

**AMERICAN BOARD OF COSMETIC SURGERY**  
**Certification Requirements**  
**(Effective for the year 2011)**

**Areas of Certification and General Requirements**

- (1) Applicants may apply for the following areas of certification:
  - \* Body, Breast and Extremity Cosmetic Surgery
  - \* Dermatologic Cosmetic Surgery
  - \* Facial Cosmetic Surgery
  - \* General Cosmetic Surgery
  
- (2) All candidates must meet the following criteria:
  - (A) Applicant must complete a current application furnished in PDF format online or by the ABCS General Office (refer to application process and procedures).
  - (B) Applicant must affirmatively state and prove valid hospital operating room privileges in current good standing. If the applicant does not have current hospital operating room privileges and performs all surgical procedures in an outpatient facility, the facility must be currently accredited by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO), Accreditation Association for Ambulatory Health Care (AAAHC), American Association for Accreditation of Ambulatory Surgery Facilities, Inc. (AAAASF), MEDICARE or a similar accrediting body approved by the state medical board having jurisdiction where the applicant performs surgery.
  - (C) Applicant shall submit four (4) letters of recommendation, including but not limited to letters from: (a) the chairperson of his/her residency program, if available, or from the department chief of his/her current hospital facility; (b) his/her cosmetic surgery fellowship director, if applicable, or verification of completion of fellowship; (c) a diplomate of the ABCS; and (d) any other practicing physician.
  - (D) Applicant shall submit proof of a current valid and unrestricted medical license in good standing in the jurisdiction where the applicant practices. Applicant must submit an explanation of any current or past disciplinary action by any state medical or osteopathic board.
  - (E) Applicant shall submit current copy of his/her curriculum vitae, certified by applicant as being true and correct as of the date submitted.
  - (F) Applicant shall affirm that he/she has no history of, nor are actions currently pending regarding any felony, crimes, convictions, or substance abuse.
  - (G) Applicant shall furnish proof of valid Advanced Cardiac Life Support (ACLS) certification at the time of application (photocopy of valid card required).

- (H) Applicant must submit proof of at least 300 Category 1 CME credits in cosmetic surgery. These may be earned in one of the following ways:
- (i) Completion of a cosmetic surgery fellowship in the areas sought in a program approved by the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery satisfies this requirement if completed within three (3) years of the date of application.
  - (ii) In the event an Applicant applies for the examination more than three (3) years but within six (6) years of completing his/her approved fellowship training, the Applicant shall receive credit for 150 CME credits in Cosmetic Surgery (Category 1) and must average 50 CME Category 1 credits in Cosmetic Surgery per year for each year following completion of his/her fellowship to the date of application; and
  - (iii) In the event an Applicant applies for the examination more than six (6) years after completing their approved fellowship training, the Applicant must average 50 CME Category 1 credits in Cosmetic Surgery per year for the six (6) years preceding his/her date of application.
- (I) Applicant shall provide a Physician Profile, ordered by the applicant from the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) or the Federation Credentials Verification Service (FCVS). Please note, it may take as long as 30 days to receive this form from the AMA, the AOA, or the FCVS.
- (J) Applicant shall submit two (2) current passport type photographs.
- (K) Applicant shall successfully complete a written examination covering general knowledge of cosmetic surgical procedures. The ABCS shall accept applications for the written component of the Annual Examination from:
- (i) Applicants who meet the current requirements; and
  - (ii) American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS) fellows who have successfully completed an approved AACS Cosmetic Surgery Fellowship Program.

Applicant must successfully complete an oral examination in the area of cosmetic surgery certification sought. The written and oral components must be successfully completed within three years of each other.

- (L) Applicant must furnish proof of prior board certification by:
- (i) one of the following boards recognized by the American Board of Medical Specialties, the Bureau of Osteopathic Specialists of the American Osteopathic Association (BOS), the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPSC):
    - 1) Dermatology
    - 2) General Surgery
    - 3) Obstetrics and Gynecology
    - 4) Ophthalmology with completion of an American Society of Ophthalmic Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery, Inc. (ASOPRS) approved Oculoplastic fellowship
    - 5) Otolaryngology
    - 6) Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery
  - OR-
  - (ii) The American Board of Oral and Maxillofacial Surgery (ABOMS) with M.D. degree.

