

BENEFITS OF THE PCOA

- Measures performance and provides side-by-side comparisons of scores to national samples
- Provides data on students' knowledge in four content areas and 35 subtopics
- Supplies faculty with a tool to provide constructive feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of students
- Allows faculty to track individuals' scores from year to year and chart their growth over time in the program
- Serves as a component of an evaluation plan, as suggested by ACPE Guidelines, that:
 - Has formative and summative measures
 - Provides for collective analyses of findings
 - Evaluates trends over time
 - Includes standardized instruments and data
- Provides documentation of improvement in student performance after curriculum has been modified or updated
- Imparts score data that can be used in research and correlational studies with existing assessments such as PCAT scores, academic proficiency, and future NAPLEX scores

PCOA PROGRAM CONTACT INFORMATION

For further information about the PCOA program please contact:

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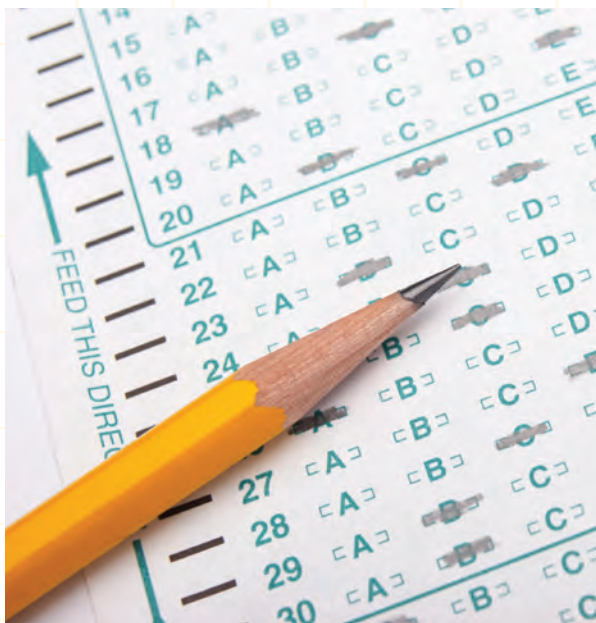
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PCOA[®]

Pharmacy Curriculum Outcomes Assessment[®]





THE PCOA

Responding to the need expressed by US colleges and schools of pharmacy for an assessment tool to assist with curriculum development and to measure student growth and performance, the National Association of Boards of Pharmacy® (NABP®) has worked closely with key stakeholders to develop the Pharmacy Curriculum Outcomes Assessment® (PCOA®).

A comprehensive tool that enables schools to analyze and evaluate performance in the curriculum, the PCOA also provides extremely valuable data on individual students' strengths, weaknesses, and progress from year to year. PCOA score reports are comparable across the curriculum years and permit measurement of student and program progress.

Following administration and a thorough analysis of resulting data, score reports are provided to participating schools of pharmacy. These reports facilitate the compar-

ison of local outcomes with those of other participating schools. Psychometric analyses are conducted to ensure there is a high level of confidence in the reliability and validity of the assessment's outcomes and the inferences garnered regarding the level of a student's knowledge within the curriculum.

PCOA FORMAT

The PCOA is a 220-item multiple choice paper-and-pencil assessment. The content of the PCOA follows a blueprint that reflects actual curriculum hours as derived from a national sample of all college and school of pharmacy curricula. The PCOA is composed of four content areas that are broken down into 35 subtopic areas. The assessment's four content areas and the corresponding percentage of items are as follows.

21%	Basic Biomedical Sciences
28.5%	Pharmaceutical Sciences
14.5%	Social, Behavioral, & Administrative Pharmacy Sciences
36%	Clinical Sciences

The assessment includes both operational (scored) and pilot (nonscored) items. Multiple forms are used to keep the assessment current and to minimize item exposure.

RELIABILITY ASSESSMENT

The PCOA was developed using advanced psychometric principles and has in place an ongoing assessment validation process. This process includes annual revisions by subject-matter experts, regular item analyses, reliability and validity studies, and annual statistical equating.

NABP developed these processes through its expertise with the high-level modes of evaluation that are used in the Association's competency examinations.

ADMINISTRATION & SCORE REPORTING

To provide for fair and standardized results, the PCOA is administered annually to students of participating schools of pharmacy. The assessment is appropriate for students in all four professional years, and provides schools of pharmacy with relevant information regarding students and pharmacy program performance across all the professional years. Registration is completed by the pharmacy schools. The cost is \$75 for each individual student registration.

Score reports will be sent to pharmacy schools for dissemination to participating students. Typical score reports contain a variety of data to provide the best possible information about individual student performance as well as pharmacy program performance. Faculty members are encouraged to present each student with his or her individual score report and discuss and plan for future needs. Please note that student- and school-specific scores will never be released to other schools; however, national percentiles for scores and program years are provided in all reports.

The schools of pharmacy will receive the following reports:

Individual Student Score Report – details total score and national comparisons as well as a breakdown of the score by content area and subtopic.

School of Pharmacy Report – includes score data by year for the assessment as a whole and broken down by both content area and subtopic.

School of Pharmacy Student Summary Report – contains a side-by-side comparison of each student's data including where they rank in the national average.