



AMERICAN BOARD OF CRIMINALISTICS

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Hello ABC Certificants,

In our pursuit of ANAB accreditation for ISO/IEC 17024:2012, we have our assessment coming up in late fall. We will keep our certificants updated as to any change in accreditation as we move to transition to ANAB for our management processes and new exams.

Our Exam Committee (EC) representatives and volunteers just wrapped up the Developing a Curriculum (DACUM) process for the new seized drugs examination. The DACUM panel convened at the Clandestine Laboratory Investigating Chemists (CLIC) annual meeting in Texas this past September. Field testing for the Foundational Knowledge Exam (FKE) has also been completed. The EC will move on to the next steps including psychometric analysis to finalize this new exam.

We are continuing to evaluate and improve the recertification process. Please check out the recertification section of this newsletter for some helpful tips on filling out your paperwork.

Our Communications and Marketing Committee has also been busy with the newsletters and keeping our social media updated. We have new banners and pamphlets available so if you are attending one of the regional meetings or AAFS, please check us out.

If you have colleagues who are interested in certification and have questions, please don't hesitate to have them reach out to any Board members. We would be happy to answer any questions and/or provide any information. Certification enhances our qualifications as forensic scientists, much like accreditation and following quality assurance programs. Certification is a way for us to provide value to our knowledge and skills that we have acquired to successfully perform our duties as forensic scientists.

I hope everyone has a great rest of their year!

Respectfully,

Danielle N. Hankinson, MS, ABC-MB
President

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AMERICAN BOARD OF CRIMINALISTICS

How to Become Involved in the ABC

Promoting Excellence Through Certification

The ABC exists and is maintained through the Member Organizations and the hard work of its many volunteers. Being a volunteer in the ABC not only helps to complete the work of the ABC, it is also a great way for a criminalist to give back to our profession and achieve a level of satisfaction not always possible on the job alone.

There are several ways to get involved.

At the end of this newsletter is a listing of all the committees in the ABC and the current chair of each committee.

You can learn what each committee does by going to <https://www.criminalistics.com>, click on Bylaws. If you want more information, or are interested in volunteering, you can contact the committee chair or anyone on the Board of Directors.

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Our Purpose:

The Forensic Science community has an obligation to:

- Establish professional levels of knowledge, skills and abilities;
- Define a mechanism for achieving these levels;
- Recognize those who have demonstrated attainment of these levels;
- Promote growth within the profession.

Why Volunteer for an ABC Committee?

I only started volunteering for ABC in early 2022, but since then, I have served with the recertification committee and the Drug Analysis Certifying Exam Management Group (CEMG). The recertification committee is a great entry point for new volunteers and by participating, I became much more familiar with the entire process of recertification and the point system. My future recertification packet submissions will be much easier now that I've reviewed other packets! Most recently, I served on the job task panel for the upcoming new seized drug exam. While more mentally strenuous than I expected, it was also the most fulfilling and very enjoyable. I really loved getting to meet and work with other analysts face to face. It's really motivating knowing that this work will eventually lead to a new and improved seized drug exam that will be used for years to come. Overall, I couldn't ask for a better organization to volunteer for or better individuals to volunteer with.

- Allison



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COMMUNICATIONS AND MARKETING COMMITTEE UPDATE

This committee will be used to keep current certificants and those who want to become certificants apprised of the goings on within ABC. You should see updates regarding board positions, volunteer opportunities, exam application information, and recertification. Please use the email below for any other suggestions you have for social media updates or suggestions for the format or content of this newsletter going forward.

communications@criminalistics.com



<https://encrypted-tbn0.gstatic.com/images?q=tbn:ANd9GcRAsgoNitWRx34NkQ1Nuu1meNE2q1vYstjScMUcxkl3jtAYHpr-&s>

RECERTIFICATION UPDATE

ABC Certificants,

We continue to evaluate and improve the recertification process on a yearly basis. This year, we moved to an abbreviated review process if the certificant was close to meeting their points. I think this process worked well with our committee members.

