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**The American Board**  
**of**  
**Colon and Rectal**  
**Surgery**



**GENERAL INFORMATION**

**2008**

*Executive Director*  
**David J. Schoetz, Jr., MD**  
**20600 Eureka Road, #600**  
**Taylor, Michigan 48180**  
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## Introduction

This information is furnished by the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery to outline rules and regulations regarding certification by our Board. The material herein provided should supply the necessary information concerning requirements for certification

It is the responsibility of the candidate to initiate the certification process by requesting an Application for Examination from the Secretary of the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery.

Educational programs in colon and rectal surgery are reviewed and approved by the Residency Review Committee for Colon and Rectal Surgery under the auspices of the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education. A list of residencies appears in the DIRECTORY OF GRADUATE MEDICAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS, published by the American Medical Association, and in each issue of the Journal, DISEASES OF THE COLON AND RECTUM.

### **Important Dates for Residents in Colon and Rectal Training Programs 7/01/2007 – 6/30/2008**

#### **APPLICATIONS FOR THE 2009 CERTIFICATION PROCESS**

Application materials must be completed and returned at the conclusion of training according to the schedule below:

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<b>July 15, 2008</b>	Deadline for receipt of application materials and <b>\$400</b> application fee.
<b>July 16-August 15, 2008</b>	Late applications accepted (fee for a late application is <b>\$600</b> ).
<b>August 15, 2008</b>	No application will be accepted postmarked after this date.
<b>September 30, 2008-</b>	Credentials Committee reviews applications. Applicants notified of acceptance for examination.
<b>January 15, 2009</b>	Deadline for receipt of <b>\$500</b> Written Examination fee. Instructions on Written Examination procedure sent to candidates.
<b>March 21, 2009</b>	<b>Written Examination</b>
<b>April, 2009</b>	Notification of Written Examination results and Oral Examination information sent to candidates.
<b>July 15, 2009</b>	Deadline for receipt of <b>\$700</b> Oral Examination fee. Instructions on Oral Examination procedure sent to candidates.
<b>September 26, 2009</b>	<b>Oral Examination</b> <b>Omni Hotel, 676 N Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611</b>
<b>October 2009</b>	<b>Notification of Oral Examination results.</b>

# THE AMERICAN BOARD OF COLON AND RECTAL SURGERY

Approved: 1949 Incorporated: 1935

## ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS AND MAILING ADDRESS

**Executive Director/Secretary-Treasurer**  
**David J. Schoetz, Jr., MD**

### ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE ADDRESS

20600 Eureka Road, #600  
Taylor, Michigan 48180  
(734) 282-9400 - (734) 282-9402 – Fax  
e-mail: [admin@abcrs.org](mailto:admin@abcrs.org) Website: <http://www.abcrs.org>

### OFFICERS

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Rochester, Minnesota

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Weston, Florida  
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New York, New York

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Vendie H. Hooks, MD  
Augusta, Georgia  
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Sacramento, California

### EXECUTIVE STAFF

Irene Babcock  
Executive Assistant

Gina Laarkamp  
Credential Coordinator

Kim M. Snape  
Examination Coordinator

## EXAMINERS OF THE BOARD

In addition to current and former members, the American Board of Colon & Rectal Surgery maintains a slate of Associate Examiners. Terms are two years, and are renewable for an additional two year period (a total of four years). Associate Examiners join Board members in all aspects of the examination process including preparation of test items for the written examination, as well as participation in the oral exam.

