Academic Policies

Student Handbook
The academic policies of Five Branches University are detailed in the student handbook which is given to students during registration. To assist new students, the handbook describes student services, administrative policies, and guidelines such as grading, attendance, examinations, and leave of absence. The student handbook is edited regularly to reflect updated policies.

Part Time Studies—Six Year Limit
The Master of Traditional Chinese Medicine (MTCM) program is a full-time program requiring a considerable commitment of time and energy. We recommend that students regard their studies at Five Branches as their primary objective throughout their matriculation at the University. Students who need to enroll in the program part-time have up to six years to complete the Master's degree program. Students who need to extend their studies beyond this six-year limit must submit a formal request to the registrar for review by the Student Progress Review Committee.

Academic and Clinic Class Size
To optimize learning, academic classes average 24 students. Classes that have insufficient enrollment (less than 10 students) may be postponed to the following semester. Clinical Theater classes range from 10 to 18 students, and Clinical Rounds, Clinical Internship Rounds, Clinical Paired Internship, and Clinical Internship classes are limited to four to eight students per section.

Attendance
If circumstances occur that cause absences of up to 18% for academic courses, or up to 12% for clinic courses, the student is responsible to meet with the instructor to assess their academic standing in the course. Frequent tardiness and/or continued absences that interfere with a student’s academic progress will be brought to the attention of the Student Progress Review Committee. Please note that instructors may have their own attendance policies that are stricter than the University policy.

Grading Policy
Five Branches University uses a letter grading system (A, B, C, F) for all academic courses and grades of credit/no credit (CR/NC) for all clinic courses. Each course syllabus describes the course’s grading procedure. To remain in good academic standing, students are required to take the MTCM program in sequential order and maintain a minimum term and cumulative grade point average of 2.75 or higher.
Cumulative Review and Competency Exams

The program offers a series of review classes to prepare students for the annual cumulative exams which are required for all students to continue their studies in good standing. Besides measuring progress, these examinations are designed to prepare students for the California state licensing and national certification exams. Students entering clinical internships are required to pass clinic competency exams.

Review Process

Review of a student’s academic progress is performed each term, including the review of all final course and clinic grades, evaluations by the faculty, and attendance rosters. Any student who does not meet the established criteria for normal academic progress and professionalism will be referred to the Student Progress Review Committee.

Student Progress Review Committee

The Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) reviews academic progress of students to ensure their success in the program. Students who need assistance to maintain good academic standing are required to meet with the SPRC to devise a plan to improve their academic performance.

Students may ask the SPRC for help in finding tutors and/or other resources to assist with successful completion of the program.

The SPRC is responsible for ensuring a fair and impartial disciplinary process for students who breach standards of professionalism. Most cases are resolved in ways that serve to foster the ethical development and personal integrity of students, and to provide a safe and comfortable campus environment.

Standards of Professionalism

The Standards of Professionalism policies are intended to protect the rights of all students, faculty, staff and patients at Five Branches University while on campus and at all sponsored events. Five Branches University may impose discipline for violation of these standards of professionalism including, but not limited to dishonesty, disrespect, disrupting a professional atmosphere, substance abuse, and sexual harassment. For detailed information about the standards of professionalism policies refer to the Student Handbook.

Academic Warning and Probation

Students unable to maintain good academic or professional standing are placed on academic warning or probation. Students will be notified by letter of the reasons that led to this action and an explanation of the corresponding satisfactory academic progress requirements for the ensuing term. Student enrollment is subject to review until the student returns to good academic or professional standing. For detailed information regarding the academic warning and probation policy refer to the Student Handbook.

