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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.*

UCNS at the Annual Meeting

UCNS will hold its annual spring Board of Directors meeting in New Orleans on Monday, April 23. UCNS will also have a booth in the Exhibit Hall in conjunction with the American Academy of Neurology Annual Meeting. Knowledgeable staff will be available at the booth to answer questions regarding UCNS accreditation and certification. Staff will also be present at several AAN section meetings to answer questions and update attendees regarding recent initiatives.

UCNS Change of Address

UCNS is moving. Effective April 30, the UCNS office will be located at **201 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55415**, which is the new AAN headquarters. Please be aware of this change when submitting applications for the Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry and Neural Repair and Rehabilitation certification examinations. The application periods for each of these examinations begin before, and end after, the move date. It is recommended that applicants email their applications to UCNS at applications@ucns.org to avoid any delay in processing. If you are mailing pieces of your application, please note that UCNS's mailing address will change **effective April 30**. Any item mailed after April 23, 2012, should be mailed to the new address. Email addresses will remain the same.



Important Dates

April 16, 2012

Headache Medicine
 Examination Application
 Deadline

April 23-26, 2012

At the AAN Exhibit Hall

May 15, 2012

Behavioral Neurology &
 Neuropsychiatry
 Examination Application
 Deadline

June 1, 2012

Accreditation Application
 Deadline for Fall Review

July 16, 2012

Neural Repair and
 Rehabilitation Examination
 Application Deadline

August 15, 2012

Neuroimaging Examination
 Application Deadline

Letter from the Chair



Paul M. Vespa, MD,
FCCM, FAAN

As we look forward to the UCNS annual meeting in New Orleans, I would like to thank Kester Nedd, DO, for his service to the UCNS as a Board member representing the new Neural Repair and Rehabilitation (NRR) subspecialty. His term ends at the end of April. Dr. Nedd is a leader in his field and we know that he will continue his work to help make NRR a success. The UCNS Bylaws call for subspecialty members to have representatives on the Board for two-year terms on a rotating basis. The next subspecialty to be represented is Neuroimaging. The Board will vote to elect a Neuroimaging representative at the April meeting.

David J. Fink, MD, FAAN, has been elected to succeed P. David Charles, MD, FAAN, as the AUPN representative on the Board. Dr. Fink is Chairman of the Neurology Department at the University of Michigan and formerly served as a member of the UCNS Accreditation Council. We thank Dr. Charles for his several years of distinguished service to UCNS. Imad T. Jarjour, MD, has been elected to succeed Dr. Charles as Board Secretary/Treasurer.

In addition to tackling important new policy initiatives at our annual meeting, we will review our successful performance in 2011, a year in which we achieved new highs in numbers of accredited programs and diplomates. We look forward to building on this momentum in 2012 and beyond.

Paul M. Vespa, MD, FCCM, FAAN

Board Member Highlight – Allison Brashear, MD, FAAN



Allison Brashear, MD, FAAN

Allison Brashear, MD, FAAN, joined the UCNS Board of Directors in 2008 as the ANA representative. Dr. Brashear is Professor and Chair of the Department of Neurology at Wake Forest University School of Medicine in Winston Salem, NC, where she is the Walter C. Teagle Chair of Neurology.

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

I like problem solving and wanted to incorporate that into patient care. The first day I was on call as a medical student I met a neurologist who was consulting on a young woman with lupus. As a student I took care of her for three months on the medicine service. I was impressed with the neurologist and how thoughtful he was with assessing her care. Months later I met Dr. Pascuzzi when he was a new faculty member at IU. He is a great role model for anyone going into neurology.

Where did you train and where do you practice?

Indiana University School of Medicine. I graduated in 1987 and did my neurology training there. I was on the faculty as a professor in neurology until 2005 when I became chair at Wake Forest School of Medicine.

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

In our department I can see the direct benefit of UCNS. We now have six board certified Neurocritical Care specialists working in our neuro ICU. This has helped improve patient care and also established Neurocritical Care as a focus of the neurosciences.

What impact do you feel the UCNS will have on the future of neurology

There will be increasing emphasis on learning across the lifetime. UCNS is beneficial to both the generalist and the specialist by providing improved training and evaluation of that training.

Certification News

Letter from the Certification Council Chair



Gregory Gruener, MD,
MBA

2012 will yield another important accomplishment for UCNS. I'm pleased to announce that soon candidates for certification examinations will be able to complete their applications online through the UCNS website. This will greatly improve the application experience. It will also free staff time to continue developing tools that improve our ability to serve you. Some features of the web application will include the ability to upload all attachments and save an application that is in process.

Gregory Gruener, MD, MBA

Practice Track Pathways Closing in 2012 for Two Subspecialties

Important notice to all physicians interested in certification in either Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry (BNNP) or Headache Medicine (HM): The practice track pathways will close following the 2012 examinations. After 2012, only those who have completed a UCNS-accredited BNNP or HM fellowship program will be able to sit for certification examinations in BNNP and HM.

