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For more information about  
UCNS, visit the UCNS web-  
site at [www.ucns.org](http://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.*

## Neural Repair and Rehabilitation Subspecialty Member Approved

UCNS is pleased to announce membership approval of its ninth subspecialty, Neural Repair and Rehabilitation. Neural Repair and Rehabilitation is sponsored by the American Academy of Neurology's Section on Neural Repair and Rehabilitation and the American Society of Neurorehabilitation. The Accreditation Council has begun to work with the subspecialty to refine its program requirements. The UCNS Board of Directors and staff look forward to working with the subspecialty.

## UCNS Diplomate Survey Results Announced

In August 2010, UCNS staff conducted a survey of current UCNS diplomates. The goal was to determine diplomate satisfaction with UCNS and the impact UCNS has had on neurologic subspecialties. All UCNS diplomates were invited to participate in the survey, and UCNS extends its gratitude for the feedback it received.

A total of 282 diplomates participated in the survey. All subspecialties were represented. The majority of responders indicated certification in Neurocritical Care (98), Headache Medicine (87), and Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (61). In addition to the real and perceived benefits of certification and accreditation, the survey asked about participation in the upcoming UCNS maintenance of certification process. A majority of participants agreed that UCNS certification is the "gold standard" in their subspecialty. Additional results included:

- 82% intend to maintain certification after expiration of their time-limited certification
- 84% "strongly agree" or "agree" with the statement "UCNS fellowships enhance the credibility of my subspecialty"
- 77% "strongly agree" or "agree" that "Preparation for the UCNS certification examination improved my knowledge and clinical skills"
- 26% indicated that UCNS certification is required for clinical privileges or academic appointment

The survey also gave participants the opportunity to provide comments. We received many positive and thoughtful comments and suggestions regarding how we can better serve our diplomates and programs. This feedback will be used to further strengthen UCNS's services to its subspecialties.

## Important Dates

### December 1, 2010

Accreditation Application  
Deadline

### January 15, 2011

Neuro-oncology  
Certification Examination  
Application Deadline

### July 1, 2011

Accreditation Application  
Deadline

### January 31, 2011

Continued Accreditation  
Applications and Fee  
Deadline

### June 15, 2011

Autonomic Disorders  
Certification Examination  
Application Deadline

### July 15, 2011

Geriatric Neurology and  
Neurocritical Care  
Certification  
Examinations Application  
Deadline

## Letter from the Chair



Paul M. Vespa, MD,  
FCCM, FAAN

It has been a year since I became UCNS Board Chair, and what a year it has been!

As highlighted in other articles in this *Newsletter*, UCNS continues to grow. In April the Board approved Neural Repair and Rehabilitation as a member subspecialty, bringing our total of member subspecialties to nine. We now have 72 accredited training programs at North America's most distinguished academic medical centers, including our most recent program at the University of British Columbia. Enthusiasm for our certification examinations far exceeded our expectations. This year we set a record for applications received (438) and processing them almost overwhelmed our modest staff. I believe that these numbers reflect the vibrancy of UCNS.

In 2010 the Board welcomed two new members. Imad T. Jarjour, MD began a three-year term as the representative of the Child Neurology Society, one of our parent organizations. He replaced Leslie A. Morrison, MD, who had served UCNS since 2005, most recently as Board Chair. In addition, Kester J. Nedd, DO, has become a member representing the recently approved Neural Repair and Rehabilitation subspecialty (see the article on page 1). The UCNS bylaws provide that representatives of member subspecialties serve two-year terms on a rotating basis. Dr. Nedd replaced Lawrence R. Wechsler, MD, FAAN, who had represented the Neuroimaging subspecialty since 2008. All Board, Council, and committee members serve on a volunteer basis. We are deeply grateful to all of them for their unselfish devotion to UCNS.

We have several exciting initiatives on our agenda for the year ahead. Over the next two years we will be making a substantial investment in upgrading our website so that program directors and examination applicants can complete applications online. As our new maintenance of certification policy is implemented, we will be providing diplomates detailed information about recertification. Finally, we will be pilot testing a new flexible training option for programs that will offer fellows greater opportunities for research and work/life balance. These are just a few of the ways we hope to continue breaking new ground in subspecialty accreditation and certification.

Paul M. Vespa, MD, FCCM, FAAN

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## Board Member Highlight – Daniel I. Kaufer, MD, FAAN



Daniel I. Kaufer, MD,  
FAAN

**Daniel I. Kaufer, MD, FAAN** joined the UCNS Board of Directors in 2010. Dr. Kaufer is an Associate Professor in the Department of Neurology and the Director of the Memory Disorders program at the University of North Carolina School of Medicine.

