



Policy Title: ACAOM Glossary

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Related Policies: [ACAOM Accreditation Procedures](#); [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#); [ACAOM Fees and Dues Schedule](#); [ACAOM Public Disclosure Policy](#)

References: [34 CFR §600.2](#); [20 U.S.C. 1099b](#); [Federal Student Aid Handbook](#)

Responsible Official: ACAOM Executive Director

Policy Summary: This is a glossary of common terms used by the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (ACAOM or Commission).

GLOSSARY

Academic Year [See also: *Credit, Credit Hour, Credit-Ratio*]

Equivalent to 30 semester credit hours or 45 quarter credit hours per year. An academic year is defined as at least 30 instructional weeks, which can consist of three quarters, two semesters, or three terms or trimesters.

ACAOM or Commission

The Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

ACAOM-Accreditable Programs

Only programs for which ACAOM has established accreditation standards and criteria are accreditable. ACAOM currently accredits or pre-accredits the following programs:

Entry-Level Programs:

1. **Master's-level degree or diploma program:** a graduate-level program that provides knowledge and skills necessary for professional recognition, credentialing, or licensure required to practice professionally in the fields of acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine (AOM).
2. **Professional doctorate (PD) degree program:** a graduate-level program, leading to a doctoral-level degree, that provides additional and expanded knowledge and skills (see criterion 7.04 *Professional Competencies*) necessary for professional recognition, credentialing, or licensure required to practice in the fields of acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine. These programs may have academic tracks that enable master's-level graduates to earn the PD degree.

Post-Professional Degree Programs:

Post-professional doctorate (DAOM) degree program: a post-professional program, leading to a doctoral-level degree, that provides advanced, in-depth education in AOM clinical specialty areas and research literacy. Program applicants must be graduates of an entry-level program. The only designation recognized by ACAOM for this degree is *Doctorate of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (DAOM)*.

Graduate-Level Certificate Programs:

Chinese herbology certificate program: a graduate program that provides knowledge and skills necessary for the professional practice of herbal medicine. Program applicants must be currently enrolled in or graduates of an entry-level program.

ACAOM Chair

The Chairperson of the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine.

Accreditation

The status of public recognition that ACAOM grants to an educational institution or program that meets its standards and criteria requirements for accreditation.

Accreditation Criteria [See also *Accreditation Standards*]

Written benchmarks, conditions, and thresholds adopted by the Commission to: (1) assess whether the quality of an institution/program merits pre-accreditation/accreditation status, and (2) maintain a culture of continuous improvement of academic quality at the institutions/programs.

Accreditation Record

An institution/program's *Self-Study Report*, along with the *Site Visit Report* and the related *Formal Institutional Response* to that report. The accreditation record also includes written third-party testimony, if any, the institution's written response to the third-party testimony, and written decisions by the Commission.

Accreditation Standards [See also *Accreditation Criteria*]

Broad classifications used to categorize related accreditation criteria.

Accredited Institution

An institution that is accredited by a recognized accrediting agency. (See "recognized accrediting agency.")

Acupuncture

The term "acupuncture" can be used to describe a specific modality or a comprehensive system of medicine.

Modality – The practice of "acupuncture" includes any insertion and/or manipulation of a filiform acupuncture needle for a therapeutic purpose based upon both traditional theoretical understanding and modern scientific study of the musculoskeletal and nervous system. This practice encompasses interventions described by terminology such as "dry needling," "motor point needling," and "myofascial trigger point needling."

"Acupuncture" as a modality is distinguished from the use of the term to generally describe the system of medicine often referred to as traditional Chinese medicine, Oriental medicine, East Asian medicine etc., which includes a variety of techniques or therapeutic approaches, including acupuncture, for the promotion and maintenance of health and prevention of disease.

Additional Location – An additional location of an ACAOM-accredited or pre-accredited institution/program is a non-main campus educational site that: (1) offers some or all of an ACAOM-accredited program; (2) is governed and financially supported by a main or branch campus; and (3) faculty, staff, and support services are controlled by that same main or branch campus. An additional location may be reviewed on an alternate accreditation cycle, depending on the distance or services offered apart from the applicable main or branch campus and, as determined by the Commission.

Administrative Probation

A temporary status imposed when an institution/program has not complied with administrative requirements.

Advanced Standing

The procedure for granting credit to a student for educational experiences or courses undertaken at another institution. It is also a term used to describe the status of a student granted credit, as distinct from students who commence a stream of study at the beginning.

Adverse Accrediting Action or Adverse Action

A decision to deny, withdraw, suspend, revoke, or terminate accreditation or pre-accreditation (Candidacy), or any other comparable accrediting action ACAOM may take against an institution or program. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Annual Reports

Reports, required of all accredited institutions/programs, that include any changes in the institution/program, any additions of programs offered at the institution, the impact of these changes on other areas of the institution, current reviewed financial statement of the institution/program, the budget, the catalog, required institutional/program statistics, and any other information required in accordance with the annual report form.