Associate Examiners are required to be certified by the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery and are required to take the recertification examination. The Board's current slate of Examiners is:

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Mark W. Arnold, MD  
Columbus, Ohio

David A. Margolin, MD  
New Orleans, Louisiana

Elisa H. Birnbaum, MD  
St. Louis, Missouri

Jon S. Palmintier, MD  
Richmond, Virginia

Peter S. Cataldo MD  
Burlington, Vermont

John H. Pemberton, MD  
Rochester, Minnesota

William C. Cirocco, MD  
Shawnee Mission, Kansas

Lawrence C. Rusin, MD  
Burlington, Massachusetts

Phillip R. Fleshner, MD  
Los Angeles, California, MD

Michael J. Snyder, MD  
Houston, Texas

Walter A. Koltun, MD  
Hershey, Pennsylvania

Eric J. Szilagy, MD  
Detroit, Michigan

## **HISTORICAL REVIEW**

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery was organized as the American Board of Proctology in 1934 and incorporated on August 13, 1935. It was the sixth Board to be organized and the tenth to be incorporated. In 1934 representatives of the American Proctologic Society (now the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons) sought approval of the American Board of Proctology from the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals and the Advisory Board for Medical Specialties (now the American Board of Medical Specialties.)

In 1940 provision was made for certification of proctologists by the American Board of Surgery and a committee of proctologists known as the Central Certifying Committee in Proctology of the American Board of Surgery. On June 15, 1949, the Advisory Board for Medical Specialties and the Council on Medical Education and Hospitals granted the American Board of Proctology approval as a primary board. It thus became the 18th specialty board approved by these organizations.

The Board announced to the Advisory Board of Medical Specialties on February 4, 1961, its intention to change its name to the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, Inc. and subsequently formally adopted the change of name at its regular meeting on April 15, 1961.

The Board is sponsored by our specialty's national organization, the American Society of Colon and Rectal Surgeons, by the Association of Program Directors for Colon and Rectal Surgery, by the American Medical Association, and by the American College of Surgeons.

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery is a member of the American Board of Medical Specialties, an organization which acts as a representative for all approved specialty boards as a group.

## **PURPOSES AND FUNCTIONS OF THE BOARD**

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery was established to promote the health and welfare of the American people through the development and maintenance of high standards for certification in the specialty of colon and rectal surgery.

To accomplish this, the Board:

1. Determines that candidates possess proper qualifications before taking the examination for certification or recertification.
2. Conducts examinations to determine the ability and fitness to practice the specialty of colon and rectal surgery.
3. Awards certificates to those candidates who fulfill its requirements.

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery appoints representatives to the Residency Review Committee. This is a tripartite committee which reviews and evaluates new and previously approved residency programs in colon and rectal surgery in order to maintain the high standards of graduate medical education. It is composed of members representing the Board, the American College of Surgeons, and the American Medical Association.

## **DEFINITION OF A BOARD CERTIFIED COLON AND RECTAL SURGEON**

A Board certified colon and rectal surgeon has successfully completed at least a five year training program in general surgery and one additional year in an ACGME approved colon and rectal surgery residency. He/She has then passed both the Written (Qualifying) and Oral (Certifying) Examinations given by the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery. The ABCRS requires certification by the American Board of Surgery for all candidates entering the examination process.

In addition to having proficiency in the field of general surgery, colon and rectal surgeons have acquired particular skills and knowledge with regard to the medical and surgical management of diseases of the intestinal tract, colon and rectum, anal canal, and perianal area. Colon and rectal surgical specialists also have special skills in the performance of endoscopic procedures of the rectum and colon and evaluation of the anal sphincter and pelvic floor using anorectal physiology techniques. Colon and rectal surgical residency programs now provide training in minimally invasive abdominal surgery involving the colon and rectum.

A colon and rectal surgeon has been trained to deal with conditions such as, but not limited to, colon and rectal cancer, polyps, inflammatory bowel disease, diverticulitis, pelvic floor abnormalities, as well as anal conditions such as hemorrhoids, fissures, abscesses, and fistulas. Training in colon and rectal surgery also provides the specialist with in-depth knowledge of intestinal and anorectal physiology required for the treatment of problems such as constipation and incontinence.

Board certified colon and rectal surgeons are committed to the highest standards of care for patients having diseases affecting the intestinal system.