The HM application was available in January 2012 and the application deadline is April 16, 2012. The BNNP application was available in February 2012 and the application deadline is May 15, 2012. Applications, payment, and all attachments must be received by the application deadline.

Submit Your News

UCNS wants to promote the accomplishments of our diplomates. If you have news you would like to include in our newsletter, please send it to acarpen@ucns.org.

2012 Certification Examination Schedule

Subspecialty	Application Deadline	Examination Date	Location
Headache Medicine	April 16, 2012	October 1-5, 2012	Pearson VUE
Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry	May 15, 2012	November 5-9, 2012	Pearson VUE
Neural Repair and Rehabilitation	July 16, 2012	December 10-14, 2012	Pearson VUE

2013 Certification Examination Schedule

Subspecialty	Application Deadline	Examination Date	Location
Neuroimaging	August 15, 2012	January 28-February 1, 2013	Pearson VUE
Neuro-oncology	January 15, 2013	July 15-19, 2013	Pearson VUE
Autonomic Disorders	June 17, 2013	November 18-22, 2013	Pearson VUE
Geriatric Neurology	July 15, 2013	December 2-6, 2013	Pearson VUE
Neurocritical Care	July 15, 2013	December 9-13, 2013	Pearson VUE

Diplomate Highlight



*Alireza Minagar, MD,
FAAN*

Alireza Minagar, MD, FAAN, is a UCNS Diplomate in the subspecialties of Behavioral Neurology & Neuropsychiatry, Headache Medicine, and Neuroimaging. He specializes in clinical neuro-immunology and multiple sclerosis. He sees patients with MS and other inflammatory disorders of the brain and spinal cord at the Neurology Clinic of Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport.

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

I chose to practice medicine for two reasons: 1) to help the sick and 2) to explore nature and its unknowns in the context of medical sciences. From the early days of medical school I was fascinated by neuroanatomy and neurophysiology to the point that many years ago, as a medical student, I edited one of my first published books in Farsi on "Neuroanatomy." My fascination for neuroscience led me to neurology and then once again I was impressed and influenced by the neuro-inflammatory diseases of the human central nervous system. As a result, I spent two years of my life working in different labs chasing my passion for neuro-inflammation, blood brain barrier, and multiple sclerosis.

Where do you currently practice?

Currently I work as Professor of Neurology at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center in Shreveport.

Why did you decide to seek UCNS certification?

Each board examination presents a new challenge and a new peak to conquer. Each board examination and the process to prepare myself for that examination translates into reading massively for several months, and this opens new horizons and new opportunities in my career. There is a fundamental difference between reading a subject casually versus reading the same subject for the purpose of taking an examination. The stress of the examination is a great drive to push oneself forward. In addition, in our modern world, where lots of new articles and textbooks are being published every day, taking these examinations helps me to keep myself up-to-date. In order to keep up with the new developments in neurology and neuroscience and in order to stay one step ahead my residents, I have to constantly read and challenge myself. Only through the challenges such as taking UCNS certification examinations one can gauge how much he/she knows and how much more has been learned.

What would you like individuals in neurology and the public to know about UCNS certification?

The board examinations which are held for the purpose of UCNS certification in any particular discipline are balanced and reasonably difficult so that they gauge the applicant's depth of knowledge and pinpoint the areas of weakness. In reality, after one takes the board examination and once one reflects on the questions that he or she missed or did not know, that is the best time to try to find the correct answers and then the person will remember them permanently. In my view, the certification examinations by UCNS are also educational tools and one can learn tremendously from them. The UCNS approach to the examination is fair. The examinees are provided with a table of contents about what they are expected to know. I strongly recommend UCNS certification examinations to all neurologists who are eligible for that particular discipline.

Accreditation News

Letter from the Accreditation Council Chair



David C. Good, MD,
FAAN

The Accreditation Council appreciates the feedback it receives from program directors. Recently, several program directors have shared concerns and questions regarding the accreditation and reaccreditation applications. In response to these comments, I have appointed an application task force to work with staff to review and improve the accreditation applications. Already, staff has developed a streamlined application, which will be reviewed by program directors in various subspecialties to ensure that the application process is user-friendly, efficient, and beneficial to programs. If you have any feedback you would like included in this important process, please contact the UCNS office at acarpenter@ucns.org.

I look forward to announcing release of improved applications in the fall.

David C. Good, MD, FAAN

Apply for UCNS Accreditation by June 1

UCNS is now accepting applications until June 1, 2012. Programs approved following this deadline may be accredited as of July 1, 2013. The next deadline for program applications will be December 1, 2012.

Submit Your News

UCNS wants to promote the accomplishments of our program faculty. If you have news you would like to include in our newsletter, please send it to acarpenter@ucns.org.