(The above boards collectively referred to hereinafter as the “approved boards”)

**Training Requirements and Eligibility Via FELLOWSHIP ROUTE**

(1) A candidate may be eligible for one or more areas of cosmetic surgery certification via the Fellowship Route based upon the following:

- (A) Initial certification by an approved board;
- (B) Postgraduate surgical training in accordance with the following training summary:

**FELLOWSHIP TRAINING SUMMARY**

APPROVED BOARDS	TRAINING	AREA ELIGIBLE
Dermatology	One year dermatologic cosmetic surgery fellowship -----	Dermatologic Cosmetic Surgery -----
	One year general surgery residency and one year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship -----	Facial Cosmetic Surgery -----
	One year general surgery residency and one year body, breast & extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship -----	Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery -----
	One year general surgery residency and two year general cosmetic surgery fellowship	General Cosmetic Surgery
General Surgery	One year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship -----	Facial Cosmetic Surgery -----
	One year body, breast & extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship -----	Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery -----
	One year general cosmetic surgery fellowship	General Cosmetic Surgery

Obstetrics and Gynecology	<p>One year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year body, breast &amp; extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year general cosmetic surgery fellowship</p>	<p>Facial Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Body, Breast &amp; Extremity Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>General Cosmetic Surgery</p>
Ophthalmology with Oculoplastic Surgery Fellowship	<p>One year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year general surgery residency and one year body, breast &amp; extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year general surgery residency and two year general cosmetic surgery fellowship</p>	<p>Facial Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Body, Breast &amp; Extremity Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>General Cosmetic Surgery</p>
Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery with M.D. degree	<p>One year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year body, breast &amp; extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship, including one year general surgery residency</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year general cosmetic surgery fellowship, including one year general surgery residency</p>	<p>Facial Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Body, Breast &amp; Extremity Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>General Cosmetic Surgery</p>
Otolaryngology	<p>One year facial cosmetic surgery fellowship</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year body, breast &amp; extremity cosmetic surgery fellowship, including one year general surgery residency</p> <p>-----</p> <p>One year general cosmetic surgery fellowship, including one year general surgery residency</p>	<p>Facial Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>Body, Breast &amp; Extremity Cosmetic Surgery</p> <p>-----</p> <p>General Cosmetic Surgery</p>
Plastic Surgery	<p>One year general cosmetic surgery fellowship</p>	<p>General Cosmetic Surgery</p>

- (2) The Fellowship Program must be approved by:
- (A) The American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery (AACS). A list of approved programs may be obtained from the AACS:
- 737 North Michigan Avenue, Suite 2100  
Chicago, Illinois 60611  
telephone: 312/981-6781; telefax: 312/981-6787  
e-mail at: [info@cosmeticsurgery.org](mailto:info@cosmeticsurgery.org); web site: [www.cosmeticsurgery.org](http://www.cosmeticsurgery.org)
- (3) Cosmetic surgery fellows of an AACS accredited cosmetic surgery fellowship program may apply and sit for the written portion of the ABCS exam during their fellowship training provided they are board eligible or certified by one of the “approved boards” by the ABCS.
- (4) Cosmetic surgery fellows of an AACS accredited cosmetic surgery fellowship program may apply and sit for the oral portion of the ABCS exam immediately following their fellowship training if they can comply with the following and are board certified by one of the “approved boards” by the ABCS.
- (A) Documented case logs as either surgeon, assistant surgeon or co-surgeon of at least 300 cosmetic surgery procedures in the specific area they seek board certification that encompass an adequate diversity as determined by the ABCS review committee.
- (B) If less than 300 cases were documented during the fellowship, the applicant must document an additional 50 cosmetic surgery procedures as primary surgeon following their fellowship in the specific area they seek board certification that encompass an adequate diversity as determined by the ABCS review committee.
- (5) A candidate that has not completed an approved American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery fellowship may be eligible for certification via a two-tiered process:

### **Tier 1: Pre-Application / Petition of Equivalency**

Applicant must furnish:

1. Initial certification by an approved board;
2. Recommendation letter from fellowship director attesting to training in the areas being sought for certification or, alternatively, a certificate of completion of fellowship obtained at time of completion of fellowship training identifying training in the area of certification sought;
3. Surgical operative logs during fellowship training;  
Experiences must meet minimal guidelines for training fellowship as set forth in GUIDELINES FOR CLINICAL FELLOWSHIP TRAINING IN COSMETIC SURGERY by the American Academy of Cosmetic Surgery; and
4. Initial application fee in the amount of \$500.00.