We are also working to provide key documents as links/attachments to the email that will be sent out as notification when the recertification process opens. Please use the Point Structure document when filling out your recertification paperwork online. This document is extremely helpful in providing information regarding acceptable documentation. In the last newsletter, I highlighted tips on submitting the correct documentation for organizational membership. **For this newsletter, I would like to highlight submitting documentation for external assessments.** It's not always easy to obtain all of the information in one email so please consider submitting multiple emails or requesting documentation (i.e. memo) from the accrediting agency that covers all of the required components. Remember, you need to **verify location, discipline, and dates of participation.**

Please don't hesitate to contact me if you have any questions regarding recertification.

Respectfully,

Danielle N. Hankinson, MS, ABC-MB
Recertification Liaison
recertification@criminalistics.com



AMERICAN BOARD OF CRIMINALISTICS

AT-LARGE POSITION ANNOUNCEMENT

October 3, 2022

The American Board of Criminalistics (ABC) is recruiting for an At-Large Director to serve on the Board of Directors (BoD). The candidate is voted in by the BoD for a three year term. This 3 year term will expire at the conclusion of the February 2026 ABC board meeting.

This position would require approximately 4-6 hours a month to execute the responsibilities and tasks listed below. One to two in-person meetings are held each year: one typically in association with the annual AAFS meeting and a second in the summer in a location that is selected by the BOD, if necessary. The meeting logistics typically include travel on Friday or Saturday to meet for full days on Saturday and/or Sunday with return travel Sunday evening or Monday morning depending on flight availability. This is a volunteer, unpaid position. A travel/per diem stipend is offered to cover the cost of travel, lodging, and per diem (at federal government rates).

The At-large member serves the ABC in the best interest of the ABC operations and business of professional certification. The member shall have no conflicts of interest that may influence the individual's decisions or duties of the At-large position and the ABC.

If interested in this position, please send a cover letter, resume (or CV), and a letter of recommendation from a participating ABC Member Organization to the ABC Registrar, at ABCRegistrar@criminalistics.com. The closing date for application is November 11, 2022.

The letter of recommendation from an executive of the nominating Member Organization should acknowledge that the member is in good standing. The Member Organization may supplement the ABC stipend (currently at \$700 per meeting) to reimburse the member for the required annual in-person meeting.

Representative Tasks of the Board of Directors:

- Establish and administer the Certification Program, to include defining eligibility requirements, defining certification and recertification processes, and setting fees for certification.
- Maintain applicable documents including forms, policies and procedures for overall function of the Board and relevant committees as well as the Certification Program.
- Research and develop possible funding sources; receive funds; account for and distribute funds.



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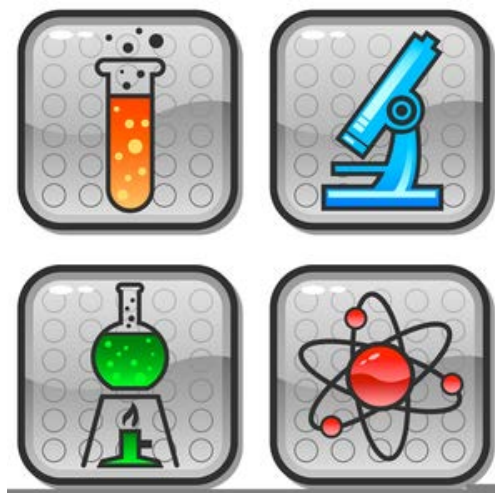
- Establish and maintain appeals processes as needed (i.e., ethics violations; examination results; candidate's applications; etc.).
- Prepare and distribute announcements.

Representative Tasks of a Director:

- Read, comment, and vote on policies and procedures affecting the organization and the certification process.
- Attend semi-annual meetings of the Board of Directors.
- Attend regularly scheduled teleconference meetings.
- Participate in committee-level activities. Chair committees as required.
- When possible, assist with the administration of certification examinations.
- Communicate with Member Organization, where applicable, regarding the work of the ABC.

Benefits to the At-Large Director:

- Have a voice in the national discussion on certification testing for forensic professionals.
- Be involved in determining the discipline tests that are offered.
- Interact with other forensic professionals from around the country.
- Add to your CV; this is a significant leadership position within the forensic community.



