

School Seeks Input on New Degree Program

Editorial Staff

The academic leadership at [Seattle Institute of Oriental Medicine \(SIOM\)](#) is creating a proposal for a master's of acupuncture degree with an emphasis in public health, *qi* development, nutrition and bodywork. The program is being considered in order to meet the growing demand for low-cost health care in this country and abroad, and to provide a program that emphasizes hands-on training in modalities that can be useful in successful private acupuncture practice, as well as in environments where little or no medical care is available. The program is also designed to help students proceed through the training while still being able to have part-time work so as to significantly reduce the potential of financial aid debt that could compromise the graduating practitioner in their chosen arena of practice and service.

To assist in the development of this proposal, school staff are seeking input from the public in terms of ideas for program development, as well as potential interest in participating in the program. The curriculum-development process is community-based, therefore perspectives from practitioners, patients, prospective students and public agencies are all welcome to participate in this planning process.

The proposal calls for a three-year master's degree with approximately 2,400 hours of clinical and academic study. The training would include multiple perspectives on acupuncture diagnosis and treatment, instruction in a variety of bodywork approaches, extensive time in *qi* cultivation and the study of food therapy. Clinic training would include preceptorship with a wide range of experienced acupuncturists and internship/externship practice in a variety of health care settings, including private practice, group acupuncture settings and rotations in several public-health and community-based clinics. SIOM is currently working on making connections for future practice with a network of clinics around the world.

The program is planned to make use of SIOM's rural retreat facility on [Vashon Island, Wash.](#), where many of the components of the program would be taught in an intensive format. This will provide a natural environment for submersion into the critical experiential elements of being a practitioner/educator in this field. This program would not include extensive study of Chinese herbal medicine or Chinese medical language, both of which are standard in SIOM's present MAOM degree program.

According to SIOM administrators: "The potential addition of this second degree follows SIOM's educational perspective that there is a need for radically different approaches to education in this field then are presently available, if we are to effectively reach the patient populations that need us the most."

The proposed date for starting the program (pending state and national regulatory approvals) is Fall 2010.

To read the draft proposal for this new acupuncture degree, go to www.siom.edu and click on Acupuncture Degree Proposal. This will also include a link to allow for comments on the draft. The

deadline for suggestions and critique is Dec. 15, 2009.

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