

UCNS Newsletter

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For more information about the UCNS, visit the UCNS website at www.ucns.org.

MISSION STATEMENT

The mission of the United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties is to provide for accreditation and certification with the goal of enhancing the quality of training for physicians in neurological subspecialties and the quality of patient care.

Autonomic Disorders and Geriatric Neurology Granted UCNS Membership

The United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties (UCNS) has approved two new subspecialties for membership. The subspecialty areas of Autonomic Disorders and Geriatric Neurology were approved by the UCNS Board.

The Geriatric Neurology subspecialty was sponsored by the American Academy of Neurology Geriatric Neurology Section. Co-sponsors of the Autonomic Disorders membership were the American Autonomic Society and the American Academy of Neurology Autonomic Nervous System Section.



Thomas Chelimsky, MD

"Both the Autonomic Section of the AAN and the American Autonomic Society feel privileged to have obtained membership in the UCNS," said Thomas Chelimsky, MD, Past Chair of the Autonomic Nervous System Section.

"This was an effort across continents, across societies, across disciplines, and across time. The field of autonomic

disorders can only accelerate its growth through an increase in the availability of training programs. We will now write an exam for the certification of fellows. This effort has also fostered new thinking about what we do and how we do it. We have begun a definition of our specialty that transcends disciplines, and can look forward to an ongoing collaboration to place our work into the broader perspective of education and training in medicine."



John C. Morris, MD

John C. Morris, MD, Past Chair of the Geriatric Neurology Section, said, "This is an important milestone for the field of geriatric neurology. By creating these standards for geriatric fellowships and developing criteria for certification, we are strengthening the entire field of geriatric neurology, and thereby improving care for patients."

There are now eight subspecialty areas with membership in the UCNS.

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Important Dates

October 8–12, 2007

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine certification examinations

November 6, 2007

Accreditation Council meeting to review Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Headache Medicine accreditation applications for the 2008 academic year

December 10–14, 2007

Neurocritical Care certification examinations

December 31, 2007

Deadline for applications for UCNS accreditation for Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, Headache Medicine, Neurocritical Care, and Neuro-Oncology fellowship programs

February 4–8, 2008

Neuroimaging certification examinations

April 12–19, 2008

UCNS exhibits at AAN Annual Meeting in Chicago

July 7–11, 2008

Neuro-Oncology certification examination

Letter from the Chair



Leslie A. Morrison, MD

The UCNS continues to grow at a rapid pace. We have recently welcomed two new subspecialty members, and the first certification examinations are scheduled in three new subspecialty areas. Our list of UCNS-accredited fellowship programs in Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry keeps expanding.

Helping to direct this growth is our new Executive Director, Mary E. Post, CAE.

Ms. Post has worked with the AAN since 1992, most recently as its Chief Operating Officer. Ms. Post will bring a wealth of knowledge to the UCNS, as well as many years of experience working with physicians through the AAN. Working with Ms. Post are Todd Bulson, Certification Manager, and Lynee Koester, Executive Assistant.

I am pleased to have Lisa DeAngelis, MD, serving as Vice Chair of the UCNS Board of Directors. Please join me in thanking her for her willingness to serve in this important role on the Board. A thank you also goes out to P. David Charles, MD, and Harvey Singer, MD, who have agreed to serve another term on the Board as Director and Secretary/Treasurer, respectively.

I would also like to thank David Bachman, MD, who has served as a Member Director on the UCNS Board since June 2005 representing Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BN&NP). Dr. Bachman was instrumental in leading BN&NP to 15 program accreditations, and also in assisting with policy development.

Accreditation Council

We would like to thank Pradeep K. Sahota, MD, for his years of service on the UCNS Accreditation Council. While serving from 2003 – 2007, Dr. Sahota contributed greatly to the development

and success of the accreditation process. Replacing Dr. Sahota on the Council is David C. Good, MD, whose term will run through May 2010. Please join us in welcoming Dr. Good to the Council.

We are also pleased to announce the following American Society of Neuroimaging representatives who have volunteered for the UCNS:

Accreditation Council Representatives

Lawrence Wechsler, MD; Camilo R. Gomez, MD

Neuroimaging Exam Committee Members:

Mircea Morariu, MD; Laszlo Mechtler, MD; Jack Greenberg, MD; Joseph Masdeu, MD; John Chawluk, MD; Carl Ellenberger, Jr., MD; Marc Malkoff, MD; David Liebeskind, MD; Eric Lindzen, MD, PhD; Shedthikere N. Krishna Murthy, MD

Thank You

I would also like to give a special thank you to all of the volunteers who provide their valuable time to the UCNS. Thank you to the members of our Behavioral Neurology and Neuropsychiatry Exam Committee, Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology Exam Committee, Headache Medicine Exam Committee, Neurocritical Care Exam Committee, Neuro-oncology Exam Committee, the Accreditation Council, the Certification Council, our five parent organizations, our consultant Benson Munger, and the members of our Board of Directors.

Leslie A. Morrison, MD

Chair, United Council for Neurologic Subspecialties

Autonomic Disorders and Geriatric Neurology Granted UCNS Membership *(Continued)*

Membership in the UCNS is the first step in the UCNS accreditation and certification processes. The UCNS Accreditation Council will begin working with both subspecialties to finalize requirements for fellowship programs. Programs will then be able to apply to become accredited by the UCNS. The Certification Council will also work with the subspecialties and appoint Examination Committees with experts from the subspecialties to develop the examinations that will be used in certifying

individuals. As a member of the UCNS, the subspecialties are granted one voting seat on the UCNS Board of Directors.

