

# NCCAOM Examination Review

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NCCAOM Examination  
Foundation of Oriental Medicine

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Foundation of Oriental Medicine

- Reference Books

- All Knowledge points and Practice questions are from the following books:

- Cheng, X. **Chinese Acupuncture and Moxibustion** (Revised Edition) 1999 Ed, Foreign Languages Press.
- Dongcheng Li, Review and Pretest for NCCAOM and California Exams in TCM Foundation and Acupuncture, the latest version.
- Dongcheng Li, Review and Pretest for NCCAOM and California Licensing Exams in **TCM Foundation**, the latest version.

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Foundation of Oriental Medicine

- **Domain A:** Clinical Examination Methods (10% of total exam)
- **Domain B:** Assessment, Analysis, and Differential Diagnosis Based Upon Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Theory (45% of total exam)
- **Domain C:** Treatment Principle (Zhi Ze) and Strategy (Zhi Fa) (45% of total exam)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Foundation of Oriental Medicine

- **Domain A: Clinical Examination Methods (10% of total exam)**
- Collect and recognize clinically significant signs and symptoms.
- 1. Looking (Wang)
  - 1) Spirit (Shen) appearance (including color)
    - ❑ Observe outward manifestation of Shen (Spirit) (e.g., complexion, expression, demeanor, and general behavior)
    - ❑ Identify and relate Shen (Spirit) to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
  - ❖ CAM: p266-267
  - ❖ Dr. Li's book: p22; p31; p241
  - ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p42 (No. 66); P46 (No. 100); p273 (No. 126); p358 (No. 64)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Looking (Wang)

- 2) Face, eyes, nose, ears, mouth, lips, teeth, and throat
  - ❑ Observe normal and abnormal conditions (including color, moisture, texture, mouth, lips, teeth and throat)
  - ❑ Identify and relate facial features
  - ❑ Recognize pathological manifestations and organ-indicative locations
- ❖ CAM: p267-268; CAM: p269;
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p9-11; p22; p241; Dr. Li's book: p9; p22-25; p241
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p39(No. 43); p259(No. 16); p261 (No. 28); p249(No. 146); p276 (No. 261, 264); p292 (No. 271, 275); p293 (No. 276); p433 (No. 56).....
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p40 (No. 56); p47(No. 106); p269 (No. 90)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Looking (Wang)

### 3) Tongue (body and coating)

- Observe normal and abnormal manifestations, patterns, conditions, and changes of the tongue and sub-lingual area
  - Identify and relate features of the tongue to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
  - Recognize pathological manifestations of the tongue and tongue coating, including color, size, moisture, texture, shape, position, movement, organ-indicative locations
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- ❖ CAM: p270-274;
  - ❖ Dr. Li's book: p9; p22; p243-247
  - ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p39(No. 46); p39 (No. 49); p41 (No. 61); p42(No. 70); p48(No.115); p189(No. 110); p189(No.114); p257(No.2, 5); p258(No. 9); p260(No. 21); p260(No.22, 26); p261(No. 32); p279(No. 170--215).....

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Looking (Wang)

### 4) Physical characteristics of the body

- Observe form, movement, and physical characteristics (e.g., head, hair, neck, back, chest, abdomen, extremities, nails)
- Identify and relate form, movement, and physical characteristics to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of form, movement, and physical characteristics
- Observe conditions and changes of the skin
- Identify and relate conditions and changes of the skin to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of conditions and changes of the skin
- Observe normal and abnormal excretions (e.g., phlegm, sputum, saliva, sweat, discharge, stool, urine)
- Identify and relate conditions and changes of excretions to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of excretions

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Looking (Wang)

- ❖ CAM: p268; CAM: p269; Dr. Li's book: p9; p22-25; p241; Dr. Li's book: p30; p54; p241
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p273 (No. 128, 134); p274 (No. 136); p275(No. 142, 143); p40 (No. 53); p273 (No. 125); p428 (No.22); p441 (No. 27); p452 (No. 27)
- ❖ Practice questions; Dr. Li's book: (phlegm) p36 (No. 26); p59 (No. 15); p61 (No. 32); p262 (No. 37); p264(No. 55); p270 (No. 104); p275(No. 144); p277(No. 154); p284 (No. 213); p292(No. 274) (urine) p34 (No. 7); p268 (No. 83) (stool) p265 (No. 62); p266 (No. 71); p268 (No. 87); p271(No. 107); p272 (No. 120); p277 (No.153);

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Listening and smelling (Wen)

### 2. Listening and smelling (Wen)

#### 1) Sounds

- Listen to respiratory sounds
- Identify and relate respiratory sounds to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of respiratory sounds
- Listen to tonal qualities, voice, and speech
- Identify and relate tonal qualities, voice, and speech to pattern/differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of tonal qualities, voice,
- Listen to abdominal sounds
- Identify and relate abdominal sounds to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of abdominal sounds
- ❖ CAM: p273
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p247-252; p247-248
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p278 (No. 161, 164);

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Listening and smelling (Wen)