UCNS Accredits New Programs

Congratulations to the following programs that were reviewed during the spring 2011 meeting and received accreditation from the UCNS effective July 1, 2012. A complete list of UCNS-accredited programs is available at <http://www.ucns.org/apps/directory/>. Newly accredited programs and their fellowship directors are:

Headache Medicine	
Baylor University Medical Center	Frederick G. Freitag, DO, FAHS
Scott and White Clinic	Duren Michael Ready, MD
University of Alabama at Birmingham	J. Ivan Lopez, MD, FAAN
Neurocritical Care	
Detroit Medical Center Education and Research / Wayne State University	William M. Coplin, MD, FCCM
Tufts Medical Center	Anish Bhardwaj, MD, FAHA, FCCM, FAAN
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill	Valerie Dechant, MD
University of Southern California	Benjamin Emanuel, DO
University of Texas Health Science Center at Houston	Asma Zakaria, MD

Program Director Highlight



William Coplin, MD,
FCCM

William Coplin, MD, FCCM, is an Associate Professor in neurology and neurological surgery at Wayne State University. He has served as Medical Director of Neurotrauma and Critical Care services and as Chief of Neurology at Detroit Receiving Hospital. In September of 2011 he stepped down from these positions to devote more time to teaching, writing, and neurotrauma and resuscitation education in developing nations (e.g., east Africa, southeast Asia).

Why did you choose to practice medicine and go into the field of Neurocritical Care?

Trite, but I was drawn to medicine by a fascination with the organism. I was drawn to neurology by a fascination with the brain, an organ whose complexity rendered it the final frontier of medicine, in the same way as the ocean floor is to a geographer or geologist. Neurocritical Care was easy. We knew so little in this particular area of medicine (neurology), just like the Mariana Trench. The marriage of neurology, neurosurgery, cardiopulmonary medicine, traumatology, etc. was perfect for my widespread interests. The thrill of being able to focus all these knowledge bases and skill sets on a particular group of seemingly dismal disease states has made for a most fascinating adventure. While all of the preceding is true, maybe it was just so my late father could say: "My son, the doctor."

Where do you currently practice?

I am a trauma center/stroke center/regional referral center/safety-net hospital junkie. From my training experiences at Ben Taub General Hospital in Houston and Harborview Medical Center in Seattle, my coming to Detroit Receiving Hospital over 15 years ago was a natural fit and transition. The residents, fellows, and medical students keep me sharp, and I can barely think of practicing in a non-academic environment. Over the years, we have developed a destination Neurocritical Care unit and neurotrauma center for the region. I am perhaps most proud of that, as are the nurses for whom I work.

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

It was a "no-brainer." Finally having our subspecialty recognized by groups such as Leapfrog and the UCNS gave us a sense of legitimacy for which we had strived since a group of us first began to assemble the Neurocritical Care Society. Nowadays, passing on that medical legitimacy to the next wave of trainees is imperative. Hospital privileging demands recognized board certification. The UCNS gave us such an avenue.

How has UCNS accreditation impacted your program?

It has added that legitimacy and credibility that we have a program that is organized and able to meet a set of standards. This has already translated into better ability to attract fellow applicants with the knowledge that they will be able to qualify to sit for a certifying examination. This has been especially important in attracting desirable trainees from emergency medicine and pulmonary and critical care medicine, as well as from neurology backgrounds.

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.

Questions About UCNS?



Becky Swanson
Executive Assistant

Becky Swanson has been the UCNS Executive Assistant since December 2009. Diplomates, applicants, and programs calling with general inquiries will usually start by talking with her. If you have a question you would like answered, email her at bswanson@ucns.org.

Q: How should I submit my application to UCNS?

A: Accreditation applications for training programs are only accepted electronically and must be submitted as a Word document. Appendices must also be sent electronically, and may be submitted as either a Word document or PDF.

We prefer that certification examination applications and any supporting documents be submitted electronically; however, those items may be mailed. **Handwritten applications will not be accepted.** Please note that we are moving and will have a new address effective April 30, 2012. All materials mailed after April 23 should be mailed to the new address. The new office will be located at **201 Chicago Avenue South, Minneapolis, MN 55415**. It is the applicant's responsibility to ensure that all applications, supporting documents, and payments are received by posted deadlines.

Did you know?

UCNS has 80 accredited programs in 22 states. UCNS also has diplomates in 46 states plus Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, and four Canadian provinces.

Staff

UCNS staff is available Monday-Friday to answer your questions regarding subspecialty membership, accreditation, and certification. **Please note:** beginning April 30, staff contact telephone numbers will change. The new numbers are noted in *bolded italics*.

Subspecialty Membership Inquiries

John Kohring, Executive Director, (651) 695-2762, ***(612) 928-6106*** jkohring@ucns.org

Certification Inquiries

Todd Bulson, Certification Manager, (651) 695-2813, ***(612) 928-6067*** tbulson@ucns.org

Accreditation Inquiries

Amanda Carpenter, Accreditation Manager, (651) 332-8681, ***(612) 928-6065*** acarpenter@ucns.org

General UCNS Inquiries

Becky Swanson, Executive Assistant, (651) 695-2716, ***(612) 928-6050*** bswanson@ucns.org



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- 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

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 Office.