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2023 Proficiency Testing Program:

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- Bloodstain pattern analysis
- DNA profiling - Y Filer
- 3 x Biological examination inc. biological material ID and DNA
- Kinship (DNA)
- Hair examination

Chemical Criminalistics

- Personal lubricant examination
- Glass examination
- Fibres examination
- Ignitable fluid residue analysis
- Automotive paint examination
- Pepper spray
- Ink analysis

Documents examination

- Document examination
- Signature examination

Fingerprint examination

- Latent marks / ten print comparison
- Enhancement, detection & identification

Inter-laboratory Collaborative Trials Digital Forensics

- Hard drive examination
- Mobile phone forensics

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- ✓ Cost affordability

For more information visit

[forensicfoundations.com.au/proficiency testing](https://forensicfoundations.com.au/proficiency-testing)

or email quality@forensicfoundations.com.au

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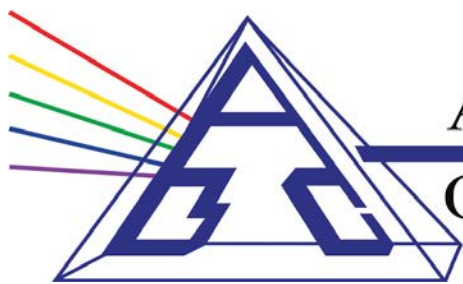
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EXAMINATION COMMITTEE UPDATE

Fall 2022 Update from the Examination Committee – Audra Curry Yovanovich, Chair

Happy fall everyone! Although I am not ready for the Midwest winter, I'm always excited for the cooler weather, changing leaves, and all things pumpkin! We completed field testing of the Foundational Knowledge Examination (FKE) at the end of August and have begun the next phase of exam development. The first step is for a small group of Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) to review the statistical analysis of the field test responses and choose the questions that will become the final version of the exam. Once these final questions have been selected, we will send that off to a psychometrician to conduct the final statistical work. The next step will be to convene a Cut Score Panel. This panel will then make a recommendation for what the passing score should be on the exam. When the statistics have been completed and the cut score set, the exam will be active. This is a lengthy process and can take 6 or more months to complete. I want to thank all of our field test takers for their patience as we work our way through this process. This time put into the creation of the new exams ensures that we are writing top notch exams that adhere to ISO 17024 standards.

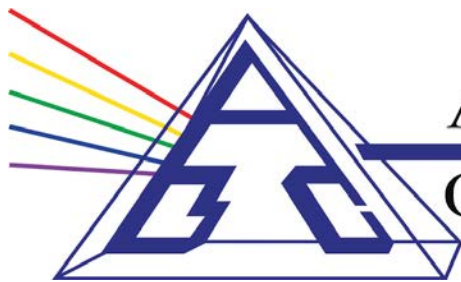
In May, Tanna Brown and Chance Cline attended a week-long DACUM training. There they learned how to guide SMEs through the process of creating a Job/Task Analysis. In September, we convened a panel of eight seized drug analysts in conjunction with the CLIC meeting in Houston, TX. Over the course of two days, Tanna and Chance guided them through the DACUM process and the Seized Drug Analysis Job/Task Analysis was created. This is the first step in a multi-year process to create our next exam, Seized Drug Analysis. I would like to offer a thank you to our panelists for dedicating their Labor Day weekend to participating in the panel and to CLIC for graciously allowing us meeting room space.

The next step in our journey to developing the new Seized Drug Analysis exam is to conduct a verification survey of the job/task analysis. We are working on putting a survey together which will go out through all of our member organizations. We will be asking Seized Drug Analysts from all over the country to review the job/task analysis and help us determine what should be on the exam and what proportion of the exam should be dedicated to that topic.

On the same topic of a verification survey, it has been five years since we conducted the Occupational Analysis that was used to create the Biological Evidence Screening and Forensic DNA examinations. To ensure that our examinations are up-to-date and still reflect their respective fields, we will be sending a survey to Forensic Biologists asking them to review what basic duties and tasks are tested on the exam.

As part of our ongoing exam maintenance strategy, surveys will be sent out every five years to verify that our exams are still relevant and testing the knowledge and skills that you need to do your job!