### 2) Odors

- Smell body odors
- Identify and relate body odors to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of body odors
- Smell breath and mouth odors
- Identify and relate breath and mouth odors to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of breath and mouth odors
- Smell excretions (e.g., sweat, urine, feces, leukorrhea, flatulence, wound exudates)
- Identify and relate excretions to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of excretions

❖ CAM: p273

❖ Dr. Li's book: p247-252

❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p273 (No. 124); p293 (No. 277, 278)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Listening and smelling (Wen)

### 2) Odors

- Smell body odors
- Identify and relate body odors to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of body odors
- Smell breath and mouth odors
- Identify and relate breath and mouth odors to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of breath and mouth odors
- Smell excretions (e.g., sweat, urine, feces, leukorrhea, flatulence, wound exudates)
- Identify and relate excretions to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Recognize pathological significance of excretions

❖ CAM: p273

❖ Dr. Li's book: p247-252; p247-248

❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p273 (No. 124); p293 (No. 277, 278); p268 (No. 84); p271 (No. 110, 116 & 117);

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Asking (Wen)

### 3. Asking (Wen)

#### 1) Chief complaint

- Inquire about presenting complaint (onset, duration, location, nature, alleviation, aggravation)
- Inquire about the history and development of chief complaint
- Identify and relate chief complaint to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Identify appropriate additional questions based on examination findings and patients' response to inquiries

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Asking (Wen)

### 2) Current health conditions

- Conduct a review of systems, including the “Ten Questions” (Shi Wen)
- Identify and relate current health conditions to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Identify appropriate additional questions based on examination findings and patients' response to inquiries

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Asking (Wen)

### 3) Health history

- Inquire about personal health history, including previous symptoms, diagnoses, and treatments
- Inquire about familial history
- Identify and relate health history to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*
- Identify appropriate additional questions based on examination findings and patients' response to inquiries

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Touching (palpation) (Qie)

### 4. Touching (palpation) (Qie)

#### 1) Radial pulses (including the 28 Qualities)

- Identify the location of radial pulses
- Identify qualities of radial pulses (including rate, depth, strength, and shape) as indicators of patterns of disharmony and of normal and abnormal states of organ and meridian function
- Identify and relate radial pulses to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Touching (palpation) (Qie)

### 2) Abdomen

- Identify, through palpation, normal and abnormal conditions of the abdomen (e.g., temperature, texture, shape, and pain)
- Identify abdominal regions representing organs and meridians
- Identify and relate abdominal palpation findings to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015) Touching (palpation) (Qie)

### 3) Meridians

- Identify, through palpation, findings along the meridians (e.g., nodules, tenderness, numbness, temperature, sensitivity)
- Identify and relate meridian palpation findings to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*

### 4) Other body areas

- Identify, through palpation, pain, body sensations (e.g., numbness, tingling, sensitivity), temperature changes, and quality of tissue (e.g., edema, hardness/softness, tension/flaccidity)
- Identify and relate palpation findings to pattern/syndrome differentiation\*

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

\*Pattern/Syndrome Differentiation:

- Eight Principles (Ba Geng)
- Organs (Zang Fu)
- Meridian/Channel (Jing Luo)
- Six Stages (Liu Jing)
- Four Levels (Wei, Qi, Ying, Xue)
- Five Elements (Wu Xing)
- Qi, Blood, Body Fluids (Qi, Xue, Jin Ye)
- Triple Burner (San Jiao)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

- **Domain B: Assessment, Analysis, and Differential Diagnosis Based Upon Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Theory (45% of Total Exam)**
  - Formulate a differential diagnosis (Bian Zheng).
  - 1. Knowledge and Application of Fundamental Theory of TCM Physiology (Sheng Li), Etiology (Bing Yin), and Pathogenesis (Bing Ji)
    - 1). Yin/Yang theory (e.g., Interior/Exterior, Cold/Heat, Deficient/ Excess)
      - Describe Yin/Yang theory
      - Evaluate symptoms according to Yin/Yang theory
      - Identify pathologies according to Yin/Yang theory
      - Apply Yin/Yang theory to clinical assessment

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

### 2) Five Elements (Five Phases/Wu Xing)

- Describe Five Elements theory
- Evaluate symptoms according to Five Elements theory
- Identify pathologies according to Five Elements theory
- Apply Five Elements theory to clinical assessment

- ❖ CAM: p20-26
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p10-13
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p16 (No. 18).....

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

### 3) Organ theory (Zang Fu)

- Describe Organ theory
- Evaluate symptoms according to Organ theory
- Identify pathologies according to Organ theory
- Apply Organ theory to clinical assessment

- ❖ CAM: p27-50
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p21-27
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p33 (No.1).....