Upon review by the ABCS Fellowship Review Committee and affirmative majority vote of the Board of Trustees, candidates that meet this criteria will receive written notification of equivalency of training to that of an AACS approved fellowship program and will then be eligible to pursue ABCS certification via the Fellowship Route. Potential candidates that are denied equivalency of training by the Board of Trustees at its sole and absolute discretion will receive written notification.

## **Tier 2: Standard Application Process**

The candidate will then be eligible to receive all directions and documentation of requirements of the ABCS examination application, and will be subject to all of the then current application, examination and certificate fees. The candidate will also be held to the same due process as those of approved AACS fellowship training. Candidates from non-AACS approved cosmetic surgery fellowships whose training is deemed equivalent to that of an AACS approved cosmetic surgery fellowship must submit a minimum of thirty (30) cosmetic surgery procedures as primary surgeon following completion of the fellowship program. Candidates shall submit the required operative reports with clearly labeled, publication quality, before and after photos to verify the completion of the case requirements. The operative reports must meet the standards set forth in the Application Booklet. The cosmetic surgery procedures must be in the area in which the applicant seeks certification and shall be of a sufficient mix to illustrate a depth and breadth of knowledge in the area of certification sought. Guidelines for the cosmetic surgical procedures acceptable to the credentialing committee shall be provided with the application Booklet furnished by the General Office.

**Training and Experience Requirements and Eligibility Via the EXPERIENCE ROUTE**

Absent any action to the contrary by the Board of Trustees, the eligibility for certification via the Experience Route will expire in 2012. All Candidate Applications for certification via the Experience Route must be received on or before the application deadline of November 1, 2011.

(1) The ABCS recognizes additional education and experience only in the area that is consistent with the candidate’s initial approved board certification. If a candidate seeks certification in an area inconsistent with his/her initial approved board certification, he/she will not be able to pursue certification under the experience route. PLEASE NOTE, the only means by which a candidate can apply for certification in an area that is not consistent with his/her initial approved board certification is by obtaining additional training and applying by the fellowship route OR by applying for a Certification of Added Qualification (CAQ).

Certification via the Experience Route requires initial certification by an approved board:

TRAINING/EXPERIENCE SUMMARY

<b>Approved Boards</b>	<b>Area Eligible</b>
Dermatology	Dermatologic Cosmetic Surgery
General Surgery	Facial Cosmetic Surgery Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery General Cosmetic Surgery
Obstetrics and Gynecology	Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery
Ophthalmology with Oculoplastic Surgery Fellowship	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Oral/Maxillofacial Surgery with an M.D. degree	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Otolaryngology	Facial Cosmetic Surgery
Plastic Surgery	Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery General Cosmetic Surgery

- (A) Applicant must furnish proof of at least 300 CME credits in cosmetic surgery in the six years prior to application. All credits must be in Category 1.
- (B) Applicant must document a minimum of six (6) years of practice experience in cosmetic surgery.
- (C) Applicant must submit typed case logs documenting at least 1,000 cosmetic procedures within the last six (6) years. All cases must have been performed after the candidate completed his/her residency and fellowship training.
- (D) Applicant must submit typed case logs documenting at least 200 cosmetic procedures performed in the year prior to application.

- (E) Applicant's case logs must illustrate a depth and breadth of cosmetic cases in the area of certification sought.
- (F) Applicant must submit typed operative reports, with clearly labeled publication quality before and after photographs securely attached to each operative report. Operative reports must illustrate a depth and breadth of cosmetic cases in the area of certification sought as set forth in the Examination Candidate Application Booklet which is hereby incorporated by reference. Operative reports must meet the standards set forth in the Candidate Application Booklet furnished in PDF format online or by the General Office. The number of operative reports to be submitted depends upon the area of certification sought. **General** requires 120 reports; **Facial** requires 105 reports; **Body, Breast & Extremity** requires 100 reports; and **Dermatologic** requires 100 reports as set forth in the Guidelines for Applicants in the Examination Candidate Application Booklet.

