine – Harrogate, TN (executive session).

The COCA–EC met via teleconference on September 29, 2005 and discussed the following:

- ❑ Reviewed and approved the electronic training materials for members of the Evaluators Registry
- ❑ Reviewed and recommended revisions to the current feasibility study requirements for business plan
- ❑ Provided an interpretation of a standards query from the Georgia-Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Suwanee (executive session).

Committee on College Accreditation Training (CCAT)

The CCAT conducted an Accreditation Training workshop program on June 21, 2005 in Bethesda, MD. This workshop was for COM training; each COM is expected to send at least one person to the workshop. The topic for this workshop is: *The Self-Study Process: Evaluating Assessments and Outcomes*. George Thomas, DO, AOA President, was the luncheon speaker for this workshop. A pre-meeting teleconference was held on June 13, 2005 followed by a post-meeting teleconference on August 29, 2005.

The CCAT met via teleconference monthly between January through May to prepare for the Evaluators Training Workshop to be held on November 11-12, 2006 at the James Hotel in Scottsdale, AZ. This 1-1/2 day program will be by invitation only for: new nominees; those unable to attend the October 2004 workshop, all team chairs, COCA voting members and non-voting attendees. The keynote address and team chair session will be given by Barry Dorn, MD, Associate Director, Program on Healthcare Negotiation & Conflict Resolution; Harvard School of Public Health.

Annual Report Review Committee

The Annual Report Review Committee met via teleconference on June 29, 2005 and August 11, 2005 to review the COCA Annual Supplemental Report. That report was reviewed and revised, then distributed to the COMs for completion by December 15, 2005. The next tentatively scheduled teleconference is for June 2006.

COM Accreditation Appeal Panel

There were no appeals heard during this year.

Continuing Recognition of the COCA by the U.S. Secretary of Education

The COCA submitted its petition for continuing recognition as a reliable accrediting agency to the staff of the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) on June 14, 2006. This submission was the first web-based petition to be prepared by the COCA. The draft staff analysis was received on October 7, 2005. Based upon the areas identified in the analysis, a response was prepared and submitted electronically on November 4, 2005. The response indicated actions that the COCA would take, beginning with consideration of revisions to its accreditation documents at its December 3-4, 2005 meeting.

The COCA Chair and staff testified before the USDE National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI). Based upon the testimony and questioning from the NACIQI members, the recommendation was to grant the full five years of accreditation with a progress report due on December 8, 2005 to demonstrate full compliance with a few areas of regulations at 34 CFR 602.

On May 1, 2006, the Honorable Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education, granted five years of continuing recognition to the COCA. A progress report is due December 8, 2006 to demonstrate full compliance with the following areas:

- ❑ 34 CFR 602.15 Administrative and fiscal responsibilities, subparts (a)(4) educators and practitioners on its evaluation body and (a)(6) controls against conflict of interest. The citation was issued for clarification and codification of current practice.
- ❑ 34 CFR 602.20 (a) Enforcement of standards, subparts (1) and (2) – enforcement of the “24-month” term for compliance. The citation was issued for clarification of current practice
- ❑ 34 CFR 602.22 (b) Substantive change – this subpart addresses substantive changes that are required to be evaluated. The citation was issued because the level of detail for all required substantive changes was not of the same high level as that for more often occurring class size change, curriculum change and branch campuses.

The COCA has already approved changes to conflict of interest procedures in the *COCA Handbook*. Revised language has already been submitted for public comment in those areas that would require revision of the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*. Final approval will occur in September 2006.