AOM-Related

Associated with modalities (specifically acupuncture and related techniques, herbal medicine, manual therapies, therapeutic exercise, and diet/lifestyle counseling) based on the theoretical perspectives introduced in the following foundational texts: *Huangdi Neijing* (Yellow Emperor's Inner Classic); *Huangdi Bashiyi Nanjing* (Yellow Emperor's Canon of Eighty-One Difficult Issues); *Shennong Bencaojing* (Materia Medica of the Divine Husbandry); and/or *Shanghan Zabinglun* (Treatise on Cold Damage and Misc. Diseases).

Appeal Costs

With regard to ACAOM's *Appeal Procedure*, the costs incurred in empaneling and conducting a hearing; travel and accommodation costs for panel members and ACAOM staff involved in the conduct of a hearing; costs of facilities for the conduct of the hearing, if held at other than the offices of the Commission; transcript fees; and legal fees incurred by the hearing panel in the conduct of the appeal. Appeal Costs do not include the costs incurred by the Commission or the institution/program in preparing for or participating in the appeal process. (See [ACAOM Fees and Dues Schedule](#).)

Appellant

With regard to ACAOM's *Appeal Procedure*, an institution or program that is the subject of an Adverse Action.

Assessment (of student learning):

An ongoing, iterative process consisting of four basic steps: 1. defining course learning outcomes; 2. choosing a method or approach and then using it to gather evidence of learning (e.g., exams, essays, group work); 3. analyzing and interpreting the evidence; and 4. using this information to improve student learning (both for formative and summative feedback). Assessment is related to student performance and is closely associated with grading.

Baccalaureate

Courses and programs that lead to a bachelor's degree.

Blended (also called Hybrid) Classroom Course

Online activity is mixed with classroom meetings, replacing a significant percentage (defined by ACAOM as < 50%), but not all required face-to-face instructional activities. When the technologies used for education and communication outside the classroom are used to supplant some, but not all face-to-face instruction, reducing the time actually spent in the classroom, the result is a blended/hybrid classroom course. For example, if a course traditionally meets in a classroom three times per week, a blended/hybrid version might use online sessions to replace one or two of the traditional weekly classroom sessions or to focus face-to-face sessions on laboratory or project work. The offering institution should set the threshold for required online activity at that institution.

Branch Campus – A branch campus of an ACAOM-accredited or pre-accredited institution/program is a non-main campus educational site that: (1) is geographically apart and independent of the main campus of the institution; (2) is permanent in nature; (3) offers courses in educational programs leading to a degree or certificate; and (4) has state authorization to operate as a quasi-independent non-main campus education site from the main institution including authority to: (a) have and manage its own faculty and administrative staff, (b) have its own operating budget, and (c) have its own authority to hire and fire faculty and staff.

Candidacy [See *Pre-accreditation*]

Certificate Programs

Certificate programs under [ACAOM Notification of Change Policy](#) have the following characteristics:

- (1) the program has all necessary state approvals;
- (2) the program is AOM-related;
- (3) the program's courses are taught at the masters or higher level;
- (4) the program's courses are credit-bearing;
- (5) the program or institution awards an acknowledgement of program completion; and
- (6) the program may be Title IV-eligible subject to U.S. Department of Education regulations.

Chair

The person in charge of a meeting, site visit, hearing panel, organization, etc.

Change of Control

Control means the possession, direct or indirect, of the power to direct or cause the direction of the management and policies of an institution, whether through the ownership of voting securities, by contract or otherwise. Applicable to both for-profit and non-profit entities, a change of control may occur when, for these purposes, 25% or more of the members of the governing board change or 25% of more of the controlling parties change outside of normal board rotation. This kind of change may be associated with a change of ownership or with a conversion from one legal type to another. A change of control also occurs when a single transaction or a series of related transactions in which any person acquires or loses control as set forth in [34 CFR 600.31](#) .

Change in Legal Status

Legal status means public, private not-for-profit, or private for-profit.

Change in Mission

A change of mission involves a significant change to the institution's defining character, strategic goals, and/ and that possibly or educational offerings, and that possibly affects the composition of its leadership, faculty, student body, sponsoring or related entity, and/or key stakeholders. Examples of significant changes of mission may include moving from on-ground to on-line courses or converting to an entirely competency-based delivery model. This type of change also may be brought about in conjunction with a change in control, change in legal status or change of ownership.