### ***Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of neurology?***

As a role model, my childhood friend's stepfather, Charles Hughes, was a neurologist working in dementia at Washington University in St. Louis. He introduced me to neurology as a medical specialty that captured my interest, and dementia as a particularly challenging and fascinating area of inquiry.

### ***Where did you train and where do you currently practice?***

In 1987, when I was a 4<sup>th</sup> year medical student doing an elective at the University of Pittsburgh, I arranged a meeting with Thomas Detre, the former psychiatry chair and senior vice chancellor for health sciences. He had just written an article calling for neurology and psychiatry to merge into a subspecialty he called "clinical neurosciences." I asked him how realistic this was as a career pathway. He smiled and said that not too many people see things this way. He was right.

During a flexible internship year I interviewed at programs in both areas. During one interview at the University of Pittsburgh neurology program, a senior faculty person addressed my equivocation with simple advice: "Do a neurology residency and a fellowship in Behavioral Neurology." With those words my career path took shape, first as a neurology resident at the University of Pittsburgh, where I did an elective rotation at the Alzheimer's Disease Research Center under the direction of Steven DeKosky. From there I went to UCLA as a Neurobehavior Fellow to study with Frank Benson and Jeffrey Cummings. After this, I returned to the University of Pittsburgh for a while, then came to Chapel Hill in 2003 to start a Memory Disorders Program.

*Continued on page 6*

# Certification News

## Letter from the Certification Council Chair



Gregory Gruener, MD,  
MBA

2010 has been a busy and exciting year for the Certification Council. We've received a record-setting number of applications for the 2010 certification examinations, which include Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, Headache Medicine, and Neurocritical Care. Also adding to the stellar numbers were the applications received for the first examination to be offered in 2011, Neuroimaging. It is my hope that we continue to build on this momentum in 2011 with the remaining four examinations, Neuro-oncology, Autonomic Disorders, Geriatric Neurology, and Neurocritical Care. The high level of interest is a true measure of success that demonstrates the quality of our exams and the recognized need for certification. I congratulate the four subspecialties and look forward to continued growth in 2011. The Certification Council recognizes the hard work of its examination committees in preparing and reviewing the examinations to ensure the highest quality in all of our examinations.

In addition to preparing the certification examinations and reviewing them, the Certification Council has worked hard to establish the UCNS maintenance of certification policy. More information on this policy is included in this newsletter.

I look forward to closing out this exciting year and working on next year's initiatives and examinations.

Gregory Gruener, MD, MBA

## UCNS Maintenance of Certification Policy

UCNS's maintenance of certification policy will be implemented January 1, 2011. All UCNS certificates are time-limited, expiring on December 31<sup>st</sup> of the tenth year after the date of issuance. Four requirements must be met during the 10-year cycle in order to be recertified for another 10-year period. The diplomate must: 1) maintain a current, active, valid, unrestricted, and unqualified license to practice medicine, 2) continue to be in good standing in the primary specialty of the ABMS or RCPSC member board that was required for eligibility when he or she applied for initial UCNS certification, 3) complete 300 category 1 CME hours approved by ACCME or RCPSC, 60 (20%) of which must be related to the diplomate's UCNS subspecialty, and 4) take and pass a UCNS recertification examination. For those diplomates who were certified prior to the effective date of the policy, CME requirements will be prorated. The same CME credits may be used to satisfy the maintenance of certification requirements for multiple specialties and subspecialties.

Additional information, including frequently asked questions and details about the policy's implementation, are currently under development and will be available on the UCNS website by the end of the year. Please contact Todd Bulson, Certification Manager, with any questions.

## Five Certification Examinations Offered in 2011

UCNS will offer five certification examinations in 2011. The examinations, including application due dates, are listed in the *2011 Certification Examination Schedule* below.

The importance of certification to their subspecialty was stressed by Thomas Chelimsky, MD, FAAN, chair of the Autonomic Disorders Certification Examination Committee, and Paola Sandroni, MD, PhD, vice chair. "The UCNS certification in Autonomic Disorders culminates years of efforts to establish the subspecialty and recognize its importance to patients who have no other medical home," said Chelimsky. "A team effort generated a core curriculum and designed the exam. The certification provides recognition to those who work in this field and strive for high standards in laboratory and clinical areas to successfully manage patients with autonomic disorders." Added Sandroni, "Because the initial team crossed specialty boundaries beyond neurology, the UCNS certification process sets a platform for the growth of Autonomic Disorders and reflects its truly interdisciplinary nature."

