



issues that inevitably arise in considering a change in entry-level standards. Part of the committee's work has been to survey the profession to determine the extent of support for a first-professional doctorate, review how state educational authorities will view such a change, document the off-site clinical work performed by the Council's member colleges, support training for faculty at the doctoral level and develop resources for AOM college administrators.

The differing opinions on an entry-level standard have been well represented in every Council meeting I have attended. What I find remarkable about the process is the depth of the members' commitment to hearing all the viewpoints, their dedication to basing any change to existing standards on those that can meet U.S. Department of Education criteria, and their desire to maintain the diversity of acupuncture traditions that exist in our field. At the heart of all the discussion about entry-level standards is the reality of knowing that excellence in educational standards leads to excellence in the delivery of patient care. Ultimately, it is the encounter between each patient with a practitioner who has met a high academic standard that makes our practitioners the experts in this modern incarnation of a long practiced medicine.

Other Council committees are also quite active. In response to FDA's adoption of current Good Manufacturing Practices (cGMP) regulations governing the compounding of herbal supplements, the Herbal Committee is currently reviewing the impact these federal rules may have on our educational institutions where Chinese herbology is part of the curriculum. This effort has involved seeking expert opinion, holding workshops and exploring best practices for institutions that have herbal dispensaries. In many ways, the impact of these rules on our institutions may significantly affect how our medicine is taught and practiced.

The Council's Marketing Committee is focused not only on how our profession is perceived by the public, but also in placing AOM education on an equal footing within other health care professional forums in the U.S. Through the committee's work, the Council has recently become a member of the Advisory Council for the National Association of Advisors for the Health Professions (NAAHP). The NAAHP is the organization specifically dedicated to educating college advisors on career opportunities in various health professions. As a patron member of NAAHP, and now a member of its Advisory Council, the CCAOM fully joins other major health care professions with an opportunity to promote the AOM profession and careers. Imagine what it might have been like for you if career counseling in a health profession in your undergraduate college had included information on an acupuncture career.

The Council's membership in the Academic Consortium for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (ACCAHC) provides an excellent opportunity for monitoring and influencing developments in the larger field of CAM. The Council's immediate past president, [Elizabeth Goldblatt](#), is chair of the Consortium and played a major role for AOM and CAM by her participation on the Conference Planning Committee for the Institute of Medicine (IOM) National Summit on Integrative Medicine and the Public Health, held last February. Dr. Goldblatt was instrumental in ensuring that CAM and AOM providers were involved in many of the background papers and presentations at this major national summit. Such events may sound like something irrelevant to the treatment room, but AOM representation in these forums greatly promotes national and general public recognition of our profession and serves to define who we are and what we do.

Finally, my participation in the Council has heightened my awareness of the benefit of the collective knowledge and expertise that is available at CCAOM general business meetings and other events at the Council's semi-annual conferences. The CCAOM holds regular trainings at these meetings for its member colleges on a wide variety of topics designed to assist and deepen the expertise of college administrators and faculty.

Our profession has developed from an essentially apprenticeship-model of education to formally accredited education and national certification, and now its leaders are actively planning and participating in national conferences with other conventional and CAM providers at the Institute of Medicine. This evolution has taken dedication, vision and talent by many people in the AOM profession.

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