

American Society of Addiction Medicine

Booklet of
information for the

**2008
CERTIFICATION
EXAMINATION**

and the

**2008
RECERTIFICATION
EXAMINATION**



FOUNDED

This booklet describes the 2008 Certification Project and the examination to be given on December 6, 2008. After that date, the next examination is tentatively scheduled for November, 2010. Criteria to sit for the 2008 examination will be set by the Board of Directors of ASAM in 2007 and may include modifications from the criteria described in this booklet. Information about the 2010 certification examination will be available in the fall of 2009.

The Rosenstiel Foundation

ASAM acknowledges with gratitude the generous support it received from The Rosenstiel Foundation for the 2008 Certification and Recertification Examination prepared by the ASAM Examination Committee in cooperation with the National Board of Medical Examiners.

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I. Officers & Certification History

A. OFFICERS: 2007-2009

President:	Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA
President-Elect:	Louis E. Baxter, Sr., M.D., FASAM
Secretary:	A. Kenison Roy, III, M.D., FASAM, DFAPA
Treasurer:	Stuart Gitlow, M.D., M.P.H., MBA, FAPA
Immediate Past President:	Elizabeth F. Howell, M.D., FASAM, DFAPA

Board of Directors:

Directors-at-Large:

R. Jeffrey Goldsmith, M.D.
Lori D. Karan, M.D., FACP, FASAM
Mark L. Kraus, M.D., FASAM
Donald J. Kurth, M.D., FASAM
Scott B. Smolar, D.O.
Penelope P. Ziegler, M.D., FASAM

Regional Directors:

Region I:	Marc Galanter, M.D., FASAM
Region II:	Peter Banys, M.D.
Region III:	John P. Femino, M.D., FASAM
Region IV:	John J. Verdon, Jr., M.D., FASAM
Region V:	Martha J. Wunsch, M.D., FAAP, FASAM
Region VI:	Thomas L. Haynes, M.D., FASAM
Region VII:	Howard C. Wetsman, M.D.
Region VIII:	Marvin D. Seppala, M.D.
Region IX:	Raju Hajela, M.D., M.P.H., FASAM
Region X:	C. Chapman Sledge, M.D., FASAM

Ex-Officio

Brian Hurley
Lloyd J. Gordon, III, M.D., FASAM
Petros Levounis, M.D., MA
Daniel J. McCullough, M.D.
Eileen McGrath, J.D.
Richard Graves Soper, M.D., J.D., MS

Executive Vice President/CEO

Eileen McGrath, J.D.

Founding President

Ruth Fox, M.D.	1895-1989
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B. History and Purpose of ASAM

The Society's history has its roots in research and clinical traditions that antedate its founding in the early 1950's when Ruth Fox began regular meetings with other physicians interested in alcoholism and its treatment. The meetings and conferences were held at the New York Academy of Medicine. In 1954, several of these physicians established the New York City Medical Society on Alcoholism, and Doctor Fox became its first President.

In 1965, the Society published the Physicians' Alcoholism Newsletter which became widely distributed. The resulting national interest eventually led to increased membership and to the first name change, to the American Medical Society on Alcoholism (AMSA). In 1983, reflecting the Society's interest in addiction to drugs other than alcohol, the name was expanded to the American Medical Society on Alcoholism and Other Drug Dependencies (AMSAODD).

In 1989, the name was changed again to the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) to reflect its increasing focus on activities within the mainstream of medicine. In the same year, having met the American Medical Association's (AMA) criteria for specialty society membership, ASAM was given a voting seat in the House of Delegates.

Today, ASAM is an association of some 3,000 physicians from virtually all medical specialties and subspecialties who are dedicated to improving the treatment of alcoholism and other addictions; educating physicians, medical students, and the general public; and promoting research and prevention. The Society serves its members by providing opportunities for education and sharing of experiences, and by promoting the development of a body of professional knowledge and literature to enhance the quality and increase the availability of appropriate health care for people affected by the addictions.