## **QUALIFICATIONS OF CANDIDATES**

A candidate shall comply with the current regulations of the Board, regardless of the time of filing applications. Decisions pertaining to fulfillment of requirements are made by the Board upon review of the candidate's formal application.

### **GENERAL REQUIREMENTS**

1. A candidate shall appear personally before the Board and submit to the required examinations.
2. A candidate shall limit the majority of his/her practice to colon and rectal surgery.
3. A candidate may be required to deliver to the Board sufficient case reports to demonstrate proficiency in colon and rectal surgery.
4. A bibliography of papers and books published by the candidate shall be submitted to the Board upon request.
5. The moral and ethical fitness of a candidate must be satisfactory to the Board and in conformity with *the Statements on Principles* of the American College of Surgeons, and the *Principles of Medical Ethics* of the American Medical Association. Practices not conforming therewith may result in rejection of an application or in deferral of examination until such matters have been resolved.

## **PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

1. A candidate must have completed an accredited residency program in colon and rectal surgery following completion of general surgical training in an ACGME approved residency program.
2. A candidate must have a currently *valid* registered full and unrestricted license to practice medicine in a state, territory, or possession of the United States or by a Canadian province, and must continue to be licensed throughout the certification process.
3. A candidate must successfully complete the Qualifying Examination of the American Board of Surgery before being admitted to The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery Written Examination (Part I).
4. A candidate must achieve certification by the American Board of Surgery before being admitted to the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery Oral Examination (Part II).

## **APPLICATION FOR EXAMINATION**

Each candidate for examination must complete and submit an Application for Examination which may be obtained on our website. The application must also be accompanied by two recent photographs of the applicant, and the required application fee.

As part of the application process, a resident must submit a list of all operative procedures performed during their training period. Case log reporting is completed using the electronic software provided by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME). Login instructions and deadline dates are accessible through the ACGME website [www.acgme.org](http://www.acgme.org). The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery will obtain the information directly from the ACGME.

The acceptability of a candidate for examination depends not only on completion of the requirements listed under "Qualifications of Candidates," but also on information available to the Board regarding the candidate's professional maturity, surgical judgment, and technical competence.

## **FEES**

### **Application Fee**

A nonrefundable fee of \$400 shall accompany the application.

### **Written Examination Fee (Part I)**

A fee of \$500 is due and payable when the candidate is notified of approval to take the Written Examination. A fee of \$700 will be charged for any written examination fee received after January 15th.

### **Oral Examination Fee (Part II)**

A fee of \$700 is due and payable when the candidate is notified of approval to take the Oral Examination. A fee of \$900 will be charged for any oral examination fee received after July 15th.

### **Re-Examination Fee**

Fees for re-examination are the same as shown above for each examination.

## **FEES (Continued)**

### **Withdrawal from Examination**

A candidate who withdraws must notify the Board office at least ten business days before a scheduled examination. A candidate, who fails to appear for examination or withdraws without giving at least ten days notice as defined above, will forfeit \$200 of the designated examination fee and will have to resubmit the forfeited amount before being admitted to the next scheduled examination.

### **Late Applications**

Recognizing that a situation may arise that prevents an applicant from meeting the July 15 deadline; the Board has a provision for late applications. Late applications are those postmarked from July 16- August 15 each year. There is a non-refundable late application fee of \$200 bringing the total processing fee to \$600. No applications will be accepted postmarked after August 15.

### **Fees are subject to change as directed by the Board.**

Each Diplomate is asked to pay annual dues until retirement to help defray expenses incurred by Board activities. The Board of Directors serve without compensation. Fees are based on the actual expenses incurred in office administration and in conducting the examination. The dues are currently \$175.

## **EXAMINATIONS**

To achieve certification by the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, a candidate must pass a Written Examination (Part I) and an Oral Examination (Part II). The Written Examination is offered in the spring and a candidate is required to pass this examination before being permitted to take the Oral Examination which is given in the fall.

