

COMMISSION ON OSTEOPATHIC COLLEGE ACCREDITATION
John M. Ferretti, DO, FACOI, Chair

This report is for the period from June 1, 2009 through May 31, 2010. During this period the AOA Commission on Osteopathic Accreditation (COCA) met three times: September 12-13, 2009; December 5-6, 2009; and May 22-23, 2010. A training session on COCA standards for representatives of the colleges of osteopathic medicine (COM) was conducted on January 9-10, 2010.

COCA meeting in September 2009

The COCA met on September 12-13, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Chicago O'Hare Hotel (Rosemont, IL). Prior to the meeting, an orientation session was conducted for a newly appointed member. Accreditation action items for the agenda included:

- ❑ One report from an initial provisional accreditation site visit was reviewed and accepted for the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Hattiesburg, MS).
- ❑ Initial provisional accreditation was approved for the William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Hattiesburg, MS).
- ❑ One Report from a comprehensive site visit was reviewed and accepted for the Midwestern University / Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (Downers Grove, IL).
- ❑ Continuing accreditation was approved for the Midwestern University / Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (Downers Grove, IL).
- ❑ Four reports from focused site visits were reviewed and accepted: Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Blacksburg, VA); Ohio University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Athens, OH); Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences-College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); and University of North Texas Health Science Center – Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (Fort Worth, TX).
- ❑ Two midcycle reports were received and accepted from the Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Kansas City, MO) and the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Philadelphia, PA).
- ❑ Nineteen (19) progress reports were received and accepted: A.T. Still University - School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Georgia Campus – Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Suwanee, GA); Kansas City University of medicine and Biosciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Kansas City, MO); Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Seton Hill (Greensburg, PA); Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (Erie, PA); Michigan State University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (East Lansing, MI); Midwestern University / Arizona College of Osteopathic Medicine (Glendale, AZ); 2 from New York College of Osteopathic Medicine /NYIT (Old Westbury, NY); Nova Southeastern University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Ft. Lauderdale, FL); Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Tulsa, OK); Pacific Northwest University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO); Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (New York, NY); University of North Texas Health Science Center – Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (Ft. Worth, TX); West Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (Lewisburg, WV); and William Carey University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Hattiesburg, MS).
- ❑ Two special reports were received and accepted from the Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO).

- ❑ Ten follow-up reports based upon review of the annual reports were reviewed and accepted for the following COMs: A.T. Still University – School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Des Moines University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Des Moines, IA); Edward Via Virginia School of Osteopathic Medicine (Blacksburg, VA); Kansas City University of Medicine and Biosciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Kansas City, MO); Kirksville College of Osteopathic Medicine / A.T. Still University (Kirksville, MO); Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Tulsa, OK); Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Philadelphia, PA) and Georgia Campus (Suwanee, GA); University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey – School of Osteopathic Medicine (Stratford, NJ); and University of North Texas Health Science Center – Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (Fort Worth, TX).

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Membership on the COCA Appeal Panel was approved for the 2009-2010 year.
- ❑ Six nominees to the Evaluators Registry were approved.
- ❑ One member of the Evaluators Registry was approved for an expansion of scope.
- ❑ Representatives from the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) were present to discuss proposed plans for re-structuring the COMLEX examination process.
- ❑ The COCA secretary discussed the notice of proposed rulemaking (NPRM) for accreditation regulations recently issued by the U.S. Department of Education.

COCA meeting in December 2009

The COCA held its fall meeting on December 5-6, 2009 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel (Chicago, IL). Accreditation action items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Three reports from focused site visits were reviewed and accepted for the: Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Seton Hill (Greensburg, PA); Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine at Macomb University Center (Clinton Township, MI) and Detroit Medical Center (Detroit, MI) and Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO).
- ❑ Approval of additional locations was granted to the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Seton Hill (Greensburg, PA); Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine at Macomb University Center (Clinton Township, MI) and Detroit Medical Center (Detroit, MI).
- ❑ Continuing provisional accreditation was approved for the Pacific Northwest University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA).
- ❑ Eight progress reports were reviewed and accepted for the: A.T. Still University – School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine at Seton Hill (Greensburg, PA); Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine at Macomb Community College (Clinton Township, MI) and Detroit Medical Center (Detroit, MI); Midwestern University – Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (Downers Grove, IL); Oklahoma State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Tulsa, OK); Pacific Northwest University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (New York, NY); and William Carey University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Hattiesburg, MS).
- ❑ Four special reports were reviewed and accepted from the following COMs: A.T. Still University – School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Rocky Vista University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO); Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (New York, NY); and University of New England – College of Osteopathic Medicine.
- ❑ One request for substantive change – branch campus was reviewed for and approval was given contingent on approval from the State of Carolina for the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine – Spartanburg, SC.

