



2011 Annual Report

“Supporting Quality Assessment and Improvement in
Nurse Anesthesia Education”

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Letter from COA Chair and Executive Director

The COA is pleased to present its first Annual Report that we hope will provide a better understanding of the COA's activities during the past fiscal year. Included in this report is information about the COA's mission, services provided, financial data, summary of operational information, upcoming meeting dates and sites, and Council governance.

The foundation of the nurse anesthesia profession is built on the educational offerings that prepare nurse anesthesia students for entry into practice. To ensure a sound foundation for the profession's future, it is critical that nurse anesthesia programs' accreditation oversight is provided by an effective COA. The Board of Directors and accreditation staff are committed to fulfilling this mission.

This past fiscal year the COA faced a new challenge in moving toward becoming financially independent. As the COA begins with implementation of action plans to reach this goal, we want to reassure you the COA is committed to continuing its work in fostering and enhancing high quality educational programs. The COA will persist in its efforts for excellence in its accreditation processes so as to continue to be viewed as the "gold standard" in advanced practice nursing accreditation by regulatory authorities such as the National Council of State Boards of Nursing (NCSBN).

Since its inception in 1975, the COA has ensured excellence in nurse anesthesia educational programs through its quality assessment activities. Challenges have been successfully faced over the years, such as the establishment of regional anesthesia clinical requirements and the transition to master's and doctoral level education for entry into practice. As of October 1, 2011, there are 112 accredited nurse anesthesia programs and 37 post master's completion degree offerings. Seven entry-level programs and nine post- master's degree completion programs award doctoral degrees.

The COA functioned as an autonomous decision-making body under the corporate structure of the AANA until February 2009 when it separately incorporated. While the COA accreditation functions are separate from the AANA, it closely monitors the interests and concerns of its communities of interest (i.e., programs, faculty, students, practitioners and the public). The interests and concerns of the communities of interest are obtained from COA's self-assessment survey, focus group sessions, hearings, calls for comments, presentations and responses to inquiries. Overall the feedback has been very positive. Constituents point to the COA's commitment to continuous quality improvement and express their appreciation for the COA's and accreditation staff's support.

The quality of the COA's accreditation processes is also reflected in its recognition by the United States Department of Education (USDE) and Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA). The accreditation process for nurse anesthesia educational programs has been recognized by the USDE since 1955 and by CHEA since its establishment in the 1980s. Following a year-long process of review in May 2011, the CHEA Board granted the COA up to 10 years' recognition, the maximum length of recognition. The CHEA Recognition Status Summary for the COA noted the following: "*COA demonstrated that it meets CHEA's standards and that its accreditation process is consistent with the quality, improvement and accountability expectations that CHEA has established.*" The COA was last reviewed by the USDE in 2007 and received five years' recognition, the maximum length of recognition. The COA is scheduled for USDE review in 2012.

Best Regards,

Francis Gerbasi

Francis Gerbasi, CRNA, PhD
Executive Director

Mary E. Shirk Marienau

Mary E. Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD
COA Chair



Our Mission

The COA's mission is to (1) grant public recognition to nurse anesthesia educational programs and institutions that award post-master's certificates, master's degrees, and doctoral degrees that meet nationally established standards of academic quality (quality assessment), and (2) assist programs and institutions in improving educational quality (quality enhancement).

Services Provided

The COA's scope of accreditation is for institutions and programs of nurse anesthesia at the post master's certificate, master's degree, or doctoral degree levels in the United States, its territories and protectorates. Both the U.S. Department of Education and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation recognize the COA as the accrediting agency for nurse anesthesia. The COA is responsible for establishing the standards for accreditation of nurse anesthesia educational programs, subject to consideration of the revisions by the communities of interest. The standards address: (I) governance, (II) resources (III) program of study, (IV) program effectiveness, and (V) accountability. The standards have been under review and have been subject to periodic major and minor revisions since they were established. Compliance with the standards forms the basis for the COA's accreditation decisions.