Academic Dismissal

Academic dismissal is termination of enrollment at the University for the inability to meet academic or professional standards. Failure to comply with the requirements set forth by the Student Progress Review Committee for remediation of a probationary status will result in academic dismissal. Students may appeal this action through the academic appeal process outlined in detail in the Student Handbook.
**Academic Appeal**

The Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC) is responsible for reviewing and approving appeals. Appeals must be submitted to the SPRC in writing, describing any extenuating or mitigating circumstances that prevented compliance with Five Branches University policies. An appeal must explain what has changed in the student’s situation, and the precise steps the student will take or is taking to regain good academic standing. For detailed information regarding the academic appeal process refer to the Student Handbook.

**Grievance Procedure**

Students who have complaints concerning administrative or academic policy may submit the grievance in writing to the Student Progress Review Committee (SPRC). The SPRC will review the complaint and gather all relevant information prior to making a decision. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the decision of the SPRC, she/he may submit a written appeal with all relevant documentation to the academic dean and the president. Following this, the matter may be given to the board of directors for final review.

If the complainant has made full recourse of the University’s grievance procedure, and believes the University did not address their complaint, the student may contact the Accreditation Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine at 14502 Greenview Drive, Suite 300B, Laurel, MD 20708, (301) 313-0855, www.acaom.org. For detailed information regarding the grievance procedure, refer to the Student Handbook.

**Non-discrimination Policy**

Five Branches University is an equal opportunity institution and does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, color, religion, national origin, ethnicity, gender, or sexual orientation, in the administration of admission, educational policies or employment. The University abides by Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act, which prohibits discrimination against any “qualified individual with a disability.”

**Graduation and Licensing Requirements**

**Master of Traditional Chinese Medicine**

The Master of Traditional Chinese Medicine Degree is awarded to students who complete the entire MTCM program in good academic standing and with no outstanding financial obligations to the University. The MTCM degree fulfills the requirements you need to take the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination and the National Certification Exam.

**Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine**

A Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine candidate is eligible for graduation once he/she has satisfactorily completed all didactic and clinical courses, fulfilled all requirements, and obtained a passing mark at the final capstone project/oral defense. Upon graduation, students will be awarded the Doctor of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (DAOM) degree.

**Becoming a Licensed Practitioner of Traditional Chinese Medicine**

Licensure to practice acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine is regulated by individual states in the United States. Other countries also have various requirements for licensure. Applicants who wish to practice outside California should investigate licensure regulations in the state or country they are interested in practicing, prior to applying to Five Branches University.

**California Licensure Examination**

Students wishing to practice acupuncture in California must first obtain the state license, which requires qualifying for and passing California’s written examination administered by the California Acupuncture Board.

All program required coursework must be successfully completed to be eligible to sit for the California Acupuncture Board licensing examination. All accounts with the administration, clinic, and library must be clear, as well as proof of an exit interview with the financial aid advisor. Students must notify the administration of their intention to sit for this examination one month prior to the examination application deadline, allowing adequate time for processing of paperwork to the California Acupuncture Board.
For the latest information about the California Acupuncture Licensing Examination and licensure in California contact:
The California Acupuncture Board
1747 N. Market Blvd, Suite 180
Sacramento, CA 95834
Phone: (916) 515-5200
Fax: (916) 928-2204
Email: acupuncture@dca.ca.gov
www.acupuncture.ca.gov

National Certification Examination
The National Certification Commission for Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine (NCCAOM®) is the only national organization that validates entry-level competency in the practice of acupuncture and Oriental medicine through professional certification. NCCAOM certification or a passing score on the NCCAOM certification examinations are documentation of competency for licensure as an acupuncturist by 43 states plus the District of Columbia which represents 98% of the states that regulate acupuncture.
For the latest information concerning the national licensing exam and licensure in other states contact:
NCCAOM
76 South Laura Street
Suite 1290
Jacksonville, FL 32202
Phone: (904) 598-1005
Fax: (904) 598-5001
www.nccaom.org
For additional information on state certification requirements and contact information for the regulatory agency for acupuncture and Traditional Chinese Medicine located in each state go to: http://www.acupuncture.com/statelaws/statelaw.htm#47.

CONTACT US!

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