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**NBOME Releases New COMLEX-USA Blueprint**

On July 5, 2017, the NBOME released the new COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint (scheduled for implementation 2018-2019). In the years since its implementation, the COMLEX-USA blueprint has been reviewed and revised regularly to reflect the evolution of osteopathic medical practice. The NBOME Board of Directors commissioned a five-year, comprehensive review of the examination series by its esteemed Blue Ribbon Panel, resulting in the new blueprint that provides stakeholders, including candidates (osteopathic medical students and residents), colleges of osteopathic medicine, residency programs and state licensing boards, a greater and more refined insight into the COMLEX-USA.

The COMLEX-USA examination series will transition to a contemporary, two-decision point, competency-based examination blueprint and evidence-based design informed by extensive research on actual osteopathic physician practice, expert consensus, and NBOME National Faculty and stakeholder surveys. The new and enhanced COMLEX-USA assesses representative required elements and measurable outcomes of the seven [Fundamental Osteopathic Medical Competency Domains](https://www.nbome.org/fomcd) and focuses on high-frequency clinical presentations or high-impact health issues and patient presentations that affect patients across the lifespan. In addition, the COMLEX-USA examination series focuses the assessment on two dimensions that continue to integrate:

- Osteopathic philosophy of whole person health care
- Underlying structure-function relationships
- Interdependence of body systems
- Self-healing and self-regulatory mechanisms
- An osteopathic approach to patient care, including osteopathic manipulative medicine and OMT

The new blueprint will be implemented beginning with COMLEX-USA Level 3 in September 2018 with the introduction of the new two-day exam, and with COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2 with the new test cycles that begin in May and June 2019, respectively.

[COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint](https://www.nbome.org/mblp)
Changes Coming to COMLEX-USA Level 3 in 2018

With the adoption of the new COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint, NBOME is preparing to implement the new blueprint first in COMLEX-USA Level 3, to be followed by implementation in COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2 in 2019. In addition, COMLEX-USA Level 3 will transition to a two-day examination, beginning in September 2018, following a period between May and August 2018 when no Level 3 examinations will be administered. Changes to Level 3 candidate eligibility are also being introduced and will require attestation that a resident is in good academic and professional standing by an AOA- or ACGME- accredited residency program director in 2018-2019. Information about the changes to COMLEX-USA can be found on the NBOME website that is updated on an ongoing basis. Throughout 2017, NBOME has been notifying colleges of osteopathic medicine, students and residents, graduate medical education programs, and state licensing boards about changes coming to COMLEX-USA and new information will continue to be shared throughout the transition process.

COMLEX-USA 2017-2018 Bulletin of Information Now Available

The NBOME released the COMLEX-USA Bulletin of Information (BOI) 2017-2018 on July 1, 2017. This document is critical for students and residents who must take COMLEX-USA to receive a license to practice osteopathic medicine.

The BOI includes information on all aspects of COMLEX-USA, including descriptions of COMLEX-USA examinations, eligibility requirements, registration and scheduling, examination administration and examination scoring. Osteopathic medical students and residents must review the BOI before registering or scheduling to take COMLEX-USA Level 1, Level 2-CE, Level 2-PE and Level 3 examinations.

This year’s COMLEX-USA BOI additionally informs examinees about these new changes:

- **Implementation of a new two-dimensional COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint.** Based on extensive research and expert consensus. The new blueprint will be implemented beginning with COMLEX-USA Level 3 in September 2018 with the introduction of the new two-day exam, and with COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2 in 2019.

- **Upcoming changes in candidate eligibility.** In September 2018 attestation of good academic and professional standing from a residency program director at an AOA- (American Osteopathic Association) or ACGME- (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education) accredited residency program will also be required as a prerequisite for taking the COMLEX-USA Level 3 examination. In 2019-2020 COMLEX-USA Levels 1 and 2 will require attestation that an osteopathic medical student is in good academic and professional standing by the dean of an AOA COCA-accredited college of osteopathic medicine (COM).

- **Updated terms and conditions.** The new BOI contains changes to terms and conditions to which candidates must agree before taking COMLEX-USA examinations.