## 2011 Certification Examination Schedule

Subspecialty	Application Deadline	Examination Date	Location
Neuroimaging	August 15, 2010	January 31—February 4, 2011	Pearson Vue
Neuro-oncology	January 15, 2011	July 11—15, 2011	Pearson Vue
Autonomic Disorders	June 15, 2011	November 28—December 2, 2011	Pearson Vue
Geriatric Neurology	July 15, 2011	December 12—16, 2011	Pearson Vue
Neurocritical Care	July 15, 2011	December 5—9, 2011	Pearson Vue

# Accreditation News

## Letter from the Accreditation Council Chair



David C. Anderson,  
MD, FAAN

The Accreditation Council is pleased to begin working with Autonomic Disorders and Clinical Neuromuscular Pathology programs as program requirements for both subspecialties have been approved. Next, the Accreditation Council will begin working with the Neural Repair and Rehabilitation subspecialty as it begins to draft its program requirements and applications.

I am also happy to announce that this year UCNS accredited its first Geriatric Neurology program, which is at Columbia University, and accredited its first international program in Canada, the Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry program at the University of British Columbia.

The Accreditation Council has also been hard at work reviewing its policies, procedures, and initiatives. The goal of this work is more streamlined and understandable accreditation processes that also retain the foundation of accreditation integrity already established by current policies and programs. New and exciting initiatives will begin in 2011, including increased flexibility for fellowship programs.

We look forward to working with our existing programs and to continue to assist new programs as they navigate the accreditation process.

David C. Anderson, MD, FAAN

## Apply for UCNS Accreditation by December 1

The deadlines for fellowship programs seeking accreditation have changed. UCNS is now accepting applications until December 1, 2010. Programs approved following this deadline may be accredited as of July 1, 2011. The next deadline for program applications will be June 1, 2011.

## Continued Accreditation Submissions Due January 31, 2011

Continued accreditation program information forms were sent to programs in September. If your program is due for accreditation review in 2011 and you have not yet received your continued accreditation forms, contact Amanda Carpenter, Accreditation Administrator, as soon as possible.

Continued accreditation program information forms, appendices, and application fees are due January 31, 2011.

## Program Changes

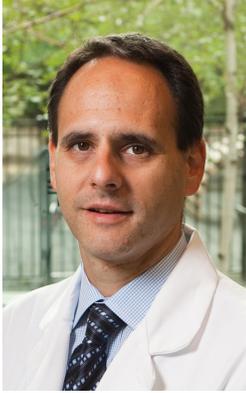
If you are planning changes in faculty, curriculum, or resources in your UCNS-accredited fellowship, please contact the Accreditation Council. The program change procedure and template letter are available for your convenience on your subspecialty accreditation page at [www.ucns.org](http://www.ucns.org).

## UCNS Accredits New Programs

Congratulations to the following programs that received accreditation from UCNS effective July 1, 2010. A complete list of UCNS-accredited programs is available at <http://www.ucns.org/apps/directory/>. Newly accredited programs and fellowship directors are:

Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry	
University of British Columbia	Trevor Hurwitz, MD
Geriatric Neurology	
Columbia University	Lawrence S. Honig, MD, PhD, FAAN
Neurocritical Care	
Mayo Clinic, Rochester	Alejandro Rabinstein, MD
University Hospitals Case Medical Center	Michael DeGeorgia, MD
Neuro-oncology	
Johns Hopkins University Medical School	John Laterra, MD
University of Texas MD Anderson Cancer Center	John F. deGroot, MD

## Program Director Highlight—Andrew Lassman, MD, Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center



Andrew Lassman, MD

### ***Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of neurology?***

When I was a kid, I enjoyed trying to figure out how things worked, and was very into science and computers, and also liked to help other people. My family is filled with physicians, and going into medicine seemed like a natural fit and a great way to combine all of my interests. In college I became fascinated with the brain and neuroscience, and early in medical school I was exposed to neuroanatomical localization, all of which led me to a residency in neurology. However, I had also considered pursuing a residency in medicine with fellowship in oncology because I found the molecular biology of cancer very intriguing. Therefore, after residency, I ultimately pursued fellowship training in Neuro-oncology, which combined my interests in molecular biology, neurology, and cancer by focusing on brain tumors. As a fellow, I also had the opportunity to work in the laboratory which gave me an understanding of the molecular biology of gliomas, the most common type of primary brain tumor, and led to fruitful collaborations with other investigators here in a variety of fields. I set as my goal the cure of glioblastoma, the most aggressive type of glioma, which is notoriously stubborn and difficult to treat. We're making progress. For example, although the average survival is troublingly short, patients with favorable prognostic factors have about a 30 percent five-year survival rate in a recent international clinical trial, and that is encouraging. Moreover, the longer patients live, the more treatments will become available. When I was in medical school, people with AIDS lived just a few months on average; now people with HIV can live for decades with treatment. If we can

learn how to treat brain tumors so that patients can live with them as a manageable condition for decades and have a good quality of life, in a sense that is the start to a cure.