Certain criteria have been ascertained to have major significance regarding educational quality. Failure to fully comply with one or more of these criteria is considered to be of critical concern in decisions regarding nurse anesthesia program accreditation. The COA reserves the right to identify other areas or criteria. The accreditation process for established programs is based on the self-evaluation study document prepared by the program and on an on-site review by a team of two or three reviewers. The process is repeated at intervals up to 10 years. A summary report of the review is presented to the COA for an accreditation decision. New programs that seek accreditation status must successfully complete an initial accreditation review, admit students, and undergo a subsequent review after the first students graduate.

Ongoing oversight by the COA is provided between formal programmatic reviews. Programs are required to inform the COA and get approval of major changes. The COA also investigates situations brought to its attention that may affect a program's accreditation status. Each program is required to complete and submit an annual report.

In a broad sense, accreditation of nurse anesthesia educational programs provides quality assurance concerning educational preparation through continuous self-study and review. **The ultimate goals of the accreditation program are to** improve the quality of nurse anesthesia education and provide competent anesthetists for healthcare consumers and employers. Graduation from an accredited program is a prerequisite for eligibility for national certification, and it is also used as a criterion by licensing agencies, employers, and potential students in the decisions they make and in determining eligibility for government funding.

Summary Financial Statements

Council on Accreditation of Nurse Anesthesia Educational Programs
Summary Financial Statements
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Statements of Financial Position

		As of August 31,	
		2010	2009
<u>Assets</u>			
Cash and investments		\$885.6	\$727.0
All other assets		23.3	21.0
	Total Assets	\$908.9	\$748.0
<u>Liabilities and Net Assets</u>			
Accounts payable and accrued liabilities		\$1034.4	\$954.6
Deferred accreditation fees		325.1	266.9
All other		68.8	114.1
	Total Liabilities	1428.3	1335.6
Net Assets		(519.4)	(587.6)
	Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$908.9	\$748.0

Statements of Activity

		Year Ending August 31,	
		2010	2009
<u>Revenue</u>			
Annual school fees		\$827.5	\$761.2
Grant from AANA		744.5	765.8
All other		149.8	149.3
	Total Revenue	1721.8	1676.3
<u>Expenses</u>			
Salaries and fringes		993.0	978.7
All other		711.3	756.6
	Operating Expenses	1704.3	1735.3
	Excess (Deficit) of Revenue over Expenses	17.5	(59.0)
Net unrealized gain (loss) on investments		31.8	(61.5)
Pension obligation not recognized in pension cost		18.9	(216.3)
	Increase (Decrease) in Net Assets	\$68.2	(\$336.8)

Summary of Operational Information

	2011*	2010	2009
Number of Programs	112	110	109
Number of New Programs	2	2	1
Degrees Offered:			
Masters	112	110	109
Doctoral	16	15	7
Number of Accreditation Decisions:			
Initial Accreditation	2	2	1
Continued Accreditation	7	5	3
Continued Accreditation Decision Deferred	2	1	-
Distance Education Offerings	4	4	6
Doctoral Degree: Entry into Practice	-	4	2
Doctoral Degree: Completion Program	1	4	1
Master's Degree Completion Program	1	1	-
Student & Faculty Midpoint Evaluations	11	10	13
Evaluation of a New Program	2	3	3
Progress Reports	10	4	17
Waiver of Graduate Degree	1	2	1
Clinical Sites (Enrichment)	75	126	106
Clinical Sites (Required)	32	27	19
Major Programmatic Change	1	1	-
Major Programmatic Change Decision Deferred	1	-	-
Probation Lifted, Continued Accreditation	-	1	-
Complaints	-	3	2
Number of On-site Visits	17	22	20
Number of Unannounced On-site Visits	1	1	-

* Does not include accreditation decisions from October 2011 COA meeting.