Change of Ownership

Ownership or ownership interest means a legal or beneficial interest in an institution or its corporate parent, or a right to share in the profits derived from the operation of an institution or its corporate parent. Changes of ownership may involve an asset purchase, merger, equity purchase, and any other transaction or corporate action in which owners or investors would, for various reasons, invest or change their investment in the institution. For these purposes, a change in ownership occurs where, in either a single transaction or a series of related transactions, the institution entity issues or transfers at least 25% of its ownership interests, or any individual, trust, estate, partnership, association, company, or corporation acquires or ceases to own at least a 25% ownership interest.

Classroom Course

Course activity is organized around scheduled class meetings. Traditional classroom courses are measured by the number of hours spent in required in-person class meetings in various formats (as defined by credit and contact hour requirements), such as lectures, studios, or workshops or other traditional face-to-face activities, such as laboratories, field trips, or internships. Such courses may involve some sort of computer usage, but the course is still anchored to the normal time spent in face-to-face classes. For the purposes of clarity in these definitions, courses that use technology at this level are considered to be “classroom” courses.

Clinical Settings:

1. Clinical Internship Location – A clinical internship location:

- (1) offers less than fifty (50) percent of an ACAOM-accredited or pre-accredited program,
- (2) clinical training is directly controlled by a main or branch campus,
- (3) training is carried out by program faculty,
- (4) faculty and faculty placement are administered by the main or branch campus,

For clinical internship training that does not occur at a main or branch campus (e.g., private practice clinic, hospital, out-patient clinic) the location:

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

2. Clinical Externship Location. – A clinical externship location:

- (1) offers less than fifty (50) percent of an ACAOM-accredited or pre-accredited program,
- (2) involves an indirect relationship to the main or branch campus,
- (3) is subject to a written agreement, and
- (4) requires proof of appropriate insurance.

Clinical Training:

1. **Clinical Observation** – Clinical observation involves students observing healthcare professionals and senior student interns performing patient care therapies in a clinical setting.
2. **Clinical Internship** - Clinical internship training:
 - (1) involves student-delivered patient care,
 - (2) is directly controlled by a main or branch campus,
 - (3) is carried out by program faculty,
 - (4) faculty and faculty placement are administered by the main or branch campus,
 - (5) is under faculty and institutional/programmatic control and direction.

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

College-Level General Education

Postsecondary learning that is unspecialized in nature, intended to develop students as personalities rather than trained specialists and to transmit a common cultural heritage, and is completed at an institution that is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education.

Consortium Agreement

A written agreement between two or more Title IV eligible institutions.

Continuing Education Courses/Programs

Continuing education courses/programs as referenced in ACAOM's accreditation standards have the following characteristics:

- (1) are non-credit bearing and, at no time, will the courses ever be assigned academic credit for any reason;
and
- (2) are not Title IV eligible.

Contractual Agreement

A written agreement between a Title IV eligible institution and a Title IV ineligible institution.

Core Faculty [See also *Faculty, Guest Lecturer*]

Core faculty are an identifiable group of qualified full and/or part-time didactic and clinical faculty members who have regular and ongoing responsibility for the design, delivery, and assessment of the program and are involved in program development, review, and governance.

Correspondence Education

Correspondence education means:

- (1) education provided through one or more courses by an institution under which the institution provides instructional materials, by mail or electronic transmission, including examinations on the materials, to students who are separated from the instructor;
- (2) interaction between the instructor and the student is limited, is not regular and substantive, and is primarily initiated by the student;
- (3) correspondence courses are typically self-paced; and
- (4) correspondence education is not distance education.

Credit

Credit is referred to as a *unit of credit*, a *credit unit*, or a *credit hour*. It is a standard unit for measuring a student's accomplishment and academic progress. One unit of credit represents a specific and comparative measurement of academic achievement as defined by each institution. It is both qualitative and quantitative. The same unit of measurement is applied to an institution's sessions as well as its term. A session is a special enrollment period within or exclusive of the defined academic year. For example, a summer period of study might be identified as a "summer session." (See also "academic year," "credit-hour" and "credit-ratio.")

A unit of credit within an institution represents that institution's evaluation of learning, although the teaching/learning methodology may differ. Most, if not all, institutions standardize by means of the lecture hour. The acquisition of knowledge and skills in any laboratory, clinic, workshop, practicum, etc., is compared to that of

the lecture hour, and is equated by some factor determined by each institution. (See also "credit hour" and "credit ratio")

As defined herein, semester credits are based on one semester credit being equivalent to 15 hours of didactic instruction.

Credit Conversion

Converting semester hours to quarter hours

- Multiply the number of semester hours by one and one-half to determine the number of quarter hours.

Converting quarter hours to semester hours

- Multiply the number of quarter hours by two-thirds to determine the number of semester hours.

Trimester hours are equal to semester hours unless the trimester is less than 15 weeks in duration, in which case the number of weeks and length of class sessions must be considered.

