

Position Paper Title: Off-Campus Clinical Training

Approved By: ACAHM Executive Director

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Related Commission Materials: [Glossary](#); [Comprehensive Standards and Criteria](#); [Position Paper: Compliance with Out-of-State Educational Activities](#); [Distance Education Policy](#); [Notification of Change Policy](#)

References:

Responsible Official: ACAHM Director of Accreditation Services

SUMMARY

This *Position Paper* focuses on the requirements for ACAHM-accreditable programs offering clinical training at off-campus locations.

BACKGROUND

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Herbal Medicine (ACAHM or Commission) recognizes the following types of [clinical training](#):

1. *Clinical Observation*
2. *Clinical Internship*
3. *Clinical Externship*

Clinical Internship versus Clinical Externship

Internship and externship are not differentiated by geographical location, i.e., on-campus or off-campus.

Clinical internship training is directly controlled by a main or branch campus, is carried out by program faculty, and involves student-delivered patient care.

Clinical externship training involves an indirect relationship to the campus. The campus is responsible for establishing learning objectives and expected learning outcomes, and ensuring that qualified (i.e., appropriate experience as a licensed professional) practitioners instruct and evaluate student clinical externs.

ACAHM's minimum program length requirements¹ stipulate that the majority of clinical training for entry-level programs must be clinical internship.

¹ See *criterion 7.02: Minimum Program Length, Credits and Hours*.

For example, master’s programs in acupuncture with a Chinese herbal medicine specialization must include at least **870** clock hours of instruction in integrated acupuncture and herbal clinical training, comprised of at least **150** hours in clinical observation and **700** clock hours of instruction in clinical internship. [Leaving 20 hours that could be classified as observation, internship, or externship.]

Entry-level doctoral programs in acupuncture with a Chinese herbal medicine specialization must include at least **1,000** clock hours of instruction in integrated acupuncture and herbal clinical training, comprised of at least **150** hours in clinical observation and **700** clock hours of instruction in clinical internship. [Leaving 150 hours that could be classified as observation, internship, or externship.]

Clinical Settings

Clinical training may occur **on-campus** (i.e., at a main or branch campus) or at **off-campus** locations (i.e., private practice clinic, community health center, hospital, out-patient clinic, etc.). Regardless of where clinical training occurs, the clinical location must meet the corresponding conditions outlined in ACAHM’s [Glossary](#)².

For clinical observation and internship training that does not occur on-campus, the location:

- (A) is subject to a written agreement³ providing for reasonable access to and assessment by program administrators and
- (B) requires proof of appropriate insurance.

For clinical externship training, the location:

- (A) is subject to a written agreement and
- (B) requires proof of appropriate insurance.

Additionally, when a proposed clinical training location is in a state different from where an institution has an ACAHM accredited or pre-accredited main or branch campus (i.e., out-of-state clinical training location), the institution/program must maintain written evidence confirming that the out-of-state clinical training location has received all necessary local and state authorizations/certifications to offer clinical training.⁴

If an off-campus clinical training site also delivers classroom instruction resulting in the location offering fifty (50) percent or more of an ACAHM-accredited program, the location is considered an “additional location” or “branch campus” as defined in ACAHM’s [Glossary](#). Refer to ACAHM’s [Notification of Change Policy](#), substantive change sections 1.02 and 1.03 for details.

Clinical Internship Training Requirements

Clinical internship training must be carried out by program faculty and involve student-delivered patient care. Faculty are instructional staff of an institution/program responsible and compensated for the design, delivery, and assessment of academic courses.

Programs are expected to utilize and document self-assessment, examination, and evaluation practices to demonstrate the effectiveness the off-campus clinical sites at providing clinical training that is functionally equivalent to clinical training at the main campus. This evaluation must incorporate input from the institution’s communities of interest– board, faculty, students, administration, and staff – and reflect on the off-campus clinical

² See definition for *Clinical Settings – Internship Locations and Externship Locations* found in ACAHM’s [Glossary](#)

³ See *criterion 2.04: Off-Campus Control*.

⁴ This requirement also applies to programs and institutions offering some or all of an ACAHM-accredited or pre-accredited program via online or [distance education](#) delivery. See also, ACAHM’s [Position Paper: Compliance with Out-of-State Educational Activities](#).

sites' impact on the institution's compliance with applicable ACAHM accreditation standards, including but not limited to the following criteria:

- 4.01: *Recordkeeping Systems*, programmatic components B, C
- 4.04: *Clinical Records*, all components
- 6.02: *Assessment of Student Learning*, all components
- 6.03: *Programmatic Review*, all components
- 6.05: *Assessment Methods*, all components
- 7.01: *Program Level*, programmatic component F
- 7.05: *Clinical Training*, programmatic components A, B, C, D
- 8.05: *Faculty Communication*, all components.

Revision History

Date Revised	Summary of Revisions	Approved By