### ***Where did you train and where do you currently practice?***

I completed a dual bachelor's/master's degree program in molecular biophysics and biochemistry at Yale followed by medical school and residency at Columbia. I received subspecialty training in Neuro-oncology at Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center after which I was privileged to join the faculty. I became director of the fellowship training program in 2007. I am also certified in Neuro-oncology by UCNS.

### ***Why did you decide to seek UCNS accreditation for your program?***

The UCNS requirements for accreditation ensure a rigorous training program for fellows. To fulfill the requirements for accreditation, we made several adjustments to our (already robust) program that enhanced the educational curriculum for fellows to maximize their training and prepare them to become the next generation of academic leaders. In addition, we hoped that accreditation would make our training program more attractive to potential fellowship applicants.

### ***How has UCNS accreditation impacted your program?***

In addition to the enhancements we made to the educational curriculum, we observed a substantial increase in the number of applicants to our program. The year before accreditation (2007), we had seven applicants for about four positions per year. Each year afterward we had at least 10 applicants. For example, we had 13 applicants for 2011, and we are already interviewing candidates for 2012.

### ***What would you like individuals in neurology and the public to know about UCNS accreditation?***

For some subspecialties, like Neuro-oncology, UCNS accreditation or physician certification is the only mechanism for formal recognition that a program or physician is credentialed.

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## Parent Organization News

### **AAN Membership Offers Benefits Geared Specifically to Your Area of Interest**

An investment in an American Academy of Neurology (AAN) membership presents a unique opportunity for you to make an important investment in your professional future. As an AAN member, you will receive access to a wealth of resources geared specifically to your area of interest, including networking opportunities through AAN Sections and the new AAN Communities.

### **Apply for 2011 Membership Today, Start Enjoying Benefits in 2010**

If you apply for a 2011 AAN Membership now, you can begin enjoying some of these exclusive benefits today. That's two months of access to AAN.com, m.aan.com, and AAN Communities until access to your full array of benefits commences on January 1, 2011.

Invest in the AAN and your professional future: visit [www.aan.com/go/membership/join](http://www.aan.com/go/membership/join) or contact AAN Member Services at [memberservices@aan.com](mailto:memberservices@aan.com), (800) 879-1960, or (651) 695-2717 (international).

## Board Member Highlight – Daniel I. Kaufer, MD, FAAN

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### **What was your first reaction to the concept of neurologic subspecialty accreditation and certification?**

During my fellowship I witnessed a Herculean attempt by Jeff Cummings to gain recognition for Behavioral Neurology and Neuropsychiatry as a subspecialty under the auspices of the American Psychiatric Association or APBN. His efforts in this regard were not enthusiastically received by the American Psychiatric Association or APBN. Despite this setback it just seemed that if any subspecialty belonged under a board of neurology and psychiatry, it should be one that represented an integration of the two, in line with historical roots as a single discipline. Prophetically, 20 years after I queried Dr. Detre about the feasibility of a combined subspecialty, David Arciniegas (a neuropsychiatrist) and I wrote the core curriculum and later helped write the certifying examination for Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry as the first UCNS-sanctioned subspecialty.

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

When UCNS was initially established in 2003, the prevailing discussion was that UCNS would help grow fledgling subspecialties as a stepping stone to becoming a certified subspecialty recognized by ABPN. However, there are formidable logistical barriers to having a UCNS-certified subspecialty be accepted by the ABPN. The success of the UCNS in many areas raises the prospect of it being a legitimate parallel pathway for subspecialty certification.

Looking ahead, I think the ultimate role of UCNS as a professional development body remains to be determined, but it is growing in stature. In less than 10 years this organization has made tremendous progress in fostering the growth and maturation of a number of neurological subspecialties. This in turn has helped refine professional standards for neurology and neurologists as a group. One of the most important roles served by UCNS is to help promote the vigor and autonomy of neurology as a field within the healthcare arena, where competition with other disciplines can sometimes be fierce. The combined subspecialty of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry now has almost 150 diplomates who will help lead the way in addressing growing public health care issues such as dementia and traumatic brain injury.

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## Staff

UCNS staff is available Monday-Friday to answer your questions regarding subspecialty membership, accreditation, and certification.

### UCNS staff:

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#### General UCNS Inquiries

Becky Swanson, Executive Assistant, (651) 695-2716, [bswanson@ucns.org](mailto:bswanson@ucns.org)



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- Association of University Professors of Neurology,  
[www.aupn.org](http://www.aupn.org)
- Child Neurology Society  
[www.childneurologysociety.org](http://www.childneurologysociety.org)
- Professors of Child Neurology, see also  
[www.childneurologysociety.org](http://www.childneurologysociety.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.