C. Past Presidents of ASAM

1954 - 1961	Ruth Fox, M.D.
1961 - 1963	Stanley E. Gitlow, M.D.
1963 - 1965	Luther A. Cloud, M.D.
1965 - 1967	Percy E. Ryberg, M.D.
1967 - 1969	Arnold S. Zentner, M.D.
1969 - 1971	Ruth Fox, M.D.
1971 - 1973	Stanley E. Gitlow, M.D.
1973 - 1975	Maxwell N. Weisman, M.D.
1975 - 1977	Charles S. Lieber, M.D.
1977 - 1979	Joseph J. Zuska, M.D.
1979 - 1981	Sheila B. Blume, M.D.
1981- 1983	LeClair Bissell, M.D.
1983 - 1985	Irvine L. Blose, M.D.
1985 - 1987	Max A. Schneider, M.D.
1987 - 1989	Margaret Bean-Bayog, M.D.
1989 - 1991	Jasper G. Chen See, M.D.
1991 - 1993	Anthony B. Radcliffe, M.D., FASAM
1993 - 1995	Anne Geller, M.D., FASAM
1995 - 1997	David E. Smith, M.D., FASAM
1997 - 1999	G. Douglas Talbott, M.D., FASAM
1999 - 2001	Marc Galanter, M.D., FASAM
2001 - 2002	Andrea G. Barthwell, M.D., FASAM
2002 - 2005	Lawrence S. Brown, Jr., M.D., M.P.H., FASAM
2005 - 2007	Elizabeth F. Howell, M.D., FASAM
2007 - 2009	Michael M. Miller, M.D., FASAM, FAPA

D. History & Purpose of the ASAM Certification and Recertification Project Addiction Medicine

In 1985, as part of its medical education mission, ASAM announced the certification project and began the development of a credentialing process and a certifying examination to be administered at the national level. The first examination in October, 1986 was the result of a process which had been started by the California Society of Addiction Medicine (CSAM). In 1981, CSAM developed a consensus on how to identify a physician recognized for expertise in the diagnosis and treatment of

alcoholism and other drug dependencies. Next came the identification of a core body of knowledge and the subsequent development of questions that would test for mastery thereof.

A pool of questions was formed starting with the selected items from the alcoholism and substance abuse modules prepared by the National Board of Medical Examiners (NBME) and items developed by the Career Teachers. CSAM refined and updated those questions, added new items to the pool and then gave the exam in 1983 and 1984 to about 200 physicians.

In 1985, the item pool was taken over by ASAM. New items were developed for ASAM in order to cover all required topics areas. The ASAM Examination Committee subjected this pool of questions to a series of refinements, with technical assistance from consultants such as the Department of Psychiatry and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Nevada School of Medicine, the Department of Medical Education at the University of Southern California School of Medicine and the National Board of Medical Examiners. Each item was edited, tested for validity, and field tested on both naive and expert groups. After analyzing those results, some questions were deleted and others changed. From the questions which remained, an examination was drawn with topics balanced for proportional emphasis on alcohol and other drugs, and basic science and clinical areas. New questions are added to the pool each year, old questions are retired and each question is subjected to the same rigorous process during each test development cycle.

This examination is a test of knowledge. While it does not certify clinical skill or competence, it does identify a physician who has demonstrated the degree of knowledge in the diagnosis and treatment of alcoholism and drug dependencies commensurate with expertise in the field as defined by ASAM. The examination is not a Board examination. ASAM is not a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, and ASAM certification does not confer board certification.

The ASAM Board of Directors has established that recertification is required after ten years in order for certification to remain valid.

II. Requirements for Examination

A. Certification

While the final step in the process of certification in addiction medicine is the successful completion of a written examination, there are certain eligibility requirements which must be met in order to sit for the examination. The requirements and the criteria for meeting them are established by the Board of Directors of ASAM. Eligibility can be established only after the review of a completed application by the Application and Eligibility Committee. No individual member of the Society or its staff is authorized to give an opinion relative to a candidate's eligibility. Applicants must meet each of the following six criteria in order to sit for the certification examination in 2008:

1. Graduation from a medical school in the United States or Canada approved by the Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), or the Committee of Accreditation of Canadian Medical Schools (CACMS), or from a school of osteopathic medicine approved by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA). If the applicant is a graduate of a medical school outside the United States or Canada, the applicant must have a currently valid standard certificate from the Educational Commission for Foreign Medical Graduates (ECFMG); or have passed the Medical Council of Canada Evaluating Examination (MCCEE).

2. A valid license to practice medicine in the state, territory, commonwealth, or possession of the United States; or in a Province of Canada in which the applicant practices: valid at the time of application and at the time of the examination. A valid medical license is a certificate to practice medicine which is issued by the appropriate agency and which certifies that a physician is allowed to practice medicine within that country, province or state. ASAM considers a medical license to be valid even if there have been stipulations/conditions placed on the license. ASAM does not consider a license to be valid if it has been suspended, revoked, or surrendered.

3. Good standing in the applicant's medical community as evidenced by at least three letters of recommendation. All letters of recommendation must be submitted by physicians. If the applicant has relocated within the two years prior to the submission of the application, at least six letters of recommendation must be submitted on the applicant's behalf. The first three recommendation letters must be from physicians who knew the applicant in his or her former medical community. The second three recommendation letters must be from physicians who know the applicant in his or her current medical community.

4. This requirement must be completed by June 30, 2008. Certification by a Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) or certification by the American Osteopathic Association (AOA), or successful completion of a residency training program in any medical speciality.