Credit Hour

The number of credits assigned to a course is usually determined by the number of in-class hours per week plus expected out-of-class student work, and the number of weeks in an academic semester, quarter or term. Quarter credit hours and semester credit hours are the two most common systems of measuring course work. Institutions on the trimester plan generally use the semester credit-hour system.

Credit Ratio

Academic credit is a measure of the total time commitment required of a typical student in a particular course of study. Total time consists of three components:

- (1) time spent in class or under direct faculty instruction;
- (2) time spent in laboratory, clinic or fieldwork; and
- (3) time devoted to reading, studying, researching, problem solving, writing, or preparing (i.e. out-of-class student work).

Credit hours are usually assigned as follows:

- (1) **Classroom course:** one credit hour is assigned for each clock hour of instruction and two hours of out-of-class student work, or
- (2) **Laboratory, practical, or clinical training course:** one credit hour is assigned for two or more clock hours of instruction and one hour of out-of-class student work, or
- (3) **Independent study:** one credit hour is assigned for three or more hours of independent study student work completed each week.

Criteria for Accreditation

The evaluative benchmarks the Commission uses to determine if an institution or program meets ACAOM'S Standards. Criteria for Accreditation expand and elaborate upon the Standards, describing in greater detail the specific applications of the Standards and the issues upon which the Commission expects the institution or program to focus in its development. The Criteria do not exceed or alter the Standard itself.

Criteria for Commission Recognition

[34 CFR Part 602](#) and [20 U.S. Code § 1099\(b\)](#)

Culture of Evidence

The use of evidence in assessment and decision-making embedded in, and characteristic of, an institution's actions and practices.

Date of Receipt

The date a document is actually received by a party, as evidenced by a postal service, courier, or private carrier receipt.

Day

Unless otherwise stated, a calendar day.

Distance (or Distance Delivered) Education

An educational process in which the majority of the instruction ($\geq 50\%$ of the classroom contact hours in a course) occurs when a student and instructor are not in the same place and includes technology that is used to support regular and substantive interactions between the instructor and the students. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education may employ the following technologies: (1) the internet; (2) one-way and two-way transmission through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communication devices; (3) audio conferencing. Distance education may employ video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if these modalities are used in a course in conjunction with any of the previous three technologies [34 CFR 602.3]. No “hands-on” practical portion of any laboratory or clinic-based courses within a degree program may be taught online.

Distance-delivered/online courses are distinguished from blended/hybrid courses in which some classroom contact hours have been replaced by online learning

Dry Needling (sometimes also referred to as, “motor point needling,” and “myofascial trigger point needling”)

The term “dry needling” is regarded by ACAOM as synonymous with the definition of Acupuncture and is a treatment modality that involves the insertion of thin, non-medicated solid needles into muscles or connective tissues.

Educational Effectiveness

Producing the intended results in an educational endeavor. Educational effectiveness includes clear and appropriate educational objectives and design at the institutional and program level; as well as processes of reviews, including the collection and use of data, which ensure delivery of programs and learner accomplishments at a level of performance appropriate for the degree awarded.

Educational Objectives

Brief, clear statements that describe the desired and measurable learning outcomes of instruction; i.e., the specific skills, values, and attitudes students should exhibit that reflect the broader goals.

Elective Courses

Courses whose content is not a required component of the program curriculum, but which may be taken by a student at his/her option. Completion of elective courses may be required by a program.

Eligibility Requirements

Eligibility Requirements are select accreditation criteria further classified by the Commission as ACAOM’s basic threshold requirements for master’s-level and doctoral programs to achieve and maintain ACAOM pre-accreditation and accreditation status.

Evaluation

A process for measuring and judging the quality of performance of an institution, a program, a process, or individuals, e.g., instructors, administrators. Evaluation for institutions/programs demonstrates the institution/program’s ability to meet or exceed mission/purpose, goals and program learning outcomes.

Executive Director

The Executive Director of the Commission.

Faculty [See also *Core Faculty, Guest Lecturer*]

Faculty are instructional staff of an institution/program responsible and compensated for the design, delivery, and assessment of academic courses.

Formal Institutional Response (FIR) to Site Visit Report (SVR)

The institution's official written communication responding to the SVR and is included as part of the accreditation record for the institution/program. The FIR is to include any alleged substantive inaccuracies in the findings of the SVR that the program believes do not accurately reflect the institution/program at the time of the site visit, indicating the Standard and/or the Criterion, and providing a narrative statement as to the evidence that was available to the site visit team that could potentially affect the finding(s).

The FIR consists of two parts: (1) verification of factual accuracy (such as spelling of names, credentials, titles, etc.) and (2) responses to alleged substantive inaccuracies in the findings.

For-Profit Education [see also *Proprietary Education*]

Educational institutions operated by private, profit-seeking businesses.

Glossary

A list of definitions of terms used in the body of a text to help explain terms.