Audra Yovanovich - Chair



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ACCREDITATION MANAGER UPDATE

After almost a decade of work, ABC submitted our application for accreditation under ISO/IEC 17024 through ANAB (ANSI National Accreditation Board) in June. Our remote onsite visit is scheduled for the first week of November. This has been a long time in the making and we are anxiously awaiting the onsite assessment. We started first really working toward accreditation in the summer of 2013, when the Quality Assurance Committee first met. In the years since, we have completely revamped our policy and procedures manuals, deployed two new exams, piloted one exam, and have begun working on development of a fourth examination. We have made significant improvements to our processes, including electronic recertification submissions, streamlining office processes, and are in the process of revising our data management. These are all huge accomplishments for such a small, volunteer-driven organization.

One thing that came out of our accreditation pursuits was a reevaluation of our certification schemes and the certifications that we are offering. The forensic community has changed since our last big examination revision, and we needed to meet the new needs of the community. We also needed to ensure that the examinations that we develop are of the highest quality. Proper certification scheme and examination development is lengthy, time consuming, and labor intensive. This work is being performed primarily by volunteers. This has taken a significant dedication on their part to get us to where we are. In addition to their dedication, it has cost the organization a significant amount of money to get the necessary work done. Examination and certification scheme development is a multi-step process that involves a significant number of invested individuals.

In the Spring 2020 newsletter I wrote about the costs associated with this accreditation process, but it seems worthy to repeat the numbers. The estimated total cost for developing one examination is approximately \$31,700. Also of note is that we began with seeking an outside body to do this work for us. The price for that work (in 2015) was \$43,000. This was necessary because the examination development work needed to be completed before we could apply for accreditation. A breakdown of anticipated costs associated with our first accreditation is as follows:

- \$3000 application fee (one-time fee)
- \$20,000 for a first-time assessment for one certification scheme (\$1250/assessor per day for document review and onsite assessment); with an additional \$7000 for our second certification scheme (BIO and DNA)
- Typically, travel is also added to this tally, but for now our accrediting body continues to work remotely.

The total anticipated cost for this first assessment is approximately \$30,000.



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After the initial accreditation, there are still additional costs:

- \$5,000-\$8,000 per year for annual assessments/surveillance visits
- \$2,500 in annual fees to the accrediting body

These costs do not account for the costs associated with hiring two contractors to perform day-to-day activities associated with examination maintenance and quality assurance in addition to our already existing contractor, the Registrar.

One question that frequently arises from our certificants is “where are my maintenance fees going?” The cost of maintaining a certification program is significant. The Board of Directors works diligently to keep costs as low as possible and many cost-cutting measures have been implemented over the course of the years. However, we cannot escape the costs associated with running this organization, ensuring that the program is sustainable, maintaining relevant examinations, and offering meaningful certification that you can be proud to have achieved and inspired to maintain.

Sincerely,
Gretchen Lajoie
Accreditation Manager



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QUESTION DATABASE MANAGER UPDATE

Elements of Style

One of my tasks is to enter new questions into the ABC Question Database for potential use on ABC examinations. While I am not the official editor, through my years entering submissions I have noticed a broad difference in writing styles among the many contributors. Punctuation, capitalization, Arabic versus Roman numerals... the list goes on, but you get my point. It seemed natural to request the Examination Committee to seek a Style Guide that could tame these natural writing style variations. My go-to writing style guide, giving away my age, was Strunk and White. Another more current choice was the Chicago Manual of Style. However, both style guides had far more content than our need, and just as importantly, did not address the multiple-choice format of our questions. The next choice would be to develop an ABC-specific guide. I was reluctant to ask the Committee to take on yet another project in their busy schedule, but I was pleasantly surprised with the enthusiasm of the members to tackle this challenge. Serendipity also played a part as Stephanie Lambert offered the expertise of her husband, Kyle, as a professional consultant. I must take a moment to thank Stephanie and Kyle for their generous donation of time and talent to complete the Style Guide, and to emphasize the professional acumen brought to the ABC by its many volunteers.

The Style Guide is now in use, and I expect the quality of our examinations will benefit tremendously. Kudos to all who helped on this project!

Dave Stockwell





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MESSAGE FROM THE ABC REGISTRAR

Our office would like to take this opportunity to remind and/or inform everyone about several important topics.