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

### 4) Channel theory (Jing Luo) (including regular channels, Extraordinary channels, Luoconnecting channels, divergent channels, muscle channels, and skin regions)

- Describe Channel theory
- Evaluate symptoms according to Channel theory
- Identify pathologies according to Channel theory
- Apply Channel theory to clinical assessment

- ❖ CAM: p59-65
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p62-70
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p71-77

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

### 5) Essential Substances theory [Qi, Blood (Xue), Fluids (Jin Ye), Essence (Jing), Spirit (Shen)]

- Describe Qi, Blood (Xue), Body Fluids (Jin Ye), Essence (Jing), Spirit (Shen)
- Evaluate symptoms according to Qi, Blood (Xue), Body Fluids (Jin Ye), Essence (Jing), Spirit (Shen)
- Identify pathologies according to Qi, Blood (Xue), Body Fluids (Jin Ye), Essence (Jing), Spirit (Shen)
- Apply Qi, Blood (Xue), Body Fluids (Jin Ye), Essence (Jing), Spirit (Shen) to clinical assessment

- ❖ CAM: p51-58
- ❖ Dr. Li's book: p28-31
- ❖ Practice questions: Dr. Li's book: p36 (No. 26-29) <sup>24</sup>

## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Fundamental theory of traditional Chinese medicine

- 6) Causes of Disease: External (Six Excesses [Liu Yin]), Internal (Seven Emotions), and Miscellaneous (diet, excessive sexual activity, excessive physical work or lack of exercise, trauma, bites, parasites, Phlegm, Blood stasis)

- Describe Causes of Disease
- Evaluate symptoms according to Causes of Disease
- Identify pathologies according to Causes of Disease
- Apply Causes of Disease to clinical assessment

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Differential Diagnosis

2. Formulation of a Differential Diagnosis Based upon Chief Complaint (Zhu Su), Prioritization of Major Symptoms (Zhu Zheng), Knowledge of TCM Diseases (Bian Bing), and Pattern Identification (Bian Zheng)

- 1) Eight Principles (Ba Gang) (i.e., Yin/Yang, Interior/Exterior, Cold/Heat, Deficient/ Excess)

- Describe Eight Principles differentiation
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Eight Principles differentiation
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Eight Principles differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 2) Organ theory (Zang Fu)

- Describe Organ pattern differentiation
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Organ differentiation
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Organ differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 3) Channel theory (Jing Luo) (including regular channels, Extraordinary channels, Luo-connecting channels, divergent channels, muscle channels, and skin regions)

- Describe Channel theory
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Channel theory
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Channel theory

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 4) Six Stages (Tai Yang, Yang Ming, Shao Yang, Tai Yin, Shao Yin, Jue Yin) Knowledge of San Jiao differentiation in relationship to meridians and organs, and interrelationships among San Jiao

- Describe the Six Stages differentiation
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Six Stages differentiation
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Six Stages differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 5) Four Levels (Wei, Qi, Ying, Xue)

- Describe the Four Levels differentiation
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Four Levels differentiation
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Four Levels differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 6) Five Elements (Five Phases/Wu Xing)

- ❑ Describe Five Elements differentiation
- ❑ Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Five Elements differentiation
- ❑ Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Five Elements differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

### Differential Diagnosis

#### 7) Qi, Blood, Body Fluids (Qi, Xue, Jin Ye)

- ❑ Describe Qi, Blood, Body Fluids differentiation
- ❑ Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Qi, Blood, Body Fluids differentiation
- ❑ Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Qi, Blood, Body Fluids differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Differential Diagnosis

### 8) Triple Burner (San Jiao)

- Describe Triple Burner differentiation
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Triple Burner differentiation
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Triple Burner differentiation

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Differential Diagnosis

### 9) Six Excesses (Liu Yin)

- Describe Six Excesses
- Assess and analyze signs and symptoms according to Six Excesses
- Formulate a diagnosis based on the analysis of Six Excesses

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Formulate treatment principle and strategy based upon

- **Domain C: Treatment Principle (Zhi Ze) and Strategy (Zhi Fa) (45% of Total Exam)**

Formulate treatment principle and strategy based upon differential diagnosis (Bian Zheng).

### 1. Treatment Principle Based upon Differential Diagnosis

- ① Eight Principles (Ba Gang)
- ② Organs (Zang Fu)
- ③ Meridian/Channel (Jing Luo)
- ④ Six Stages (Liu Jing)
- ⑤ Four Levels (Wei, Qi, Ying, Xue)

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Formulate treatment principle and strategy based upon

- ⑥ Five Elements (Wu Xing)
- ⑦ Qi, Blood, Body Fluids (Qi, Xue, Jin Ye)
- ⑧ Triple Burner (San Jiao)
- ⑨ Causes of Disease: External (Six Excesses [Liu Yin]), Internal (Seven Emotions), and
- ⑩ Miscellaneous (diet, excessive sexual activity, excessive physical work or lack of exercise, trauma, bites, parasites, Phlegm, Blood stasis)
  - ▣ Select appropriate treatment principle based on pattern/syndrome differential diagnosis

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## Examination Contents Outline (2015)

Formulate treatment principle and strategy based upon

### 2 Treatment Strategy to Accomplish Treatment Principle

- ❑ Select appropriate treatment strategy (e.g., disperse, tonify, cool, warm) treatment principle
- ❑ Prioritize treatment focus [e.g., Root and Branch (Biao Ben), acute/chronic, external/internal, Pathogenic Factors, constitutional, seasonal]
- ❑ Adjust treatment principle and/or strategy based on patient's response, disease progression, and lifestyle (e.g., substance use, smoking, exercise, diet)

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Thanks

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