Residency programs must be accredited by one of the following:

In the United States:

- the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME);
- the Postdoctoral training committee of the American Osteopathic Association (AOA);

In Canada:

- Professional Corporation of Physicians of Quebec;
- College of Family Physicians of Canada;
- Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada.
- Residency programs accepted by any Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties as qualifying to sit for that Member Board's certification examination will be accepted as qualifying to sit for the ASAM Certification Examination.

Outside United States/Canada:

- United Kingdom's Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCPUK);

- Australia and New Zealand's Fellow of the Royal Australasian College of Physicians (FRAACP);
- South Africa's Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCPSA);
- Ireland's Member of the Royal College of Physicians (MRCPI)
- Residency programs accepted by any Member Board of the American Board of Medical Specialties as qualifying to sit for that Member Board's certification examination will be accepted as qualifying to sit for the ASAM Certification Examination.

5. This requirement must be completed by June 30, 2008. One year's full time involvement or one full time equivalent (one FTE) in the field of alcoholism and other drug dependencies, in addition to and not concurrent with residency training. Involvement may come under the headings of clinical care of patients, education, research, and administration. At least 50% of such time of involvement must have been spent in the treatment of patients for alcoholism and other drug dependencies. Time spent providing general medical care to patients with substance use problems can be used to meet the requirement, if additionally, the specific issues of their substance use, ongoing recovery, and relapse prevention are also being actively addressed. The requirement for one year of involvement is met only by time specifically treating patients for alcoholism and other drug dependencies.

6. 50 hours of Category I Credit toward the AMA Physician Recognition Award. Credits must have pertained to the diagnosis and treatment of persons with alcoholism and other drug dependencies and must have been accrued over the two years immediately prior to the date of the examination. (Canadian or osteopathic equivalent accepted.)

B. Requirements for Recertification

1. ASAM Recertification. The ASAM Board of Directors has established that recertification is required ten years after initial certification in order for certification to remain

current. Recertification will be by examination. Those candidates seeking initial certification and those candidates seeking recertification will be given the same examination, and the same scoring policy will be followed for both certification and recertification candidates.

2. License. A valid license to practice medicine in the state, territory, commonwealth, or possession of the United States; or in a Province of Canada in which the applicant practices: valid at the time of application and at the time of the examination. A valid medical license is a certificate to practice medicine which is issued by the appropriate agency and which certifies that a physician is allowed to practice medicine within that province or state. ASAM considers a medical license to be valid even if there have been stipulations/conditions placed on the license. ASAM does not consider a license to be valid if it has been suspended, revoked, or surrendered.

3. Good Standing. Good standing in the applicant's medical community as evidenced by a letter of recommendation. The letter of recommendation must be submitted by a physician who is the clinical director, chief of staff or a Society official who has known the applicant for two years and can attest to his or her current medical practice and good standing. If the applicant has geographically relocated within the two years prior to the submission of the application, a reference letter must be submitted from both the former and the current practice locations.

III. Policies

A. Application Instructions

Physicians who wish to apply for certification or recertification must complete, sign, and file with the ASAM office the corresponding certification or recertification application, together with the supporting data required by the application. Incomplete applications cannot be accepted for review by the Application and Eligibility Committee and will be returned to the candidate. Copies of the application can be printed from the ASAM web site (www.asam.org).

B. Deadlines & Fees

Applications will be accepted on the following filing schedule:

Deadlines and Dates	Certification Fees
Early: December 17, 2007	\$1,250 for members \$1,550 for nonmembers
Standard: February 29, 2008	\$1,350 for members \$1,650 for nonmembers
Late: May 31, 2008	\$1,650 for members \$1,950 for nonmembers

Deadlines and Dates	Recertification Fees
Early: December 17, 2007	\$1,050 for members \$1,350 for nonmembers
Standard: February 29, 2008	\$1,150 for members \$1,450 for nonmembers
Late: May 31, 2008	\$1,450 for members \$1,750 for nonmembers

A completed application form and completed letters of reference **must be postmarked with** a U.S. Postal Service cancellation stamp on or before Monday, December 17,

2007 to qualify for the Early Deadline, on or before Friday, February 29, 2008 to qualify for the Standard Deadline, and on or before Saturday, May 31, 2008 to qualify for the Late Deadline. A commercial postage meter mark will not be accepted in place of the cancellation stamp.

Applications for which all parts are not postmarked by May 31, 2008 will not be accepted for consideration and will be returned to the candidate unprocessed. Payment and application must be submitted together.