- The review of Year 2021 Recertification packets by Recertification Committee has been completed. ABC Registrar has posted approved recertification points onto the Members Only side of ABC website.
- Starting with the Year 2021 reviews, only enough documentation was reviewed to confirm enough points to ensure that a certificant meets recertification requirements. If you have met your recertification requirement, the points reflected on your points chart on the Members Only Side will reflect what was reviewed and may not reflect the points you claimed. You will not receive an additional notification of this change of points.
- Update contact information on the Members Only Side of ABC website when necessary. Current email address assists our office to get important information out to you.
- In January 2023 ABC will email information regarding submission of 1) recertification paperwork claiming points for Year 2022 activities and 2) Rules of Professional Conduct and fees for Year 2023. ABC uses the Mailchimp email platform.
- **If you do not receive this informative email, please notify the ABC Registrar via email address abcregistrar@criminalistics.com. ABC may have an incorrect email address for you or your email provider is blocking Mailchimp.**
- Notify our office when you want to resign your certification. If you are retiring from the forensic field, you might be eligible for Emeritus status. Visit ABC website for information regarding this status.
- Please **do not staple** any documents. Our office must scan many documents and staples will interfere with operation of scanner.
- ABC Registrar's Office has a limited printing budget. If a document cannot or should not be submitted electronically via ABC website, please mail it to our PO Box.
- Certification exam application deadline is 75 days prior to exam date. This means our office **must receive** your application by application deadline.
- If your agency is interested in hosting a certification exam offering, contact our office. If there are less than 7 exam candidates, there may be additional expenses.

Although this office works for ABC, we are here to help **You** as best we can. Stay healthy and be safe.

Mike and Debbie Healy



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Missing In Action
(as of October 03, 2022)
The ABC has lost contact with the following individuals:

Carver, Jesse
Segal, Jonathan
Suggs, Samuel

IMPORTANT MESSAGE FOR ALL CERTIFICANTS:
Please contact the ABC Registrar if you need to resign your certification.
Please review the information on the ABC website
regarding Emeritus status; you might qualify.

ABC Registrar
abcregistrar@criminalistics.com
P. O. Box 1358
Palmetto, FL 34220



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Jason Linder

Treasurer
Angelica Noyola

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AAFS Criminalistics Section
Shawn West (Vice President)

ASCLD
Jason Linder (Secretary)

ASTM-E30
Jennifer Remy

CAC
Alice Hilker

MAFS
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MAAFS
Catherine Savage

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NWAFS
Stacy Guess

SAFS
Erin Tracy

SWAFS
Angelica Noyola (Treasurer)



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At-Large Directors (3)

Dave Koppenhaver - Supported by MAFS
Term Expires - Feb. 2024

Christine Pinto - Supported by CAC
Term Expires - Feb. 2023

Rebecca Williams - Supported by MAFS
Term Expires - Feb. 2025

Public Member - Vacant

Individuals Assisting the ABC

Jenna Crawford
Recertification Committee Co-Chair

Amy Brodeur
Recertification Committee Co-Chair

Sara Roper
Webmaster of the ABC Website

Julie Sikorsky
Credentials Committee Chair

Task Group - Leads

Recertification Task Group - Chair Gretchen Lajoie

Testing Site Manager Task Group - Chair Shawn West

Electronic Exams Task Group - Chair Jennifer Remy



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Committees

Examination Committee

Audra Yovanovich (Chair)

Stephanie Lambert

Ruth Damaso Neely

Amy Duhaime

Chance Cline

Tanna Brown (Vice-Chair)

Esmeraldo Gorecho III

Amy Reynolds

Tammy Jergovich

Marisil Wright-Pennant

Quality Assurance Committee - Chair Christine Pinto

Credentials Committee - Liaison Christine Pinto

Recertification Committee - Liaison Danielle Hankinson

Appeals Committee - Chair Erin Tracy

Ed Rhodes Scholarship - Coordinator Christine Pinto

Ethics Committee - Chair Stacy Guess

Communications and Marketing Committee - Chair Catherine Savage

Contractors

Accreditation Manager - Gretchen Lajoie

Question Database Master - David Stockwell



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