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Seeking public commentary was authorized for proposed revisions of standards 4,6 and 7 and procedures II, III, IV and VII document *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*. The proposed revisions will be considered for final approval at the May 2010 meeting of the COCA.
- ❑ A workplan for review of proposed changes to *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* to come into compliance with the revisions to the procedures of the Secretary of Education at 34 CFR 602 was reviewed and approved. After an appropriate commentary period, revisions will be reviewed at the May 2010 meeting. All recognized accrediting agencies must be in compliance by July 1, 2010.
- ❑ The 2009 COM class size report was reviewed and accepted with additional information received for the Michigan State University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (E. Lansing, MI) being accepted without establishing precedent.
- ❑ The 2011 COM site visit schedule was reviewed and approved.
- ❑ Proposed revisions to the Evaluator’s Manual were reviewed and approved.
- ❑ The COCA reviewed and approved one nomination to the Evaluator’s Registry.
- ❑ The COCA received and accepted the resignation of one individual from the COM Appeal Panel. Upon election that position was filled.
- ❑ The COCA received written comments from the AACOM on the COCA conflict of interest policies that currently appear in the Handbook of the COCA. The comments will be referred to the Standards Review Committee for study and recommendation.
- ❑ AOA President Larry A. Wickless, DO, FACOI, addressed the COCA on the topic of creation of osteopathic graduate medical education.
- ❑ AACOM President Stephen C. Shannon, DO, MPH, addressed the COCA on student performance on the NBOME COMLEX II – CE examination after rescoring.

COCA meeting in May 2010

The COCA held its spring meeting on May 22-23, 2010 at the O’Hare Hilton Hotel (Chicago, IL).

Accreditation action items from the agenda included:

- ❑ Five reports from comprehensive provisional accreditation on-site evaluations were reviewed and accepted for the following COMs: A.T. Still University, School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Lincoln Memorial University-DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (Harrogate, TN); Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences, College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO); and Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (New York, NY).
- ❑ Continuing provisional accreditation was granted to the following five COMs: A.T. Still University, School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Lincoln Memorial University-DeBusk College of Osteopathic Medicine (Harrogate, TN); Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences, College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Rocky Vista University College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO); and Touro College of Osteopathic Medicine (New York, NY).
- ❑ Five progress reports were reviewed and accepted from the following COMs: A.T. Still University - School of Osteopathic Medicine in Arizona (Mesa, AZ); Pacific Northwest University of Health Sciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA); Rocky Vista University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO); University of North Texas Health Science Center – Texas College of Osteopathic Medicine (Fort Worth, TX); and William Carey University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Hattiesburg, MS).

- ❑ One request to access operating reserve funds was reviewed and approved for the Pacific Northwest University of the Health Sciences – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Yakima, WA).
- ❑ Three special reports were received and accepted for the following COMS: two from Rocky Vista University – College of Osteopathic Medicine (Parker, CO) and one from Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Blacksburg, VA).
- ❑ With acceptance of the special report, the Edward Via Virginia College of Osteopathic Medicine (Blacksburg, VA) completed the contingency requirement for initial approval of the branch campus to be established in Spartanburg, SC.
- ❑ One substantive change – curriculum was approved for the Lake Erie College of Osteopathic Medicine (Erie, PA).
- ❑ Annual reports were received and accepted from all 25 COMs; additional information was requested from 5 of the COMs.