Examinations are conducted at times and places determined by the Board and this information may be obtained from the Board office. It is also published in the ABCRS website ([www.abcrs.org](http://www.abcrs.org)), DISEASES OF THE COLON AND RECTUM and in the Journal of the American Medical Association. Examinations are held in one designated city in the United States.

### **Part I - Written Examination**

The Written Examination is an assessment of a candidate's knowledge of the theory and practice of colon and rectal surgery with a separate Visual Diagnostic Examination. The written portion of the examination is a four-hour test of multiple choice questions covering the spectrum of colon and rectal surgery and the body of basic science pertinent to it. The Visual Diagnostic portion is a two-hour test consisting of questions and a slide presentation.

### **Part II - Oral Examination**

The Oral Examination is conducted by members of the Board or its designated examiners. Its objective is to evaluate the candidate's clinical experience, problem solving ability and surgical judgment, and to ascertain the candidate's knowledge of the current literature on colon and rectal diseases and surgery. Each candidate will undergo three 30-minute oral examinations by three two-member examining teams.

## **Examination Results**

The Board makes every effort to be as prompt as possible in notifying candidates of their examination results and letters of notification may be expected from four to six weeks following the examination.

## **RE-EXAMINATIONS**

A candidate who has failed either the written or oral portion of the examination may be re-examined after one year has elapsed.

A candidate who fails to pass either the written or oral portion of the examination may repeat that part of the examination twice, thus offering the candidate three opportunities to pass each part of the examination.

A candidate who fails to pass either the written or oral portion of the examination three times may not repeat the examination without satisfactory completion of an approved remedial colon and rectal residency program and submission of a new application for examination. A copy of the remedial training guidelines may be obtained from the Board office upon request.

## **REQUIREMENTS GOVERNING ADMISSIBILITY TO EXAMINATIONS**

A candidate must apply to the Board's certification process within five years after the completion of approved colon and rectal training.

### **Special Re-entry Policy**

Candidates who apply after the prescribed five year period (late applicants) must observe the Board's special reentry policy. The requirements include submission of updated background and training information, a current list of operative procedures, documentation of 100 Category I CME credit hours (two years prior to the application date), and a \$350 processing fee (in addition to the regular application fees). Late candidates will undergo a Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB) search to ensure there are no restrictions pending against their license. Also, verification from the Chief of Surgery from their institution/hospital will be requested attesting to the ethical/moral standing of the applicant. Pending approval of these requirements, the applicant may submit the standard Application for Examination (along with the required fees) to the Board. Complete details may be obtained by writing the Board office.

For all applicants for the 2007 certification process, July 15, 2006 is the deadline for receipt of late entry application materials and the \$750 application fee (\$400 regular & \$350 special processing fee).

The entire Board certification process must be successfully completed within seven years following approval of the formal application. In addition, a candidate whose application for examination has been approved, but who does not take the examination within three years, must submit a new application.

In exceptional or unusual circumstances the Board may, at its discretion, waive one or more of these limitations.

## **STATUS OF APPLICANT**

The Board does not use or sanction the terms "Board Eligible" or "Board Qualified." The standing of an individual with the Board varies according to the current status of credentials and will be so reported.

## **INQUIRY AS TO STATUS**

The Board considers an individual's record not in the public domain. When a written inquiry is received by the Board regarding an individual's status, a general but factual statement is provided which indicates the person's location within the examination process.

## **RECONSIDERATION AND APPEALS**

The Board has adopted a policy with regard to reconsideration and appeals of decisions adverse to applicants. A request for reconsideration, which is the first step, must be made in writing and received by the Board office within 60 days of the date of notice from the Board of the action in question. A copy of the Reconsideration and Appeals Policy may be obtained from the Board office upon request.