- **Update to transcript annotation.** This year’s BOI clarifies the O annotation used on NBOME transcripts to show that an ‘other condition’ occurred while the candidate attempted to take an exam.
The NBOME Board of Directors held its 2017 Midyear meeting in our Chicago offices June 22-24. In all, more than 50 individuals representing the NBOME Board, special guests and staff attended numerous sessions over five days, taking place on three floors of the NBOME Chicago Corporate Offices, Conference Center and National Center for Clinical Skills Testing and Lutheran Center. The meetings were very successful; some of the highlights of the meetings include:

Executive Committee Highlights

- Meeting of the Executive Committee of the NBOME Board on June 22 followed by a development session for Board members conducted by Syd Steele, JD, NBOME Legal Counsel, Sandra Waters, MEM, VP for Collaborative Assessment & Initiatives and Joe Flamini, MBA, FACHE, VP for Administration/COO on the NBOME test accommodations processes, including the approach the NBOME takes to review applications and determine whether or not accommodations will be granted and an in-depth discussion of some of the intricacies and challenging nature of test accommodations and examinees with disabilities.

- Board Votes Move Important Initiatives Forward
  The Board voted to approve the 2018 annual budget, the enhanced COMLEX-USA Master Blueprint document with test specifications and National Faculty chair appointments. Other business included a report from the President and CEO on advances since 2016, including a new balanced scorecard showing progress toward the ACEL strategic plan and the 2017 priority goals, reports from NBOME Board Committees, updates on COMAT Foundational Biomedical Sciences portfolio, the CATALYST pilots and a report on COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE testing at both sites, as well as strategic discussions.
• **Board Focus on Single Accreditation System for GME**

During the Board meeting on Saturday, June 24, a panel discussion was held, with an *Update on the Single Accreditation System for Graduate Medical Education with a Focus on Osteopathically Distinctive Assessment in the New GME Arena.* Thomas Cavalieri, DO Chair of the Board and Stephen Shannon, DO, MPH, President, American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine (AACOM), Lorenzo Pence, DO, Senior Vice President, Osteopathic Accreditation from the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) and Boyd R. Buser, DO, President of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) presented brief status reports from their respective organizations, followed by a question and answer session with questions from NBOME Board members.

• **Federation of State Medical Boards**

A special meeting with representatives from the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) was held following the Board meeting on Saturday. The meeting was attended by Humayan Chaudhry, DO, FSMB President and CEO; Greg Snyder, MD, FSMB Chair of the Board; Arthur S. Hengerer, MD, FSMB Immediate Past Chair; Gary Slick, DO, MA, NBOME Board Chair; Dana Shaffer, DO, NBOME Board Vice-Chair; Geraldine O’Shea, DO, NBOME Secretary-Treasurer; Ron Burns, DO, NBOME Board member; John Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President & CEO; Sandra Waters, MEM, NBOME VP for Collaborative Assessment & Initiatives; Joe Flamini, MBA, FACHE, NBOME VP for Administration/COO.

Don Polk, DO, NBOME Board Member and Past Chair of the FSMB, with Hank Chaudhry, DO, President and CEO of the FSMB.
The NBOME Honors Outstanding Service

On Saturday evening, Board members held a special dinner with guests from AACOM, American Association of Osteopathic Examiners (AAOE), AOA, Association of Osteopathic Directors and Medical Educators (AODME), ACGME, AOA Bureau of Emerging Leaders, Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP) and the FSMB. At the Board dinner, two NBOME special awards were presented. Recognition for Outstanding Service was presented to Don A. “Jake” Jacobson, CLU, CHFC and Chris Thoman, NBOME software developer, received the NBOME Frederick G. Meoli, DO President’s Award for Outstanding Service, presented by Frederick G. Meoli, DO. The award is named after Dr. Meoli, a longtime NBOME leader who served as NBOME President (Board Chair) from 1999-2001 and its first full-time DO President and CEO from 2002-2009.

Recognition for Outstanding Service—Don A. “Jake” Jacobson, CLU, CHFC

Jake was recognized for outstanding service for his contributions to the financial oversight of the NBOME and for his dedication serving on the Finance Committee from 2008-2017.