Policy discussion items for the agenda included:

- ❑ Proposed revisions to the document *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*, as authorized for public commentary by the COCA at its meeting of December 5-6, 2009, together with commentary received, were reviewed in the forum conducted by the Standards Review Committee (SRC) on March 6, 2010. Based upon that review and subsequent review by the SRC in a teleconference on April 20th, the recommended revisions were presented to the COCA for their consideration: Chapter I - standards 4, 6, and 7; Chapter II; Chapter IV; and Chapter VII. After review and discussion, the COCA voted to approve the proposed revisions. The revisions become effective on July 1, 2010.
- ❑ Proposed revisions to the document *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*, primarily in Chapters V and VI, were made in order to bring the COCA procedures and two standards into compliance with revised requirements of the U.S. Department of Education as reviewed at a teleconference standards forum of the SRC on May 18, 2010 were presented to the COCA, along with the commentary received, for the COCA's consideration. After review and discussion, the COCA voted to approve the proposed revisions. The revisions become effective on July 1, 2010.
- ❑ One individual was approved for addition to the Evaluators Registry.
- ❑ Three current members of the Evaluators Registry were approved for qualification as Team Chairs.
- ❑ One individual was approved for addition to the Consultants for College Accreditation Registry.
- ❑ Eight individuals were approved for re-appointment to the Consultants for College Accreditation Registry.
- ❑ Representatives of the National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners (NBOME) were present to update the COCA on progress in development of its examination product lines, and the rescoring program for its existing COMLEX examinations
- ❑ The AACOM President presented an update on programs including: a new on-line orientation to OMM program for non osteopathic physician faculty; submission of a USPHS Title VII training grant to HRSA; concerns about COMLEX 2-CE rescoring; and the Board of Deans reaffirmation of the right of COM faculty to determine graduation requirements.
- ❑ The AOA President spoke on: continuing affirmation of COCA's ability to meet its responsibility to make independent standard-setting and accreditation decisions; continued support of the AOA Board of Trustees that graduating COM students should continue to be required to pass COMLEX Examinations; and beginning of an "OGME Roundtable" to discuss the continuum of predoctoral and postdoctoral education in the osteopathic profession.

COCA - Executive Committee (COCA – EC)

September 2009 Report – A report was given of the July 10, 2009 meeting by teleconference.

- ❑ Action in executive session – The COCA-EC reviewed and approved a procedural request.
- ❑ Action in executive session – The COCA-EC reviewed a special report and authorized a focused site visit.

December 2009 Report – No report.

May 2010 Report – No report.

Annual Report Review Committee

The Annual Report Review Committee did not meet during the year. Staff will be preparing a revision of the existing supplemental report for review in the 2010-2011 year.

COM Accreditation Appeal Panel

There were no appeals heard during this year.

Committee on College Accreditation Training (CCAT)

September 2009 Report –

An informational report was given of the June 26, 2009 meeting by teleconference:

The CCAT began the initial planning of the COMs Accreditation Training Workshop, to be held on December 4, 2009 at the O’Hare Hilton Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. Items of discussion included the theme of the workshop, identifying session topics and potential guest speakers and facilitators. The Committee agreed that the keynote address should focus on the self study, emphasizing the relationship between a COM’s mission, its strategic plan and to the self study. If available, a representative from the Chicago Higher Learning Commission was to be invited to deliver the keynote address. Two plenary sessions were proposed: one would focus on “living” the standards everyday; the other on standards that are routinely cited as deficient as well as new standards that may require clarification. Topics for breakout sessions were discussed.

The Committee also received an update from staff on the dates of the next Web-based training program for evaluators. This two-part, staff facilitated program was scheduled for Thursday, September 10 and Thursday, September 24, 2009 from 4:00-5:30 p.m. CDT.