Goals

Broad, general statements of what the institution/program intends to accomplish. Goals describe broad learning outcomes and concepts (what you want students to learn) expressed in general terms (e.g., clear communication, problem-solving skills, etc.) Goals should provide a framework for determining the more specific program learning outcomes and should be consistent with the purpose of the program and the mission of the institution. A single goal may have many specific subordinate learning objectives.

Good Cause

"Good cause" is an exceptional remedy available to the Commission for extending statutory deadlines provided the following conditions are met:

- (1) The program/institution has demonstrated significant accomplishments in addressing the areas of non-compliance during the period under sanction, or
- (2) The program/institution has demonstrated at least partial compliance with the ACAOM Standard(s) and Criteria cited and, for any remaining deficiencies, demonstrates an understanding of those deficiencies, as well as readiness, institutional capacity, and a plan to remedy those deficiencies within the period of extension contemplated by the Commission.

When determining whether these conditions have been met, the Commission will also consider whether:

1. The quality of education provide by the program/institution is in material compliance with ACAOM's Standards and Criteria for Accreditation at the time of the extension, and
2. The Commission has no evidence of any new or continuing violations of its Criterion regarding programmatic/institutional honesty and integrity, and
3. The Commission has no evidence of other reasons or current circumstances why the program's or institution's accreditation should not be continued for "good cause."

Guest Lecturer [See also *Core Faculty, Faculty*]

An individual who is invited by a program to deliver curricular content which does not comprise a complete academic course.

Hybrid [See also *Blended Classroom Course, Distance Education, and Online Course*]

Online activity is mixed with classroom meetings, replacing a significant percentage (defined by ACAOM as < 50%), but not all required face-to-face instructional activities. When the technologies used for education and communication outside the classroom are used to supplant some, but not all face-to-face instruction, reducing the time actually spent in the classroom, the result is a blended/hybrid classroom course. For example, if a course traditionally meets in a classroom three times per week, a blended/hybrid version might use online sessions to replace one or two of the traditional weekly classroom sessions or to focus face-to-face sessions on laboratory or project work. The offering institution should set the threshold for required online activity at that institution.

Independent Study

- (1) An intensive independent investigation, directed by a member of the faculty, of selected topics;
- (2) Independent research in the student's area(s) of special interest under the guidance of a member of the faculty; or
- (3) Completion of a major project where the student will concentrate on an area of specialized interest under faculty supervision. An independent study for which credit can be granted shall culminate in an approved paper or project. An independent study entails considerably more than a paper or project that might be required as homework in a course, e.g., for each credit awarded for independent study in a program that runs on a 15-week semester or trimester, the independent study should be expected to require a minimum of 45 clock hours from the student.

Interim Reports [See also *Monitoring Actions*]

The Commission or its staff may direct the program or institution to describe in an *Interim Report* its progress relative to remediating findings of the Commission. The Commission or its staff may also may require a program or institution to address activities that were being planned or implemented at the time of an on-site evaluation to enhance institutional or program effectiveness. The Commission may direct the institution/program to describe in an interim report its progress relative to remediating findings of the Commission on pre-accreditation/(re) accreditation or at any time during the pre-accreditation/ accreditation period. The Commission also may require the institution/program to address activities that were being planned or implemented at the time of the on-site evaluation to enhance institutional/program effectiveness.

Interim Site Visit [See also *Monitoring Actions*]

The Commission or its staff may require that an interim site visit be conducted in conjunction with things like a request for a *Monitoring (Progress) Report, Interim Report* or *Supplemental Information Report*. A visit may also be required if verification of program or institutional status and/or progress requires an on-site review, in addition to a paper review. A visit is often required with a *Show Cause* action. A visit may be conducted by a staff or individual evaluator, by a small site visit team, or by a full site visit team, depending on the nature and number of the Commission or staff concerns.

Learning Outcomes [See *Outcomes*]**Letter of Intent**

A program must submit a *Letter of Intent* and any required attachments to pursue pre-accreditation status, which has been authorized by the institution's governance structure. (See [ACAOM Accreditation Procedures Policy](#).)

Main Campus

The primary location of an ACAOM-accredited or pre-accredited institution/program.

Minimum Core Curriculum

Curriculum composed of principles with which all students should be familiar to engage in the safe and effective practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine. The minimum core curriculum also represents fundamental elements of all major Oriental medicine traditions, ensuring that all acupuncturists are generally familiar with the various traditions while permitting the respective program to focus on the achievement of its own mission, goals and objectives. The curriculum, thus, allows diversity in meeting the precise, yet evolving, outcomes and professional competencies to be attained by a graduate

Mission

An institution's formally adopted statement of its fundamental reasons for existence, expressive of its shared purposes and values, and central to its decisions about priorities and strategic objectives.