Jake is Co-Owner and Partner of Dean Jacobson Financial Services, LLC and has been with the firm since 1980, where he currently serves as the firm’s President. Board Chair, Gary Slick, DO, MA, presented the award, acknowledging the good fortune of the NBOME to have Jake serve as a member of the Finance Committee and the Investment Subcommittee.

Dr. Slick recognized the sound financial advice and guidance Jake has brought to the NBOME throughout great growth and change. Comments from Past-Finance Committee Chairs, John Becher, DO, Gary Clark and Janice Knebl, DO, MBA who all worked closely throughout their tenure with Jake, were shared as a testament to his service over the years, including his exemplary record of meeting attendance, having only missed two of 46 meetings and teleconferences over a 10-year period.

Congratulations Jake!
The President’s Award for Outstanding Service was first given in 2015. This award recognizes a NBOME employee who has demonstrated exemplary performance of activities, directly related to the NBOME Core Values. It was established several years ago to recognize a member of NBOME’s staff for meritorious service. The awardee is selected by the NBOME President upon nomination by staff colleagues and the Executive Leadership Team.

In 2016, the NBOME Board of Directors approved the staff recommendation to approach Frederick G. Meoli, DO, the NBOME’s first full-time DO President and CEO, and request the honor of affixing his name to the award in perpetuity. A retired osteopathic surgeon, Dr. Frederick G. Meoli has led and served the NBOME, his patients and our profession with dedication and wisdom. Dr. Meoli served as NBOME President (which was the title given then to the volunteer Chair of the Board of Directors) from 1999 through 2001 and was our first full-time President and CEO from 2002 through 2009. During his over two decades with NBOME, as a Board member, Chair, and then full-time President & CEO, the NBOME grew in national and international recognition and preeminence.

Chris is the third annual recipient of the NBOME Frederick G. Meoli, DO, President’s Award for Outstanding Service. This very special award is given to a staff member who exemplifies the high standards set by the NBOME in areas such as supporting NBOME practices, procedures and policies by bringing about significant positive change; eliminating obstacles in support of the NBOME’s mission; showing innovation and proactive leadership; and building relationships and partnerships.

As NBOME Software Developer, Chris’ technology skills, work ethic, leadership and excellent customer service are outstanding. Since joining the NBOME Information Technology Department in 2012, Chris has led many software development projects and efforts to continuously improve the NBOME including improving the NBOME Candidate Registration System performance—specifically, increasing the portal’s availability from 99.4% to 100%, thus eliminating 300 minutes/month of system downtime for users. Additionally, he facilitated the automation of transcript reporting for the Electronic Residency Application Service (ERAS)—specifically, reducing turnaround time for requests from 2-3 days to almost immediate. It is worth noting that Chris contributed, owned, or helped complete 37 software development projects in his time at the NBOME, and addressed over 1,000 incidents or issues with software or technology processes—all showing Chris’ value in both the routine and strategic duties he addresses every day.
The NBOME Liaison Committee—Working to Forward Our Mission to Protect the Public

The NBOME Liaison Committee met on Sunday, June 25, led by NBOME Board Vice-Chair and Liaison Committee Chair, Dana Shaffer, DO. Representatives from ten stakeholder organizations joined NBOME Board and staff leaders to share updates from each organization and to discuss enhancements to the COMLEX-USA program and protecting the public. Those attending included Thomas Cavalieri, DO, AACOM Board Chair; Stephen Shannon DO, MPH, AACOM President; Nick Schilligo, MS, Staff Liaison for AAOE and Vice President, Public Policy, AOA; Barbara Walker, DO, AAOE Board Chair; Lorenzo Pence, DO, Senior Vice President, Osteopathic Accreditation, ACGME; Boyd R. Buser, DO, President, AOA; Lynn Mark, DO, MA, Immediate Past President, AODME; Johnny Dias, DO, New Physician Representative, AOA Bureau of Emerging Leaders; Ashley Sam, fourth-year osteopathic medical student, National First Vice-Chair, Council of Osteopathic Student Government Presidents (COSGP); Humayan Chaudhry, DO, FSMB President and CEO; Greg Snyder, MD, FSMB Board Chair; Elise Lovell, MD, Chair-Elect Organization of Program Director Associations; Katie Cassella, fourth-year osteopathic medical student, National President, Student Osteopathic Medical Association (SOMA).

