FAQ: COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT DISTANCE EDUCATION

1. Are there any ACAOM-accredited programs offered via distance education/online?
   Currently, ACAOM does not accredit distance education programs in acupuncture and Oriental medicine. All ACAOM-accredited/pre-accredited programs are principally residential in nature. ACAOM does have a Distance Education Policy, under which accredited programs may seek to offer a limited number of courses in which more than 50% of course content or activity is delivered via distance education methods. In no instance may more than 49% of a total program be offered via distance education. Only didactic instruction may be conducted via distance education; clinical and practical/laboratory instruction may not be offered via distance education.

   Accredited and pre-accredited programs are allowed to offer “hybrid courses”, in which more than 50% of course content or activity is delivered via traditional (face-to-face) means and less than 50% of course content or activity is delivered via distance education methods. Many ACAOM programs utilize hybrid courses in their curriculum. All other ACAOM standards, criteria, policies and procedures regarding programs of study and admissions apply to distance-delivered courses, including limitations on participation by non-matriculated students.

   Note, ACAOM’s accreditation standards for entry-level professional doctoral (PD) programs allow an institution to offer a PD completion track for graduates of an ACAOM-accredited/pre-accredited master’s-level program. This completion track is considered by the Commission as a component of the overall professional doctoral program, rather than separate and distinct programs (see ACAOM accreditation criteria 5.08 and 7.02 for details). While some institutions have chosen to advertise such degree completion opportunities as “transitional doctorates” or “bridge” programs, the Commission will not review and accredit these programs apart from a full start-to-finish PD program. The PD completion components of the overall professional doctoral program may be offered entirely online.

2. Are there any institutions/programs that do not require the student to reside in the local area?
   All ACAOM-accredited/pre-accredited programs are principally residential in nature. While some institutions/programs have been approved to offer select courses online, there are currently no programs that offer enough online instruction to make study-from-home possible. There are several programs across the country that offer modular schedules (i.e., travel in for one intensive weekend per month). Prospective students are encouraged to consult ACAOM’s Directory of Accredited/Pre-accredited Programs and Institutions, search for schools in a desirable location, and then contact each school to determine what options they offer that might be appealing.

3. Does ACAOM accredit any training programs specifically for licensed healthcare professionals other than acupuncturists?
   Not at this time. All ACAOM programs are required to meet the minimum program length requirements stipulated under accreditation criterion 7.02. Individuals interested in pursuing an entry-level ACAOM-accredited program should explore the master’s-level and professional
doctoral programs listed under ACAOM's Directory of Accredited/Pre-accredited Programs and Institutions