Monitoring Actions

An action issued when the Commission or its staff identifies one or more *ACAOM Eligibility Requirements* and/or *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation* with which a program or institution may not be or remain in compliance unless the program or institution gives careful attention and commitment to continuing progress. Types of

Monitoring Actions include, but are not limited to, requiring programs or institutions to submit *Interim Reports*, *Annual Reports*, *Progress Reports*, *Supplemental Information Reports*, and/or hosting interim site visits.

Monitoring Report [See *Progress Report*]

Motor point needling [See *Dry Needling*]

Myofascial trigger point needling [See *Dry Needling*]

Nonprofit (Not-for-Profit) Institutions

An organization whose purposes are other than making a profit. In economic terms, a non-profit institution uses its surplus revenues to further achieve its purpose or mission, rather than distributing its surplus to the organization's shareholders (or equivalents) as profit or dividends.

Observation

Observation involves opportunities for students to observe acupuncturists and, in more limited instances, senior student interns performing acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine therapies in appropriate clinical settings.

Online Course

All course activity is done online. There are no required face-to-face sessions within the course and no requirements for on-campus activity. Purely online courses eliminate geography as a factor in the relationship between the student and the institution. They consist entirely of online elements that facilitate the three critical student interactions: with content, the instructor, and other students.

Order to Show Cause

An *Order to Show Cause* is a non-compliance action by the Commission to terminate the accreditation of a program or institution within a maximum period of one year from the date of the Order, unless the program or institution can show cause why such action should not be taken. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Oriental medicine

A collective term for systems of medicine, incorporating fundamental principles, physiological concepts, theoretical foundations, diagnostic procedures, and treatment modalities, whose fundamental theory originated in China and further developed in a variety of other predominantly Asian cultures. Treatment modalities include acupuncture,

herbal medicine, manual therapy, diet/lifestyle counseling, and therapeutic exercise. In the context of ACAOM accreditation, “Oriental medicine” programs incorporate comprehensive training in herbal medicine, while “acupuncture” programs provide only introductory herbal content.

Outcomes (also referred to as “Learning Outcomes” and “Student Learning Outcomes”)

The intended results for any unit or department of an institution or program. In the context of the Commission’s *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*, primary emphasis is placed on student learning outcomes which describe significant and essential learning that students have achieved and can reliably demonstrate at the end of a course or program, as demonstrated by such indicators as student attitudes, knowledge, skills, and performance. Outcome measures may also address student access, success, and other indicators aligned with institutional and programmatic mission and goals.

Pre-accreditation (or Candidacy)

The status of public recognition that ACAOM grants to an institution or program for a limited period of time that signifies ACAOM has determined that the institution or program is progressing towards accreditation and is likely to attain accreditation before the expiration of that limited period of time.

Prerequisite

Prerequisites are the required courses that must be taken to qualify for advanced study, or for entrance into a certain program or course. For example, the Commission requires for entry into the professional master’s program that a program admit only students who have met the prerequisite requirement, which is at least two academic years of accredited, postsecondary, baccalaureate-level education achieved in an educational institution accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the US Secretary of Education. The content of these two academic years of studies is not specified by the Commission allowing the program to determine what particular prerequisite course work is appropriate to its mission, goals and objectives.

Preceptorship [See *Clinical Training: Clinical Externship*]

Probation

Probation reflects the Commission’s findings that a program or institution fails to meet one or more of the ACAOM *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*. *Probation* is a clear warning that if the program or institution does not substantially correct the deficiencies noted by the Commission by the end of the probationary period, pre-accreditation or accreditation status will be withdrawn. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Program

A postsecondary educational program offered by an institution of higher education that leads to an academic or professional degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential.

Progress Report

The Commission or its staff may request a *Progress Report* when it has been determined that the program or institution is noncompliant with any *Eligibility Requirements* and/or *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*, or it is concerned about the potential for future non-compliance with one or more requirements of pre-accreditation or accreditation, when issues are very complex or numerous, or when the issues require a more substantive, detailed response. Institutions or programs that are required to submit *Progress Reports* must address compliance with specific eligibility requirements, or standards and criteria, at designated times prescribed by the Commission or its staff (e.g., quarterly, bi-annually).

Proprietary Education [See also *For-Profit Education*]

Educational institutions operated by private, profit-seeking businesses.

Public Member

A public member is a public representative who is not:

- (1) An employee, member of the governing board, owner, or shareholder of, or consultant to, an institution or program that is either pre-accredited or accredited by ACAOM or has applied for pre-accreditation or accreditation;
- (2) A member of any trade association or membership organization related to, affiliated with, or associated with, ACAOM or a program/school of acupuncture and/or Oriental medicine;
- (3) A spouse, domestic partner, parent, child, or sibling of an individual identified in (1) or (2) of this definition.