Upcoming Meetings

COA Workshops and Training

February 22, 2012	Self-Study Workshop (day before ASF)
February 26, 2012	On-site Reviewer Training (day after ASF)
August 2-3, 2012	Doctoral Workshop (San Francisco, California)

Assembly of School Faculty (ASF) Meetings

February 23-25, 2012	San Diego, California
August 4-8, 2012	San Francisco, California

Council Meetings

January 17-19, 2012	Park Ridge, Illinois
May 21-23, 2012	Park Ridge, Illinois
October 10-12, 2012	Park Ridge, Illinois

Governance of the Council

Officers:

Mary E. Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD,
Chair

Elizabeth Monti Seibert, CRNA, PhD,
Vice Chair

Michael Kremer, CRNA, PhD, FAAN,
Secretary/Treasurer

Directors:

Kathleen A. Cook, CRNA, MS,
CRNA Practitioner

Maria D. Garcia-Otero, CRNA, PhD,
CRNA Practitioner

Allynn R. Petersen, MS, RN, CNOR,
Healthcare Administrator

Demetrius J. Porche, DNS, PhD, APRN,
University Representative

Kay K. Sanders, CRNA, DNP,
CRNA Educator

James P. Singsank, CPA, MBA,
Public Representative

Judith Watkins, EdD,
Public Representative

Bette Wildgust, CRNA, MS, MSN,
CRNA Educator

Michael H. Wilhelm, RN, CEN, CCRN,
Student



Committees/Task Forces:

Finance/Bylaws Committee

Michael J. Kremer, CRNA, PhD, FAAN, Chair
Elizabeth Monti Seibert, CRNA, PhD
Allynn R. Petersen, MS, RN, CNOR
James P. Singsank, CPA, MBA

Audit Committee

James P. Singsank, CPA, MBA, Chair
Kathleen A. Cook, CRNA, MS
Kay K. Sanders, CRNA, DNP

Standards and Policies Committee

Bette Wildgust, CRNA, MS, MSN, Chair
Kay K. Sanders, CRNA, DNP
Judith Watkins, EdD

Selection and Evaluation Committee

Maria D. Garcia-Otero, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Kathleen A. Cook, CRNA, MS
Demetrius J. Porche, DNS, PhD, APRN
James P. Singsank, CPA, MBA
Michael H. Wilhelm, RN, CEN, CCRN

Efficiency Advisory Committee

Betty Horton, CRNA, PhD
Kathleen O'Donnell, CRNA, PhD
Marianne R. Phelps, PhD
James P. Singsank, CPA, MBA
Karen Kershenstein (Outside Consultant)

Annual Report Task Force

Elizabeth Monti Seibert, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Kathleen A. Cook, CRNA, MS
Michael J. Kremer, CRNA, PhD, FAAN
Kay K. Sanders, CRNA, DNP
Bette Wildgust, CRNA, MSN

International Issues Task Force

Maria D. Garcia-Otero, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Betty J. Horton, CRNA, PhD
Mary Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD

Distance Education Task Force

Bette Wildgust, CRNA, MS, MSN, Chair
Michael Dosch, CRNA, PhD, MS
John M. O'Donnell, CRNA, MSN, DrPH
Marianne R. Phelps, PhD

Info & Instructional Technology Task Force

Mary E. Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Allynn R. Petersen, MS, RN, CNOR
Demetrius J. Porche, DNS, PhD, APRN

Organizational Structure Task Force

Mary E. Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Elizabeth Monti Seibert, CRNA, PhD
Francis Gerbasi, CRNA, PhD, Executive Director

Oversight of Clinical Sites Task Force

Elizabeth Monti Seibert, CRNA, PhD, Chair
Cormac O'Sullivan, CRNA, PhD
Kay K. Sanders, CRNA, DNP
Nancy Tierney, CRNA, DMP
Bette Wildgust, CRNA, MSN

Standards Revision Task Force

Rebecca Gombkoto, CRNA, DNP
Denise Martin-Sheridan, CRNA, PhD
James Walker, CRNA, DNP
Mary Jean Yablonky, CRNA, MA
Betty Horton, CRNA, PhD, FAAN

Research and Practice Doctoral Task Force

Michael Kremer, CRNA, PhD, FAAN, Chair
Betty J. Horton, CRNA, PhD
Mary E. Shirk Marienau, CRNA, PhD
Judith Watkins, EdD



Staff**Executive Director:**

Francis Gerbasi, CRNA, PhD

Operation Specialist:

Liza Curiel

Accreditation and Education Specialists:

Annette Boksa, BSC

Kara Chlebek, MPA

Barbara Farkas, MAdEd

Susan Monsen, MATD

Administrative Assistants:

Paula Aniol, BSC

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