On July 23, 2017, John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President and CEO and Gary L. Slick, DO, MA, NBOME Board Chair, gave a NBOME update to AOA trustees and affiliates about assessment across the continuum, 2017 enhancements to COMLEX-USA, the new COMLEX-USA blueprint (2018-19), the COMLEX-USA #PerfectlyMatched campaign and the Single Accreditation System, and NBOME’s new CATALYST platform and osteopathic continuous certification. CATALYST features easy accessibility on smartphones, tablets or computers 24/7, email notification of questions, short questions to fit busy schedules, spaced repetition, continuous assessment and learning with immediate performance feedback and direction to improvement resources. Assessment content is determined by each certifying board or client, with questions aligned to the scope of practice, and varied based on learner needs. Drs. Gimpel and Slick shared preliminary findings from two CATALYST pilots in coordination with the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), the American Osteopathic Board of Internal Medicine (AOBIM), and the American Osteopathic Board of Pediatrics (AOBP), and participating internists and pediatricians. Based on preliminary results of the two pilot studies, participants expressed significant satisfaction with the relevance, convenience and ability of CATALYST to help provide better care to their patients, with 100 percent indicating they would recommend CATALYST to their colleagues. With these positive results, the NBOME is preparing for a third pilot to take place in 2017 to further explore the CATALYST platform as an alternative method for ensuring ongoing physician competence for osteopathic continuous certification (OCC), component 3, cognitive assessment.

For more information about CATALYST, contact jflamini@nbome.org.
On July 20, 2017, the American Association of Osteopathic Examiners (AAOE) held its Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. The meeting was attended by osteopathic licensure board members and other organizational representatives, and was presided over by AAOE Chair, Barbara Walker DO. Hank Chaudhry, DO, FSMB President & CEO, provided an update on recent changes in licensed physicians in the U.S., the interstate medical licensure compact, physician wellness, and international activities in medical regulation. John Gimpel, DO, MEd, NBOME President and CEO, and Gary L. Slick, DO, MA, NBOME Board Chair presented a NBOME update to the group on the new COMLEX-USA blueprint and its implementation beginning in 2018, and enhancements to COMVEX and expansion of NBOME’s COMVEX subcommittee.

On Monday, June 5, 2017, the NBOME met with the Saudi Commission for Health Specialties (SCFHS) and our testing partners Education Management Solutions (EMS) in the Philadelphia office to discuss clinical skills assessment and other testing of health professionals. Based in Riyadh, SCFHS is responsible for supervising and evaluating training programs, as well as setting controls and standards for the practice of health professions across the Saudi Kingdom. SCFHS launched its work through its competent supervisory, executive and specialist boards and committees. “This was a wonderful opportunity to learn about assessment in Saudi Arabia and to showcase our people, our mission, our experience and services,” said Dr. Gimpel.

On June 26th, AACOM (American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine) presented a webinar with Stephen Shannon, DO, moderating and Boyd Buser, DO, and Lorenzo Pence, DO, speaking on the upcoming Single Accreditation System (SAS) for graduate medical education (GME) and how it will impact current osteopathic medical students.

The SAS transition began July 1, 2015, and is entering the third year of a five-year transition period. When the transition is complete, accreditation activities of the AOA (American Osteopathic Association) and AACOM will be integrated into the governance and operation of the ACGME (Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education). The SAS governs GME accreditation only; board certification, CME, COMLEX-USA as a requirement for graduation and licensure, and pre-doctoral education activities and requirements will all remain the same under the SAS.

Dr. Pence, who is a full-time employee of ACGME, noted that more than 50 DOs are currently serving on committees at the ACGME, including the Executive Committee, to facilitate this change and maintain the necessary requirements for osteopathic medical students. In 2020, the AOA will cease to accredit, with the ACGME fully taking over this role. In instances where a residency program is pending accreditation, the AOA will be able to continue to work with the resident under the ‘no resident left behind’ provision to ensure a smooth accreditation process.