To learn more about the UCNS subspecialty membership process, please go to www.ucns.org/membership/

For more information contact Mary Post at mpost@ucns.org

First Exams in Neuroimaging

The deadline for certification applications for the first examinations in the subspecialty of Neuroimaging is September 15, 2007. Examinations will be given February 4–8, 2008.

Board Member Highlight

Kurt A. Jaeckle, MD, joined the UCNS Board of Directors in May 2005. He has been on the faculty at the Mayo Clinic Jacksonville as a professor of neurology and oncology since 2000, where he focuses on patient care. He also works on clinical trial development as Chair of the North Central Cancer Treatment Group (NCCTG) Neuro-oncology Committee.

UCNS: Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of neurology?

KJ: It was the exposure to highly motivated teachers and instructors of neuroanatomy and neurology in medical school that resulted in my choice of neurology. I caught their enthusiasm for what they did.

UCNS: Where did you train?

KJ: I did my internship and residency at Vanderbilt University, then my neuro-oncology training with Jerry Posner and Bill Shapiro at Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center. I initially practiced neuro-oncology on the faculty at the University of Utah and later the University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center.

UCNS: What was your first reaction to the concept of neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?

KJ: The idea of some form of official certification process had been intermittently tossed about in informal conversations over several years, but nothing had ever really taken shape. By the early to mid 1990s, several centers offered training in neuro-oncology, but the actual training experience for fellows varied widely between programs, procedures were less than optimally defined in most circumstances, and there was no standardized approach to education, nor requirements for the programs. In about 1994-5, I started a series of informal discussions with several mid-career and senior neuro-oncologists regarding this issue. Around 1996, Lisa DeAngelis, Lisa Rogers and I, (and there were many others involved), realized it was past time to formally organize a strategic process that would lead to the establishment of a certification and accreditation process. In about 1997, I took up the charge of organizing an effort to discuss the feasibility of certification and organize the process which would lead to this. The Executive Committee of the AAN Section of Neuro-oncology decided that someone should lead this effort and I think I got nominated since I was out of the room at the time. In any event, we began with discussions at the AAN Annual Meeting and the annual Society for Neuro-oncology meeting. Program Directors of existing neuro-oncology training programs were invited to attend.

UCNS: When did you become involved in the discussions regarding neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?

KJ: I was honored to be a member of the Commission and was able to learn much more about the process of ACGME

accreditation and ABMS certification. We started by obtaining the training procedures and policy manuals from about half a dozen of the largest US neuro-oncology training programs. A task force critically examined these documents, sifting out as well as projecting what might be considered "idealized" and applicable standards for future programs and trainees. This of course was complicated and required a great deal of compromise, and the process has taken eight years. The development of templates by the UCNS for applications, certification and accreditation, and the practice track path, caused us to further refine the original documents. Versions of these documents went out to the programs in draft and final forms on three occasions for feedback. The Subspecialty Program documents were finally approved by the UCNS in the spring of 2005, and since then the documents have gone through many additional improvements and revisions. They are being reviewed by the Councils and the Board for consideration of final approval this fall, and additionally, a separate Examination Committee has met and nearly completed efforts in generating the official examination for applicants.



Kurt A. Jaeckle, MD

UCNS: What has been the impact of the UCNS since it was established in 2003?

KJ: My own personal feelings are that this has the potential to represent a milestone in the development of neuro-oncology. This will for the first time lay down a set of agreed-upon standards for programs and trainees. Certification and accreditation is voluntary. However, those UCNS-accredited programs will provide successful trainees with an irrefutable set of qualifications, while preparing trainees for their careers. Most importantly, we feel that this process has for the first time clearly defined the critical requirements for trainees and programs nationwide, which should solidify the subspecialty. There are potentially several results of this process: improvement of training and the quality of patient care; definition of the role of the neuro-oncologist; clear documentation of background experience for credentialing (for potential defense of experience and the specialty to patients, other physicians, institutional credentialing committees, and insurance providers); and finally, stimulation of future interest of individuals who may enter the field of neuro-oncology.

UCNS Accredits Additional Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry Programs

Congratulations to the following Headache Medicine and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry programs that have received accreditation from the UCNS beginning July 2008.

Headache Medicine Program	Fellowship Director	Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry Program	Fellowship Director
University of South Florida	Maria-Carmen Wilson, MD	Emory University School of Medicine	Angela Ashley, MD
Mayo Clinic (MN)	Jerry Swanson, MD	Northwestern University	Marsel Mesulam, MD
Cleveland Clinic	Jennifer Kriegler, MD		

For a complete listing of UCNS-accredited programs, access the UCNS Fellowship Directory at www.ucns.org.

Fellowship Directors: Apply for Accreditation by December 31, 2007

Program Information Forms for Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, Headache Medicine, Neurocritical Care, and Neuro-Oncology programs that wish to apply for UCNS accreditation must be submitted by

December 31, 2007, for review in the spring and accreditation for the 2008 academic year. Applications and information are available on the UCNS website at www.ucns.org/accreditation/application.

UCNS

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The UCNS is sponsored by five parent organizations:

- American Academy of Neurology
www.aan.com
- American Neurological Association
www.aneuroa.org
- Association of University Professors of Neurology
www.aupn.org
- Child Neurology Society
www.childneurologysociety.org
- Professors of Child Neurology *see also*
www.childneurologysociety.org

www.ucns.org

SUBMIT STORY IDEAS

Any news or story ideas for UCNS readers? We would like to hear from you. Submit feedback regarding this issue and/or story ideas for future issues to the UCNS Executive Office.

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