C. Refund and Withdrawal Policy

No refunds will be issued once an application has been received by ASAM. However, if an emergency withdrawal from the examination is approved by the Application and Eligibility Committee then ASAM will carry forward the examination fee one time to the next scheduled examination. These emergency cases will be handled individually and will require the applicant to provide supporting evidence and documentation for review by the Committee. There will be a \$100 fee to process an emergency withdrawal request. Requests must include a description of the circumstances which require an emergency withdrawal and payment of the additional fee should accompany this request. Requests must be submitted no later than November 7, 2008. The applicant will be notified if the request is approved. All applicants whose emergency withdrawal has been approved will be required to submit a new application when applying for the next scheduled examination and must fulfill all requirements stipulated by the Society for that examination year.

D. Appeals

Applicants not accepted to sit for the certification/recertification examination may request additional review by a Review Committee of the ASAM Board of Directors. Any such request must be received by the ASAM Office within three weeks of the date of the applicant's non-acceptance letter. The request must be made on the basis of informa-

tion to be presented by the applicant in a personal interview. In the event that travel is required, any expense incurred by the applicant in traveling to the interview will be borne by the applicant.

E. Candidates Requiring Special Assistance

Provisions will be made for candidates who, for any reason, need special assistance in taking the examination. The candidate should notify the Credentialing Director before September 14, 2008 if special assistance is needed.

F. Alternative Date

For those who cannot sit on Saturday, December 6, 2008, an alternative examination date is available. The alternative date is Monday, December 8, 2008.

Requests to take the exam on the alternative date should be directed in writing to the ASAM Credentialing Director. Requests must include a description of the circumstances which require an alternative date, and payment of the additional examination fee should accompany this written request. The applicant will be notified if the request is approved. The request must be submitted no later than September 14, 2008.

G. Examination Results

Scores and individual performance data will be reported to each examinee by March 7, 2009. The same policy will be followed for both certification and recertification candidates.

H. Recertification

Certification Certificates Issued from 1986-1996

Certificates for initial certification issued from 1986-1996 are not time limited and *will not expire*. Physicians who have obtained such a certificate and maintain current ASAM membership will continue to

be listed in the membership directory as "ASAM certified, 19xx." However, all certified physicians are strongly encouraged to consider recertification after ten years in order to demonstrate the currency of their knowledge in the field of addiction medicine.

Certification Certificates Issued in 1998 and thereafter
Certificates issued in 1998 and thereafter are time limited and will expire ten years after the date of initial certification. After obtaining initial certification, physicians with the time limited certificate will be listed in the membership directory as "ASAM certified, 20xx," through the tenth year after the certificate has been earned, provided that the physician maintains current ASAM membership. After ten years have passed, physicians not obtaining a recertification certificate will forfeit ASAM certified status.

I. Retaking Examination

There is no limit to the number of times a physician can retake the certification/recertification examination.

Physicians who re-apply must submit a new application, pay all applicable fees, and fulfill all requirements stipulated by the Society for that year.

J. Release of Information on Certification and Recertification Status

Certified members are identified in the ASAM Membership Directory with the year in which they passed the exam. The Directory will also show the date of recertification. Upon request, the ASAM office will confirm whether a physician is certified or not either verbally or in writing. Anyone can request information from the ASAM office about the certified status of any physician. An authorization for release of this information is a part of the examination application form.

K. Revocation of Certificate

A certificate may be revoked if there has been substantive misrepresentation on the part of the applicant during the credentialing process. Before a certificate is revoked, the physician will be informed of the basis of such action and will be afforded a hearing.

L. Changes in Policies and Procedures

The Society reserves the right to change its fees, policies, and procedures at any time, and cannot assume responsibility for giving advance notice thereof. The provisions of this publication are not to be construed as a contract between any candidate and the American Society of Addiction Medicine.

M. For Further Information

Inquiries should be addressed to Credentialing Project Director; American Society of Addiction Medicine, (301) 656-3920.

IV. Calender of Events

2007-2008 ASAM CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

2007

**November 30-Dec 2 Comprehensive Medical Review
Officer Training Course**
18 Credit Hours in AMA PRA Category 1
Chicago, IL

2008

April 10 The Ruth Fox Course for Physicians
8 Credit Hours in AMA PRA Category 1
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

April 10 Pain & Addiction: Common Threads IX
8 Credit Hours in AMA PRA Category 1
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

April 13 39th Annual Medical Scientific Conference
Up to 22.5 Credit Hours in AMA PRA
Category 1
Toronto, Ontario, Canada

October 26-28 Review Course in Addiction Medicine
21 Credit Hours in AMA PRA Category 1
Chicago, IL

**December 6 2008 ASAM Certification and
Recertification Examination in
Addiction Medicine**
5 Credit Hours in AMA PRA Category 1
Computer Examination given at over 300
National and 100 International Prometric
Testing Centers



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