

CHP Corner



American Academy of Health Physics
American Board of Health Physics
Website: aahp-abhp.org

Show Your Support for Exam Candidates!

In keeping with tradition, please wear your Hawaiian shirts on Monday, 14 July 2014, to show your support for the exam candidates.

Part II Examination Panel

Curtis Kwasniewski, CHP, Chair

Have you looked back on your certification process and said, “I could have done a better job creating that test” or even “where do they get those questions from?” If so, then you may be a prime candidate to work on the Part II Exam Panel. The panel consists of about 30 individuals, professionals and experts in their respective fields, who work diligently to put together a test that is both fair and challenging. They write questions testing others to the knowledge level that would be expected of professional health physicists. They also attend Health Physics Society (HPS) meetings and enjoy a FREE breakfast and lunch (or two) while working with a great group of professionals to make an exam that tests the knowledge of potential certified health physicists (CHPs).

Participation on the panel is a very rewarding (and sometimes humbling) experience. In exchange for your hard work, you obtain a substantial number of recertification points and may receive travel support to attend the panel workshop during the annual meeting. The following is a synopsis of the typical Part II Panel year, for those few and proud who are willing to serve.

Shortly after the Part II exam is taken, questions are sent to each panel member to begin grading. Panel members and American Board of Health Physics (ABHP) Board members work in teams of three to grade each of the questions as assigned by the panel chair. A panel member typically grades one required 50-point core question and one elective 100-point topical question. The team leader compiles the results for the team and ensures that grades from each of the three graders are consistent. This process is usually completed by the early fall.

Sometime after the first of the year, the balloting round begins. Each panel and ABHP Board member ranks the 12 core questions and the 3 questions for each topical portion of the exam. The panel chair tallies the results and begins the final Part II exam development process.

Soon after the balloting is completed, the panel chair makes question assignments for each panel member. Typically, each member works to develop two questions: one 50-point question from one of the core topics of health physics (personnel dosimetry, shielding and activation, measurements and instrumentation, and biological effects of radiation) and one 100-point question from one of topical areas (accelerators, environmental, fuel cycle, medical, nonionizing, power reactors, university, and general health physics). These questions can be entirely new or updates and revisions to existing questions. These questions are submitted to the chair in time for formatting for the panel workshop.

The panel workshop will be held 11–12 July 2014 in Baltimore, Maryland, just prior to the 2014 HPS Annual Meeting. A group of panel members will attend the workshop along with the ABHP chair. The panel workshop is an intense two-day period of review and improvement to develop questions and stock solutions from each of the submitted questions. This is where your knowledge will be tested to improve the process. At the end of the workshop, the top three choices for each core question and each topical-area question are selected for inclusion in the exam bank.

A great big THANK YOU to the entire panel for taking time out of their busy schedules to volunteer for this important task: Vice Chair Richard Adams, Past Chair Wayne Gaul, Erik Abkemeier, Matthew Arno, Kelly Ausbrooks, John Bliss, Wes Boyd, Kathleen Dinnel-Jones, Henry Lynn, Jeff Chapman, Jerry George, Shawn Googins, Don Haes, Sarah Hoover, Greg Jones, Chris Kessler, Tom Hansen, Allen Mabry, Bill Maguire, Hans Oldewage, Dennis Quinn, Steve Rademacher, Pat Roach, Betsy Ullrich, Tosh Ushino, Wei-Hsung Wang, and William McCarthy. In addition, we thank Nancy Johnson from Burk & Associates for her valuable support and guidance for involvement in the question-writing process.

If you are interested in participating on the panel, please indicate your interest when you submit your American Academy of Health Physics annual dues or email me at karancurk@hotmail.com.

Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee

Victoria Morris, CHP, Chair

The Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee is a standing committee of the American Academy of Health Physics (AAHP). The primary mission of the committee is to provide oversight and coordinate activities that may impact the titles of “certified health physicist” and “CHP” and to enhance the recognition of the profession of health physics.

Like all AAHP committee members, the members of the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee are volunteers, and we rely on our peers to keep us informed regarding when our assistance may be needed. With this in mind, an email was sent 30 April 2014 to the leadership of the Health Physics Society (HPS) chapters. The email introduced the current members of the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee and requested that the chapters keep the committee informed of any legislation ongoing or upcoming in their area or state that may be of interest to the committee.

The state of Georgia defines “health physicist” and “certified health physicist” in Georgia Code 42-21A-3. The definitions are recognized in Georgia Code to provide assurance to the public that individuals representing themselves as being involved in the profession of health physics meet minimum qualifications, thereby protecting the public health and safety. In July 2013, Scott Schwahn, PhD, CHP, submitted professional recognition language to Tennessee Senator Randy McNally and Tennessee Representative John Ragan, both from the Oak Ridge area. The submission requested that “certified health physicist” and “health physicist” be added to Tennessee Code Title 62 (Professions, Businesses and Trades). Scott began his draft with language provided by the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee. Unfortunately, the request has not been submitted yet for legislative consideration.

In March 2014, the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee took on the task of overseeing contact with [The Joint Commission](#) in regard to ensuring that medical health physicists’ qualifications and contributions are appropriately recognized by The Joint Commission.

In January 2014, the AAHP, under the signature of then AAHP President Ray Johnson, sent a letter to The Joint Commission requesting clarification on The Joint Commission’s standards for a medical physicist.

On 14 April, Victoria Morris (chair of the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee), along with Edgar Bailey (AAHP chair), Ruth McBurney (AAHP Professional Standards and Ethics Committee past chair), Jeff Brunette (AAHP past secretary), Andy Miller (HPS Board member, HPS director liaison to RSO Section, and American Board of Health Physics [ABHP] board member), and Steve King (HPS Board member, HPS Medical Section past president, and HPS director liaison to Medical Section) met by conference call with several members of The Joint Commission staff. During the conference call, the role of the medical health physicist, overlapping tasks that both a medical health physicist and a diagnostic or therapy physicist are qualified to perform (e.g., shielding calculations and shielding installation surveys), and the ABHP certification were dis-

cussed. The conference call went very well. The Joint Commission appeared to agree that a “CHP” should be included within the title of “medical physicist” and that a CHP is qualified to design and manage x-ray therapy facilities and nuclear medicine shielding. At the close of the meeting, The Joint Commission agreed to look at its standards and accordingly update them.

The current members of the Title Protection and Professional Recognition Committee are listed below. Please help the committee help you. Contact a committee member regarding any information you have that could be useful to the committee or involve an issue the committee should address.

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