

Osteopathic College Accreditation in the Global Environment

Alissa Craft, DO, MBA
Vice President, Accreditation
American Osteopathic Association

Purpose of Accreditation

- Accreditation assures the **quality** of the osteopathic medical education provided to the student.
- Accreditation is a **benchmark** and a measure of achievement for a college of osteopathic medicine.
- Accreditation is required for a COM's graduates to be **eligible** for licensure to practice osteopathic medicine.
- Accreditation allows COM students to be **eligible** to receive federal loans.

Peer Review

- Formal written policies and procedures that eliminate bias.
- Standards are developed collaboratively.
- Peer reviewers undergo training.
- Peer reviewers are volunteers.

Outcomes in Accreditation

- Outcomes provide evidence that standards have been successfully met.
- Outcomes of interest to educators and accreditors include:
 - Educational achievement/student learning
 - Indicators of performance
 - Procedural compliance

The Triad of Accreditation

- The US takes a three-pronged approach where the federal government, state governments and accreditation agencies share responsibility for accreditation oversight.
 - Accreditation agencies ensure that programs and institutions of higher education meet acceptable levels of quality in teaching and learning and promote continuous improvement in those areas.
 - State governments issue licenses to institutions that operate in the state.
 - The federal government focuses on the administrative and fiscal integrity of its student financial aid programs.

USDE Recognition

- The COCA has been a nationally-recognized accrediting agency since the first listing of its predecessor by the Secretary of Health Education and Welfare in 1952.

Institutional v. Program Accreditation

- **Institutional accreditation**
reviews academic and organizational structures of a college or university as a whole.
- **Programmatic accreditation**
conducts an in-depth assessment of specialized or professional programs at a college, university or independent institution.

Institutional Accreditation

- COCA serves as accreditor for the entire institution (free-standing COM) for 5 Schools:
 - PNWU-COM
 - VCOM
 - ACOM
 - BCOM
 - ARCOM

Program Accreditation

- When the COCA accredits a DO program at a school that is part of a larger institution, the COCA is only responsible for the accreditation of the program.

USDE Recognition

- USDE Recognition allows our institutions to participate in Title IV and other HEA funding opportunities.
- In 2016, COCA was granted continued accrediting authority.

About the COCA

- Representative body of the **osteopathic profession** and the **public**.
- Comprised of 17 voting members recommended by a Nominating Committee and appointed by the AOA President.
- Members of AOA Board of Trustees are **not** eligible to serve on the COCA.

COCA Membership (17)

- Dean, private institution
- Dean, public institution
- Educators (2)
- Hospital Administrator
- Director of Medical Education
- [AOA] Members-at-large (8)
- Public members (3)

The COCA Standards

1. Mission/ Goals
2. Leadership/Governance
3. Facilities
4. Faculty
5. Students
6. Curriculum
7. Research
8. Graduate Medical Education

International Accreditation

- ECFMG® has announced that, effective in 2023, physicians applying for [ECFMG Certification](#) will be required to graduate from a medical school that has been appropriately accredited. To satisfy this requirement, the physician's medical school must be accredited through a formal process that uses criteria comparable to those established for U.S. medical schools by the [Liaison Committee on Medical Education \(LCME\)](#) or that uses other globally accepted criteria.

ECFMG Position

- The ability to achieve ECFMG Certification is a key determinant of IMGs' readiness to enter the U.S. health care system. ECFMG's decision to require medical school accreditation as a requirement for IMGs seeking ECFMG Certification is a significant step in its continuing efforts to enhance protection of the public.

The Process

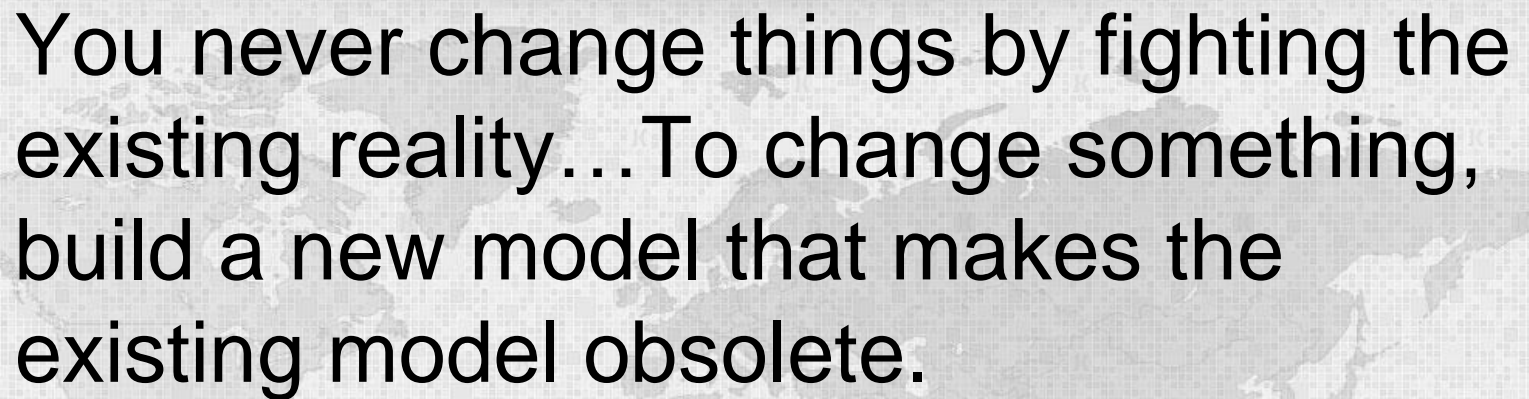
- WFME and the Foundation for Advancement of International Medical Education and Research (FAIMER®) worked in collaboration throughout 2011 to develop a process for evaluating and recognizing accrediting agencies. The WFME-FAIMER team developed proposals for an application, recognition criteria, and policies and procedures to support the recognition of accrediting agencies. Graduates of medical schools accredited by an agency recognized by the resulting process would meet the new ECFMG requirement.

WFME Program Recognition

- This program recognizes accrediting agencies that have the authority to accredit education programs/schools that award the MD degree or its equivalent.
- The following types of agencies are eligible to apply for WFME recognition:
 - governmental entities
 - entities that are authorized/recognized by the government
 - entities that are authorized/recognized by an appropriate professional/scientific association

WFME Program Recognition

- The entity must have the authority in the country where the medical school is located to accredit education programs/schools that award the MD degree or its equivalent.
- Recognition of an accrediting agency by the WFME Recognition Committee confers the understanding that an agency has been deemed to be credible in its policies and procedures to assure the quality of medical education in programs/schools that it accredits.



You never change things by fighting the existing reality... To change something, build a new model that makes the existing model obsolete.

Buckminster Fuller