Public Disclosure

Publication and dissemination of relevant information to help ensure that members of the public are provided full and accurate information. (See [ACAOM Public Disclosure Policy](#))

Purpose Statement (also referred to as “Program Purpose” and “Statement of Purpose”)

A formally adopted statement of a program’s fundamental reasons for existence that guides programmatic practices, decision making, and strategic planning.

Recognized Accrediting Agency

A recognized accrediting agency is one whose accreditation standards, policies, procedures, and practices are reviewed and monitored by the U.S. Secretary of Education or the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA), and that is listed by these entities as a reliable authority regarding the quality of education and training in a given field or profession. To achieve recognition, accrediting agencies must demonstrate that they conduct effective and responsible accreditation practices that meet established provisions and standards for recognition.

Revocation/Termination of Pre-accreditation or Accreditation

An adverse action (Sanction) taken by the Commission when a program or institution has been found to be seriously out of compliance with one or more of ACAOM’s *Eligibility Requirements* and/or *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Rubric

An assessment tool used to measure the effectiveness of a process, work product, or student work. It is a scoring guide that seeks to evaluate performance based on a full range of criteria rather than a single numerical score, and which sets forth the criteria on which work will be judged.

Sanction

The Commission uses sanctions to inform the program or institution and the public of the severity of its concerns about the program or institution’s failure to meet one or more of ACAOM’s *Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*. All sanctions are made public and published on ACAOM’s website consistent with the [ACAOM Public Disclosure Policy](#). When the Commission issues a sanction, a public notice is prepared to inform the public about the nature of the Commission’s concerns and the procedures that will follow. Examples of Commission “sanctions” include but are not limited to: Warning, Probation, Order to Show Cause, or Sanctions for Unethical Behavior. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Self-Study (Eligibility, Pre-accreditation and Accreditation Phases)

An institution-wide, self-assessment, examination, and evaluation of an entire institution/program by its educational communities of interest -- board, faculty, students, administration, and staff -- based on applicable *ACAOM Eligibility Requirements* and *Accreditation Standards*. The process culminates with the drafting of the findings and recommendations of the self-study for the institution/program's own action. The collected findings and recommendations includes an assessment of the institution/program's educational activities and the identification of program strengths, weakness, opportunities for further development, as well as future plans for capitalizing on the strengths and addressing identified weaknesses. Self-studies, and their related documentation,

are required components of applications for pre-accreditation, initial accreditation, and re-accreditation. (See [ACAOM Accreditation Procedures Policy](#) and ACAOM's [Self-Study Guide](#).)

Self-Study Training

Following submission of a *Letter of Intent*, a representative or representatives of the institution/program seeking pre-accreditation/accreditation must complete ACAOM's *Self-Study Training*. Training may involve workshop attendance and/or self-paced review of ACAOM's guidance documents and resources. (See [ACAOM Accreditation Procedures Policy](#))

Significant program change

The purpose, goals, outcomes, scope, or content of a program reflect changes and revisions that are no longer indicative of a program's previously approved purpose, goals, outcomes, scope, or content.

Significant Changes in Clock Hours, Hours, or Program Length

A change from clock to credit hours, or vice versa, and/or a 20% or greater increase or decrease in the number of clock or credit hours required for the successful completion of an ACAOM-accredited program.

Significant Changes to an Accredited AOM Program

Changes to an ACAOM-accredited program that affect program outcomes, program length (time), course titles, or an essential assessment component.

Significant Change to Present Facilities

Changes to a presently approved facility that impact the instructional or administrative oversight of the ACAOM accredited programs offered.

Significant Changes to the Mission or Objectives of an ACAOM-Accredited Institution

A change to the mission or objectives of an institution that depart from previously approved outcomes, scope, or content.

Site Team

A team of peers from the higher education community that is selected, trained to review an institution/program's presentation and other documents, and conduct an on-site evaluation visit to an institution.

Site Visit

An on-site evaluation, conducted by Commission-appointed peers or staff, intended to obtain in-depth information concerning all administrative and educational aspects of the institution/program to assess compliance with the *ACAOM Eligibility Requirements and Accreditation Standards* and the achievement of its own stated mission, goals and objectives. The site visit confirms and complements the information contained in the comprehensive pre-accreditation/accreditation self-study report, substantive change application, or relevant monitoring report completed by the institution's stakeholders. The site visitor(s) issue a site visit report of findings to the program and the Commission. Site visits may also be required for interim, focused, compliance, and staff visits. (see ACAOM's [Site Visit Manual](#))

Site Visit Report (SVR)

During a site visit, the site visit members prepare a written *Site Visit Report (SVR)* of their findings for the Commission. (see ACAOM's [Site Visit Manual](#) and [ACAOM Accreditation Procedures Policy](#))

Student Learning Outcomes [See "Outcomes"]

Substantive Change

A change that may significantly affect an institution's quality, scope, or control. Substantive changes require prior approval by the Commission to assure that the proposed change will not adversely impact the institution, the Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (AOM) program, or compliance with ACAOM standards or policies (See [ACAOM Notification of Change Policy](#).)