For additional information, go to the AACOM website to view the webinar and a detailed FAQ.
NBOME—Keeping up with the COMs!

NBOME representatives provide on-site campus visits or videoconference presentations to 10-15 COM campuses each academic year, typically upon invitation from the dean. These are usually one-day visits that feature NBOME and COMLEX-USA updates to faculty and students, or videoconference presentations to faculty. Upon request, these visits may include faculty development in multiple-choice question (MCQ) test item-writing, case development, clinical skills testing or related assessment or curricular topics. In addition to providing information to the COM faculty and students about COMLEX-USA, COMAT, COMSAE and other NBOME products and services, these visits allow opportunities for COM faculty and students to provide important feedback to the NBOME. For more information, please contact Kelly Reynolds, NBOME Executive Assistant, kreymonds@nbome.org.

Recent Visits to Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine

On June 2, 2017, NBOME President and CEO John R. Gimpel, DO, MEd, attended the faculty meeting at Midwestern University Chicago College of Osteopathic Medicine (CCOM) at their offsite retreat in Downers Grove, IL.

Dr. Gimpel talking to faculty about COMLEX-USA and NBOME.

Dr. Gimpel also visited the Liberty University College of Osteopathic Medicine (LUCOM) in Lynchburg, VA, on June 8, 2017, to meet with faculty for a COMLEX-USA and NBOME update and conducted an Item Writing Workshop.

LUCOM Dean Peter A. Bell, DO, pictured with Dr. Gimpel

On July 6, 2017, Dr. Gimpel presented changes to the COMLEX-USA program and NBOME updates to deans, faculty and students at Michigan State University College of Osteopathic Medicine (MSU-COM) in East Lansing, MI.

Dr. Gimpel with MSU-COM faculty member Taylor Scott DO (far left), Interim Sr. Associate Dean Kari Hortos, DO (left) and Associate Dean Susan Enright, DO (right).
COMAT Program Update

The COMAT program continues to grow with engagement of almost all of the COMs! The majority of COMs have now added COMAT Emergency Medicine or are doing so in 2017-2018. In addition, the new COMAT-Foundational Biomedical Sciences (FBS) comprehensive exam is likely to be released by December 2018, and tailored organ body system and/or basic science discipline COMAT exams targeted for release in December 2019. Look for updates including special programs for COMAT-FBS exams that will be offered exclusively for COMAT COMs! Enhanced Site Readiness Tools for COMAT to pre-check system, access, and devices for COMAT COMs are now available. Contact Client Services for more information.

COMAT
National Board of Osteopathic Medical Examiners

NBOME Office Visitation Days

Interested in learning more about NBOME assessments, services or facilities? Consider NBOME for Visitation Day—a behind-the-scenes opportunity to explore the COMLEX-USA licensure examination program, with a particular emphasis on the components of the Level 2-PE clinical skills examination, as well as other NBOME assessment services, including the COMSAE, COMAT and COMVEX examination programs. Visitation Day is an interactive group event and includes a tour of the NBOME National Center for Clinical Skills Testing and interaction with the NBOME leadership team. Past participants report that these are wonderful development opportunities. Invitees include faculty and staff from COMs, GME programs and state licensing boards. The next NBOME Visitation Day will be held in the NBOME Chicago Corporate Office and Conference Center on Monday, October 16, with a Philadelphia Office Visitation Day in the plans for the spring of 2018.

Contact Rachel Maxwell, rmaxwell@nbome.org, for more information on resources that may be available to your organization and to register for a NBOME Visitation Day.

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Enhanced Site Readiness Tools for COMAT to pre-check system, access, and devices for COMAT COMs are now available. Contact Client Services for more information.

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COMLEX-USA Level 2-PE Orientation Guide

Send submissions, questions or comments about The Osteopathic Examiner to the Editor:
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The NBOME’s Mission
To protect the public by providing the means to assess competencies for osteopathic medicine and related health care professions