## **CERTIFICATION**

A candidate who has met all the requirements and successfully completed the examinations of the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, will be issued a certificate attesting to his/her qualifications in colon and rectal surgery. The Certificate shall be signed by the President or Vice President and the Secretary, and shall bear the Boards corporate seal of the Board.

The certificate granted by the Board does not confer privilege or license to practice colon and rectal surgery but is evidence that a physician's qualifications for specialty practice are recognized by his/her peers. It is not intended to define the requirements for membership on hospital staffs, to gain special recognition or privileges for its Diplomates, to define the scope of specialty practice, or to state who may or may not engage in the practice of the specialty.

Unless the candidate specifies otherwise, the Board forwards the names of candidates who have achieved certification to the American Board of Medical Specialties for publication in the *Official ABMS Directory of Board Certified Medical Specialists*.

## **TIME-LIMITED CERTIFICATION**

Beginning with those candidates who passed the certifying examination in 1990 and thereafter, the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery will issue time-limited certificates. Certificates will be valid for ten years from the date of certification, after which the certificates will no longer be valid.

NOTE: Time-limited certification will not affect Diplomates holding certificates issued prior to 1990.

## **MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC)**

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery offers Maintenance of Certification in the specialty. Certificates can be renewed prior to expiration by fulfilling the requirements for Maintenance of Certification specified by the Board. The examination is offered annually, on a voluntary basis, to all certified colon and rectal surgeons who apply and meet the Board's requirements. An information booklet, which outlines the MOC requirements and procedures, is available by writing the Board office.

## **EXAMINATION OF CANDIDATES WITH DISABILITIES**

The American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery supports the intent of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). The Board will make a reasonable effort to provide Board applicants who have documented disabilities with modifications in its examination process which are appropriate for such disabilities but which do not alter the measurement of the skills or knowledge which the examination process is intended to test.

## **REVOCATION OF CERTIFICATES**

The filing of an application for examination, participating in an examination, and accepting a certificate are voluntary acts. Therefore, the Board assumes no responsibility for any effect which certification or failure to obtain certification may have on private or professional activities of candidates.

When an application is submitted, candidates are required to sign an agreement, a portion of which reads as follows: *"I agree to disqualification from examination or from the issuance of a certificate, and I agree to the forfeiture and redelivery of such certificate in the event that any of the statements herein made by me at this time or at any time in the past or future in regard to my application for a certificate is false, or in the event that any of the rules and regulations of the Board governing such examinations and certificate is violated by me. "*

Certificates which have been issued are subject to the provisions of the Articles of Incorporation, the Constitution and Bylaws of the American Board of Colon and Rectal Surgery, Inc. and may be revoked for violation of any of these provisions.

## **RESPONSIBILITY OF CANDIDATE/DIPLOMATE**

The Board shall require each Candidate and each Diplomate to provide complete information concerning any and all restrictions placed on his/her license within sixty days after its imposition. Such information shall include, but is not limited to, the identity of the state medical board imposing the restriction as well as the restriction's duration, basis, and specific terms and conditions. The Candidate/Diplomate has the affirmative obligation to advise the Board of all restrictions and to inform it when such restrictions expire or are otherwise removed.

Candidates/Diplomates who are discovered not to have made disclosure shall be required to show cause why their Candidate/Diplomate status should not be withdrawn, deferred or otherwise sanctioned. The Board may defer further consideration or reinstatement until such disclosure is satisfactorily made.