An informational report was given of the August 12, 2009 meeting by teleconference:

- ❑ The preliminary agenda for the December 2009 CCAT COMs Workshop was reviewed and revised. The Committee also reviewed the list of commonly cited standards, which was prepared by staff at the Committee’s request during the June 2009 teleconference meeting. The list included seven standards (1.1; 3.1; 4.1; 4.1.1; 4.1.2; 6.11; 6.12) that had been cited four or more times in site visit reports from 2006-2009. Standard 1.1.1 was subsequently added to the list for informational purposes as it is relatively new and likely to garner questions from COM representatives.
- ❑ Staff gave an update on the status of the online training program for evaluators. Twenty eight (28) evaluators were identified as “in need of training” – some were newly approved to the *Evaluators Registry*; others were in need of a refresher course (i.e., hadn’t attended a training workshop since 2002 or had been approved years prior, but never attended a workshop). Thirteen evaluators were confirmed to attend the September 2009 program.

December 2009 Report –

The Committee on College Accreditation Training (CCAT) held its biennial COMs Training Workshop on December 4, 2009 at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel in Chicago, Illinois. Prior to the workshop there were 62 registrants, including one AACOM representative, six COCA/CCAT members, and four staff. All COMs had at least one, with a maximum of six, representatives registered to attend the Workshop. Preliminary reporting was presented at this COCA meeting, with a detailed final report to be presented at the May 2010 COCA meeting.

May 2010 Report –

The COCA Committee on College Accreditation Training (CCAT) held its biennial training workshop for COMs on December 4, 2009. Sixty-one attendees, including representatives from the American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine, all 26 colleges of osteopathic medicine, and members of the AOA Board of Trustees attended the one-day event at the O'Hare Hilton in Chicago, Illinois. "Surviving COCA: A Blue Print for Institutional Improvement," was designed to explore issues involved in institutional improvement, beginning with the self-study process. Keynote speaker, Robert Appleson, PhD, Vice President for Accreditation Relations, The Higher Learning Commission of the North Central Association, used case studies and illustrations from the rules of football to examine the role, expectations, sources of evidence and some of the challenges commonly faced in the self-study process.

One plenary session, "Living the Standards Daily", had separate sessions for established COMs and for new COMs. The second plenary session was "Commonly Cited Standards Demystified". Two sets of breakout sessions were offered sequentially, covering the following topics: core competencies; institutional assessment; and the four most common substantive change requests. The workshop also included group and panel discussions on commonly cited standards and ways to avoid these citations; how new and established COMs should integrate the tenets of the standards in their daily decision-making; sessions on core competencies, institutional assessment, and how to request substantive changes in class size, location (additional and branch campus), and curriculum. Copies of the PowerPoint presentations for these sessions were posted on COCA's Web site. A copy of the Workshop's evaluation summary was presented to the COCA for their reference.

COCA staff and the CCAT Chair met via teleconference on February 22, 2010 to discuss the COMs Accreditation Workshop evaluation summary. In preparation for the next COMs workshop, in late spring staff will develop and distribute a needs assessment survey consisting of 6-10 questions to determine:

1. the information COMs most want to know;
2. what area(s) of the accreditation process are most problematic for COMs; and
3. what is the most effective method of delivering this information to COM representatives.

The next CCAT Evaluators Workshop is tentatively scheduled for January 2011.

ad hoc Standards Review Committee (SRC)**September 2009 Report –**

The SRC met by teleconference on June 9, 2010:

- ❑ The SRC reviewed the written and quantitative responses of the survey conducted in the Fall of 2008 as part of the systematic review of the COM accreditation standards. In general discussion of the report, the following concerns were noted: Improvement of inter-rater reliability was identified as being needed for all standard domains; the standards as now written allow for multiple interpretations; training of evaluators is a high priority; many of the survey respondents expect the accreditation process to be punitive.

- ❑ The SRC reviewed revision to standard 7.1 as proposed by staff. The action was to authorize presenting this revision to the COCA for their review.
- ❑ The SRC reviewed revisions to standards 4.1, 4.1.1, 4.3, 4.5, and 4.8 as proposed by staff. The action was to authorize presenting revisions to standards 4.1, 4.1.1, 4.3, 4.5 to the COCA for their review. Staff was directed to continue revision of standard 4.8 (ethics) using the construction style that was proposed for standard 7.1 and return this to the SRC for their consideration.