**Training Requirements and Eligibility via CERTIFICATE OF ADDED QUALIFICATION (CAQ) ROUTE**

(1) An applicant may apply for a Certificate of Added Qualification (CAQ) in cosmetic surgery. There are two CAQ categories available:

- (A) Facial Cosmetic Surgery
- (B) Body, Breast & Extremity Cosmetic Surgery

(2) To be eligible for a CAQ in cosmetic surgery from the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery, the applicant must meet the following minimum requirements:

- (A) The applicant must meet the criteria required for certification by the ABCS and be a Diplomate in good standing of the ABCS in Facial, Dermatologic, or Body, Breast and Extremity Cosmetic Surgery.
- (B) The applicant must hold a current, valid and unrestricted medical license (in conformance with the written policy of the ABCS) and perform his/her surgical procedures in an accredited facility (in conformance with the written policy of the ABCS).
- (C) The applicant must submit a current dated Candidate Application and application fee in the amount of \$500.00.
- (D) The applicant must submit a typed case log documenting at least 100 cosmetic surgical procedures within the category of his/her requested CAQ, and shall be of a sufficient mix to illustrate a depth and breadth of knowledge in the area of certification sought. The cosmetic surgical procedures must have been performed within the previous consecutive three (3) years of his/her application.
- (E) The applicant must submit operative reports containing 100 cosmetic surgical procedures subject to the review of the ABCS Credentials Committee. Fifty (50) of the 100 cosmetic surgical procedures submitted must contain publication quality pre and post operative photographs securely attached to the operative reports. The operative reports must illustrate a depth and breadth of cosmetic surgical procedures within the category of his/her requested CAQ.
- (F) The applicant must have completed at least 4 AACS-sponsored (or deemed equivalent by the ABCS Credentials Committee) Surgical Workshops in his/her chosen CAQ category within the previous three (3) years.
- (G) The applicant must have completed a minimum of 100 Category 1 CME hours in Cosmetic Surgery within the preceding three (3) years of his/her CAQ application.
- (H) The applicant must pass a 100 question written examination, formulated by the ABCS Examination Committee, that covers the cosmetic surgical procedures within their chosen CAQ category. Effective 2010 and thereafter, the written examination for a CAQ would be waived if the applicant had obtained his/her initial ABCS certification within the preceding three (3) years.
- (I) The applicant must pass an oral examination in his/her chosen CAQ category.

- (J) CAQ certificates will be time-limited and require maintenance of the CAQ within 10 years and may be performed with Recertification of their ABCS certification.

### **Credentialing Committee**

- (1) A Credentialing Committee, established by the President of the Board, shall review all applications and recommend and approve qualified candidates who satisfy the foregoing certification requirements for examination.
- (2) Upon act of the Board of Trustees, in its sole and absolute discretion, a successful applicant who meets all credential requirements and successfully passes the oral and written components of the examination shall be granted membership status and issued a certificate of membership. The certificate shall at all times remain the property of the ABCS and neither the certificate nor the ABCS membership shall be considered a property right of the member. The certificate and ABCS membership shall be valid until membership is revoked or otherwise terminated in accordance with these by-laws, provided, however, under no circumstances shall the term of the certificate or ABCS membership exceed ten (10) years. In the event that membership status is revoked or is not renewed, the certificate shall be returned to the Corporation by the holder. If a certificate is not returned promptly after termination of membership, the Corporation may initiate legal action to recover the certificate. The former member shall be obligated to reimburse the Corporation for all reasonable expenses, including reasonable attorney fees incurred by the Corporation in connection with such action.
- (3) The Board of Trustees shall have the power to deny membership or to revoke a member's membership in its sole and absolute discretion. The decision of the Board of Trustees shall be final.
- (4) Certificates of membership are not transferable or assignable.
- (5) The Board of Trustees shall establish initial and annual membership fees and application fees. For those Diplomates certified in 1990 and thereafter, the annual membership fees (sustaining fees) shall be mandatory. *Those Diplomates who have not paid the mandatory sustaining dues within ninety (90) days of the date they were billed shall be assessed a late fine of fifty dollars (\$50.00).* Those Diplomates who fail to pay their mandatory sustaining fees shall have their names submitted to the Board of Trustees for sanctions, including, but not limited to, "status of Diplomate not in good standing for failure to pay mandatory dues" or "revocation of Diplomate status for failure to pay mandatory dues" as the Trustees deem fit.

### **Recertification**

The candidate successfully completing the Board Examination will be awarded a certificate which will be valid for ten (10) years. Diplomates of the American Board of Cosmetic Surgery must be reexamined every ten (10) years to maintain certification.

### **Application Process and Procedures**

Prospective applicants, who believe they fulfill the eligibility requirements, must obtain a current dated application furnished in PDF format online or from the ABCS General Office. The application must be completed in its entirety and must include all requested documentation. The completed application and application fee shall be submitted to the General Office by the application deadline. Applications that are incomplete by the deadline or received after the deadline will not be considered. All applications and accompanying materials submitted to the ABCS become the property of the ABCS and will not be returned or copied. All materials submitted shall be no larger than 9 inches by 11 inches.