*NOTE: The Board shall periodically review the database of the Federation of State Medical Boards to identify any Candidates/Diplomates who have failed to disclose license restrictions.*

## FORMER OFFICERS OF THE BOARD

<b>President</b>	
Curtice Rosser	1949-1950
Walter Fansier	1950-1954
Louis E Moon	1954-1955
Robert A Scarborough	1955-1956
Harry E Bacon	1956-1957
Hyrum R Reichman	1957-1958
AW Martin Marino, Sr	1958-1959
Robert J Rowe	1959-1960
Frederick B Campbell	1960-1961
Merrill O Hines	1961-1963
AW Martin Marino, Sr	1963-1964
Clifford E Hardwick	1964-1965
Karl Zimmerman	1965-1966
Patrick H Hanley	1966-1967
J Edwin Alford	1967-1968
Stuart T Ross	1968-1969
Andrew J McAdams	1969-1971
Donald M Gallagher	1971-1973
James A Ferguson	1973-1975
Matthew A Larkin	1975-1976
Alejandro F Castro	1976-1977
Eugene P Salvati	1977-1979
Eugene S Sullivan	1979-1980
Stanley M Goldberg	1980-1981
H Whitney Boggs, Jr	1981-1982
John E Ray	1982-1983
G Bruce Thow	1983-1984
Bertram A Portin	1984-1985
Malcolm C Veidenheimer	1985-1987
Peter A Volpe	1987-1988
Wallace Bailey	1988-1989
J Byron Gathright, Jr	1989-1990
Ira J Kodner	1990-1991
Victor W Fazio	1991-1992
Lee E Smith	1992-1993
John M MacKeigan	1993-1994
David J Schoetz, Jr	1994-1995
Theodore E Eisenstat	1995-1996
H Randolph Bailey	1996-1997
Marvin L Corman	1997-1998
David A Rothenberger	1998-1999
Philip H Gordon	1999-2000
Richard L Nelson	2000-2001
Ian C Lavery	2001-2002
Robert D Fry	2002-2003
James W Fleshman	2003-2004
Alan G Thorson	2004-2005
Vendie H Hooks	2005-2006
Herand Abcarian	2006-2007

<b>Vice-President</b>	
George H Thiele	1949-1954
Robert A Scarborough	1954-1955
Harry E Bacon	1955-1956
AW Martin Marino, Sr	1956-1957
Robert J Rowe	1957-1959
Frederick B Campbell	1959-1960
Merrill O Hines	1960-1961
J Edwin Alford	1961-1962
Garnet W Ault	1962-1963
Clifford E Hardwick	1963-1964
Karl Zimmerman	1964-1965
Patrick H Hanley	1965-1966
Hyrum R Reichman	1966-1967
Francis J Burns	1967-1968
Andrew J McAdams	1968-1969
Donald M Gallagher	1969-1971
James A Ferguson	1971-1973
Matthew A Larkin	1973-1975
Eugene P Salvati	1975-1977
Eugene S Sullivan	1977-1979
Stanley M Goldberg	1979-1980
H Whitney Boggs, Jr	1980-1981
John E Ray	1981-1982
G Bruce Thow	1982-1983
Bertram A Portin	1983-1984
Malcolm C Veidenheimer	1984-1985
Herand Abcarian	1985-1986
J Byron Gathright, Jr	1986-1988
Ira J Kodner	1988-1990
Victor W Fazio	1990-1991
Lee E Smith	1991-1992
John M MacKeigan	1992-1993
David J Schoetz, Jr	1993-1994
Theodore E Eisenstat	1994-1995
H Randolph Bailey	1995-1996
Marvin L Corman	1996-1997
Robert W Beart, Jr	1997-1998
Philip H Gordon	1998-1999
Richard L Nelson	1999-2000
Ian C Lavery	2000-2001
James W Fleshman	2001-2003
Alan G Thorson	2003-2004
Vendie H Hooks	2004-2005
Richard P Billingham	2005-2006
Bruce G. Wolff	2006-2007

### **SECRETARY-TREASURER**

Louis A Buie	1949-1954
Stuart T Ross	1954-1968
Patrick H Hanley	1968-1972
Norman D Nigro	1972-1986
Herand Abcarian	1986-2006

## **Residency Programs**

**For a complete listing of Colon and Rectal Surgery  
Residency Programs please visit our website**

**<http://www.abcrs.org/residencyprograms.htm>**