December 2009 Report –

The SRC met by teleconference on October 5, 2009 to continue the review, modification, and clarification of the *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*. The following standard areas were reviewed at this meeting: Standard Six: Curriculum; Chapter II: Applicant and Accreditation Procedures; Chapter IV: On-site Visit Procedures; and Chapter VII: In the Public Interest. The revisions submitted by staff were discussed and accepted with slight modifications. The committee unanimously agreed to submit the revisions in these areas to the COCA for review at their December 5-6, 2009 meeting. The review of Chapter III: The Self-Study Process, was tabled for the next SRC meeting on November 9, 2009.

The SRC held a teleconference on November 9, 2009 to continue the review, modification, and clarification of the *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*. Participants in the teleconference were: Mark S. Cantieri, DO, Chair; Sandra Featherman, PhD; Kenneth J. Veit, DO; Gregory James, DO; and COCA staff. Chapter III: The Self Study Process was reviewed. The revisions submitted by staff were discussed and accepted with slight modifications. The committee unanimously agreed to submit the revisions in these areas to the COCA for review at their December 5-6, 2009 meeting.

May 2010 Report –

The SRC held a teleconference on January 22, 2010, to continue to review proposed changes to Chapter VI-USDE Requirements of the *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*. These changes are needed in order to be in compliance with USDE regulations on July 1, 2010. The proposed revisions submitted by staff were discussed, and it was agreed that further review was needed. The committee also discussed the plans for the Standards Forum to be held on March 6, 2010. The Standards Forum would give stakeholders an opportunity to discuss the proposed revisions to Standard Four: Faculty, Standard Six: Curriculum, Standard Seven: Research and Scholarly Activities, and Chapters II, III, IV, and VII with stakeholders. It was reported that the announcement of the Standards Forum had been posted on the COCA website on January 11, 2010, and that stakeholders had been informed of the Standards Forum by e-mail.

The Standards Forum was held on Saturday, March 6, 2010, at the O'Hare Hilton Hotel to discuss proposed revisions to the *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*: Standard Four: Faculty, Standard Six: Curriculum, Standard Seven: Research and Scholarly Activities, and Chapters II, III, IV, and VII. Materials distributed to participants included written commentary received prior to Standards Forum. Participants discussed the proposed revisions, suggested additional changes to the language and intent of the current and revised standards, as well as expressions of consensus with the changes. The results of the Standards Forum were recorded by COCA staff for presentation to the SRC at its next meeting.

The SRC held a teleconference on April 20, 2010, to consider the results of the Standards Forum in its review of proposed changes to the *Accreditation of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine: COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures*: Standard Four: Faculty, Standard Six: Curriculum, Standard Seven: Research and

Scholarly Activities, and Chapters II, III, IV, and VII as well as the proposed changes to Chapter VI – USDE Requirements. The SRC discussed the results of the Standards Forum and agreed to recommend changes that had been previously proposed, as well as changes recommended by the Standards Forum participants, to the COCA for discussion and final approval at their meeting on May 22-23, 2010. A discussion of the proposed changes to Chapter VI - USDE Requirements resulted in the SRC decision to post the proposed changes on the AOA COCA website for public commentary prior to the COCA May 22-23, 2010 meeting. In addition, the SRC decided that a teleconference should be held prior to the COCA meeting to allow stakeholders to express their opinions on the changes proposed in Chapter VI. A teleconference was scheduled and held on Tuesday, May 18, 2010, and stakeholders were invited to the teleconference via e-mail. The SRC held the teleconference with nearly 30 participants in the call.

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

On May 1, 2006, the Honorable Margaret Spellings, Secretary of Education, granted five years of continuing recognition to the COCA. An interim report with changes approved by the COCA in its conflict of interest procedures in the *COCA Handbook*, and in its procedures stated in the *COM Accreditation Standards and Procedures* was submitted on December 7, 2006 and recommended for acceptance by the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) at its meeting held on May 30-31, 2007. On August 15, 2007 Secretary Spellings accepted the recommendation of the NACIQI that all issues had been satisfied. The COCA petition for continuing recognition is due June 2011.