Supplemental Information Report [See also *Monitoring Actions*]

In the event there is insufficient information to substantiate institutional or program compliance with one or more of *ACAOM's Policies, Eligibility Requirements or Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*, the Commission or staff may request a *Supplemental Information Report* for review.

Specialized or Programmatic Accreditation Agency

An accrediting agency that is national in scope and accredits higher education programs or institutions that prepare individuals for entry into practice in a specialized discipline or defined profession or educates individuals in a concentrated area of study. Specialized accreditation assures that a program is educationally sound and relevant to current practice in the professional field.

Supervised Clinical Practice

Clinical training conducted under the supervision of program-approved supervisors.

Teach-out Plan

A written plan developed by an institution that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 100 percent of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study, and may include a teach-out agreement between institutions. (See [ACAOM Teach-Out Policy](#).)

Teach-out Agreement

A written agreement between institutions that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable opportunity for students to complete their program of study if an institution, or an institutional location that provides 100 percent of at least one program offered, ceases to operate before all enrolled students have completed their program of study. (See [ACAOM Teach-Out Policy](#).)

Termination of pre-accreditation or accreditation

An adverse action taken by the Commission when a program or institution has been found to be seriously out of compliance with one or more of *ACAOM's Eligibility Requirements and/or Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Vitae

A faculty or staff member's resume that includes an appropriate summary of educational history and, if applicable, certification/licensure information, work history, research and publication history, professional consultation responsibilities, recent continuing education, membership and responsibilities in professional organizations, and honors or achievements.

Warning

A warning sanction reflects the Commission's finding that a program or institution fails to meet one or more of *ACAOM's Eligibility Requirements and/or Standards and Criteria for Accreditation*. (See [ACAOM Commission Actions Policy](#).)

Withdrawal of Candidacy

The Commission may withdraw Pre-accreditation status from an institution/program directly, after due notice, for a variety of reasons outlined in the *Commission Actions Policy*. An institution/program whose Pre-accreditation

status has been withdrawn, or that withdraws from Pre-accreditation, may not reapply for Pre-accreditation until, in the judgment of the Commission, the reasons for the withdrawal of Candidacy have been satisfactorily addressed.

Revision History

Date Revised	Summary of Revisions	Approved By
161207	Glossary reformatted, some old definitions revised and some new definitions added to clarify and reflect current ACAOM policies and procedures	ACAOM Executive Director
170214	Addition of certificate & continuing education program definitions, minor reformatting	ACAOM Executive Director
170307	Addition of “clinical setting” definition; addition of hyperlinks	ACAOM Executive Director
170515	Addition of “advanced standing” definition	ACAOM Executive Director
170616	Revised definition of auxiliary location to include clinics; added definitions for change of control, change in legal status, change in mission and change of ownership	ACAOM Executive Director
170719	Addition of “public member” definition	ACAOM Executive Director
171114	Revised to reflect “calendar” days as opposed to “business” days where relevant. Addition of hyperlinks where applicable to improve users’ experiences	ACAOM Executive Director
180130	Addition of “Core faculty” and “faculty” definitions	ACAOM Executive Director
180224	Revised reference link to FSA Handbook; deleted definition for Auxiliary Location; revised Clinical Settings & Clinical Training definitions; revised Faculty definition to course, not program; added “ACAOM accredited or pre-accredited” to Main campus, Branch campus, & Additional location.	ACAOM Executive Director
180302	Definitions for Distance Education, Classroom Course, Blended Classroom Course and Online Course added	ACAOM Executive Director
180420	<u>Revised</u> definitions of continuing education, credit hour, eligibility requirements, letter of intent; <u>added</u> definitions for AOM-related, contractual agreement, consortium agreement, educational objectives, eligibility requirements, goals, learning outcomes, purpose statement, self-study training, and site visit report. Definitions added for AOM-related, and consortium agreement, contractual agreement.	ACAOM Executive Director
180515	<u>Revised</u> definition of Certificate Program to include required state approvals	ACAOM Executive Director
181026	<u>Revised</u> definitions of: accreditation criteria, accreditation standards, certificate programs, continuing educations programs, monitoring (progress) report, public member, sanction <u>Added</u> definitions of: ACAOM-accreditable programs <u>Removed</u> definitions of: guidelines, professional doctoral program, prof. master’s level acupuncture prog. prof. master’s level OM prog., prof. post-grad DAOM prog.,	ACAOM Executive Director
181211	<u>Added</u> definitions of: assessment, evaluation <u>Revised</u> definition of clinical training (to include observation) <u>Changed</u> post-grad DAOM to post-professional DAOM	ACAOM Executive Director