Certifying Examination 2026 Update

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Chairs, Oral Examination Committee
Trustees of the American Board of Urology

American Board of Urology (ABU)

- Mission of the ABU is to act for the benefit of the public
  - "Protect the public" through certification of candidates who demonstrate the highest quality of urologic care
  - Accomplishes this through establishing and maintaining standards of certification for urologists

ABU Certification Process

Up to 6 years

Complete ACGME or RCPSC approved residency program

→

Pass the Qualifying Examination

Three attempts

→

Meet requirements to take Certifying Examination

- 16 months in practice
- Log review (Complications narrative)
- Unrestricted license
- Peer review
- Professional responsibility action history

→

Pass Certifying Examination

Three attempts

CERTIFYING EXAM: PURPOSE

- To determine the candidate's ability to
  - Gather information relevant to a clinical problem
  - Manage clinical problem(s) effectively and safely
  - React in a timely fashion to complications
  - “Show” communication, diagnostic and technical skills
  - Act in an ethical and professional manner

CERTIFYING EXAM: GENERAL

- You will be given pertinent clinical information at the start of each standard protocol or objective structured clinical exam (OSCE)

- You will be asked to
  - Interpret tests/images/diagrams
  - Discuss surgical techniques
  - Demonstrate knowledge of disease screening, risk, evaluation, treatment, and follow-up
  - Manage complications
  - Interact with patients/family members

CERTIFYING EXAM: PROCESS

- Case scenario will be handed to you at the start of each protocol or OSCE
  - You may write on this summary
  - Pencil and paper will be provided
  - If laboratory values are revealed during the protocol, normative values will be usually be provided

- Test results /images/ video may be shown to you at certain points during the protocols

- The examiners will move you along so that you complete the protocols and OSCEs in the allotted time

