



	Question
Q–	"How do I know I am ready?"
A:	Each potential applicant must answer this for themselves. The level of expertise expected of a FAAO is beyond certification and reflects mastery. Most professionals underestimate their expertise. A frank discussion with a trusted colleague is often helpful in assessing your stage of development. A sponsor should be someone you can comfortably work closely with for the duration of your project. As such he or she could also be a good person for this.
Q–	What are the benefits of becoming an FAAO?
A:	This is different for each applicant depending on their needs and goals. Some benefits include the satisfaction of recognition by your peers as an expert, which is its own reward but can also increase your referral base. It can help in job and academic promotion applications. Becoming a fellow is joining a community of like-minded people passionate about the same things you are.
Q–	When are applications accepted?
A:	Applications can be accepted at any time. Application deadline is generally mid-November. It is published in the Fellowship section of the AAO web site each year.
Q–	What is required to apply?
A:	There is a complete list of requirements in the Fellowship section of the AAO website. https://www.academyofosteopathy.org/aao-fellowship-program
Q–	Is there a quick look bullet page that highlights the process?
A:	Yes, this is available in the “Fellowship” section of the AAO website. https://www.academyofosteopathy.org/aao-fellowship-program
Q–	How long does the process take to become a FAAO?
A:	It is designed to be a 2-year process. https://aao.memberclicks.net/assets/docs/FAAO-App_CandidateSchedule_2years.pdf
Q–	How many and what kind of tests are involved?
A:	There is an OMT preassessment exam at the time of the candidate’s thesis proposal. There is a virtual oral exam approximately 2 weeks preceding the final practical exam.
Q–	Why is there a pre-assessment exam if I’m already board certified?
A:	The Fellowship process is a measure of cumulative learning, wisdom and skill gained beyond certification. The preassessment exam is to make sure your OMM proficiency is at the level to begin the Fellowship process.
Q–	How much does it cost to become an FAAO? Is it refundable?
A:	Five hundred dollars is due at the time of the application. If an applicant is not accepted as a candidate, 70% of the application fee will be refunded. One thousand dollars is due before the final oral and practical examinations.



Q–	Does my certification need to be NMM?
A:	Certification by the AOA, ABMS or ABPS in any specialty meets the criteria.
Q–	What makes a good thesis topic?
A:	Your thesis topic should be something you are passionate about. It should illustrate osteopathic concepts. That said, there have been successful thesis submissions representing a diverse number of topics.
Q–	How many and what kinds of case histories are required?
A:	Three case histories will be required. One should revolve around your thesis topic when appropriate. All three should be representative of your clinical practice.
Q–	How do the case and thesis submission and the revision process work?
A:	This is covered in detail on the web site but briefly, after your application is accepted, you will have several months to submit drafts of your thesis and first case. The committee will review these and give you feedback including specific suggestions for revisions. The second draft of the thesis and first case as well as drafts of cases 2 and 3 will be due several months later. This process continues through three revisions of each document.
Q–	Does this honor get recognized by colleges of osteopathic medicine (COMs), insurance companies or hospitals?
A:	The FAAO designation can factor prominently in academic rank and promotion. Recognition varies by hospital and insurance company. Insurers may consider it in decisions about panel inclusion as well as payment decisions. Likewise, hospitals may consider this recognition when considering staff inclusion and privileges.
Q–	What if I am not successful in the process?
A:	The candidate is given specific feedback regarding the areas of concern throughout the process. Should the candidate fail the oral and/or the practical examinations, such examinations may be repeated after a year of recommended study or activity at no additional fee. Should the candidate fail a second time a 2 year wait until beginning the process again is required.
Q–	What if I have further questions?
A:	For process questions contact Debbie Cole at www.academyofosteopathy.org . For questions about scientific or clinical issues, or about the experience of going through the process, there will be committee members at a table at Convocation to discuss this with you. There will also be FAAOs, wearing distinctive buttons that are ready to talk to you during Convocation. You can also reach out to any member of the Committee on Fellowship in the AAO.