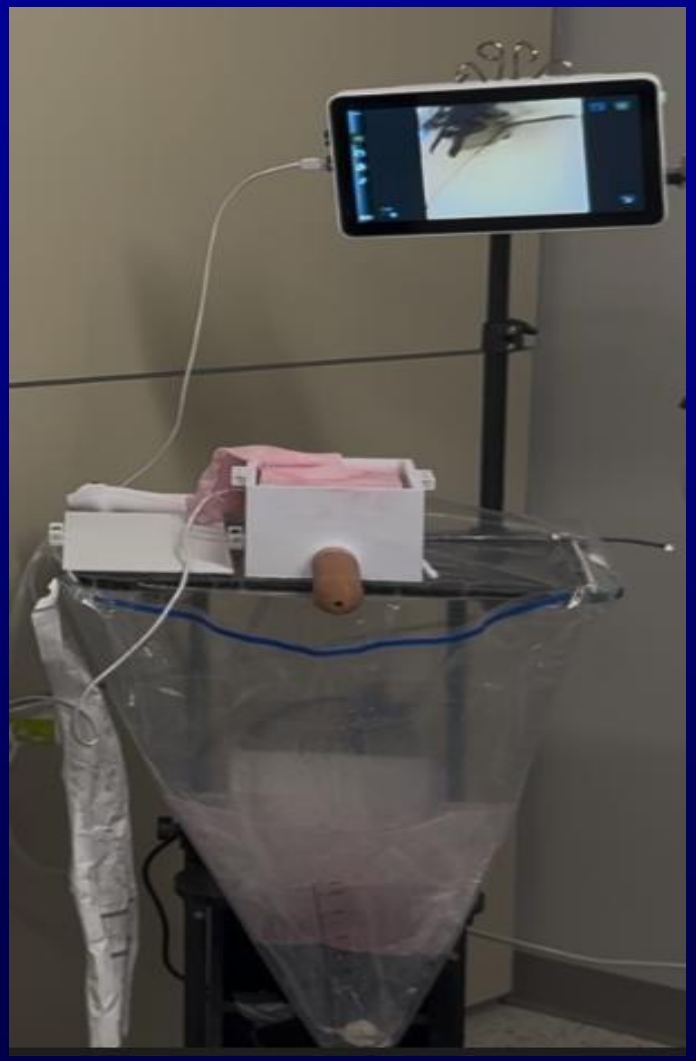
CERTIFYING EXAM: OSCEs

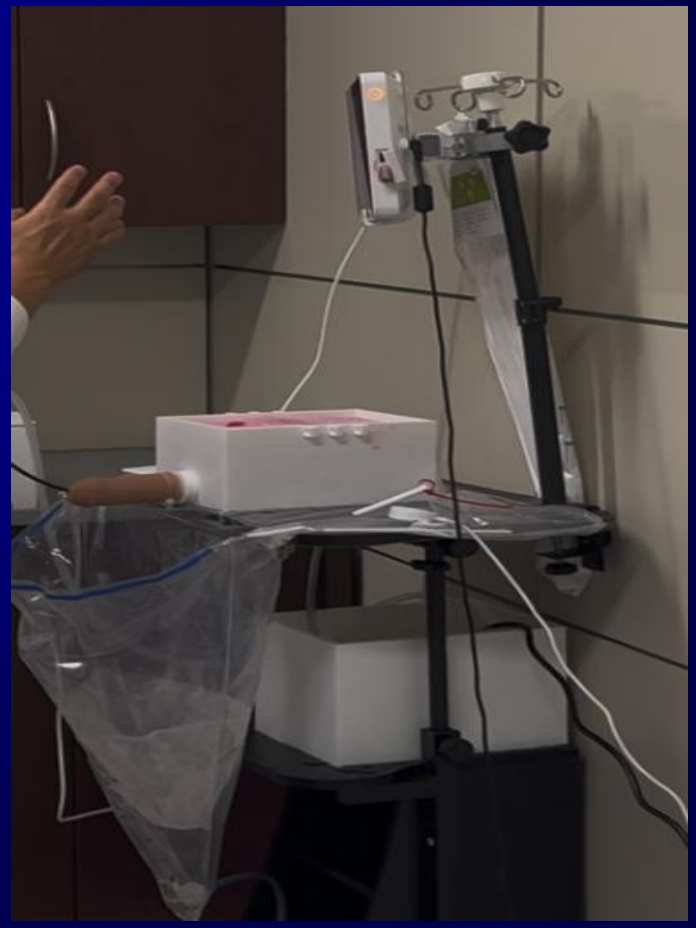
- One OSCE will assess professionalism and communication
  - There will be a simulated clinical situation with an examiner
  - The second examiner will provide clinical content and instructions

- One OSCE will involve real time use of a clinical situation or diagnostic study
  - You may be asked to interpret a study/direct an intervention
  - Examples include but not limited to radiographic images and/or video

- One OSCE will involve a simulated model of the male lower urinary tract
  - You will be asked to perform cystoscopy and identify relevant findings
  - Once the procedure has been completed further questions related to the cystoscopic assessment will be asked

CERTIFYING EXAM: OSCEs





CERTIFYING EXAM: PROCESS

- Two examiners in each room
  - Only one examiner will be delivering each protocol / OSCE
  - Both examiners in a room will score for the test they gave
- The examiners are blinded to the residency training, previous scores, peer review results, and type of practice
- Examiners and examinees will be queried prior to exam to avoid examinations with individuals whom they may have a relationship

CERTIFYING EXAM: SUMMARY

- Three standard protocols of 8 items each completed in 45 minutes
- Three different OSCEs of 10-13 minutes each
  - Professionalism
  - Diagnostic
  - Simulation
- Short break between standard protocol and OSCE sessions

CERTIFYING EXAM: RECORDING

- The examinations will be recorded
- Recordings are destroyed once results are released
- Results are released about 4 - 8 weeks exam date

CERTIFYING EXAM: SCORING

- Scoring is done on a point system for each section within each protocol in addition to an overall assessment
  - Failing to answer one section correctly does not affect the next item scoring
  - Scoring is ***objective as possible*** and highly ***reliable consistently***

- The “difficulty” of the examiner as well as of each question and protocol is taken into account to minimize scoring bias and increase the fairness of the results. Each protocol has objective answers and standardized scoring.

CERTIFYING EXAM: LOCATION
AIME Center

- Raleigh, North Carolina
- Testing center – also home to American Board of Anesthesiology
- Candidates stay in hotel less than 5 minutes away

AIME CENTER
Protocol Room

CERTIFYING EXAM: LOGISTICS

- Bus transportation to/from Hotel and AIME center

- Morning candidates must report 30 minutes prior to their exam; all morning candidates will be sequestered until 12:30 PM

- Afternoon candidates must report at 12:00 PM

- Boxed lunches will be provided

CERTIFYING EXAM: COMMENTS ARE IMPORTANT

- No more hotel room exams
- Two examiners for each protocol/OSCE
- Actual examiners that candidate will have are revealed before
- Exam schedule
  - Condensed to one half day
  - Told specifically the date and time for travel purposes
- Question, protocol, and examiner difficulty adjusted to a "fair average" to eliminate scoring biases and objective scoring rubric implemented

CERTIFYING EXAM: WORDS OF WISDOM

- If you do not know a particular question or believe you made an error, keep progressing through the examination; scoring will depend on how you do on the ENTIRE protocol/ exam

- Maintain professional behavior at all times; this is the only time the examiner will get to ”know” you

- An overall assessment score for each protocol carries more weight than individual sections, so maintain focus throughout the protocol or OSCE

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