



TCM Review Seminars
NCCAOM Foundations Study Schedule

This study schedule is a suggested daily study schedule. It is based on studying 3 hours a day for the first part of class. As the test approaches, the study time and amount will ramp up. Feel free to modify this schedule to fit your school, work and home life. The point is to spend between 18-21 hours a week studying the material. This does not include watching videos.

Studying can take many forms:

1. Watching and re-watching the videos
2. Spending time organizing the material
3. Creating study material and spending time studying those
4. Taking quizzes online

The best approach is to use a mix of these techniques. This is by no means an exhaustive list so please add your own preferred way to study. I'll talk more about ways to use this schedule on the next page.

This course is a jumping off point in your preparation for the NCCAOM Foundations exam. I do my best to make sure that the course covers all topics of your exam. From time to time, new classes may develop as new information is gathered.



Tips for Using this Schedule

1. Day 1 for you is the day after you watch the class.
2. Make flashcards only for the material that you will be studying in each day of the schedule. You don't need to make all the study material for an entire section at once. Making flashcards is a form of learning. A good method is to make a few cards, learn them, and then move on. If you are spending too much time writing out flashcards, consider making photocopies of the material and cutting and pasting it into index cards. Another option is to create online flashcards. If flashcards are not your preferred way of studying, please use the method that you are most comfortable with.
3. If you are a reader, spend more time reading the material. If you are a tactile learner, spend more time creating study material. If you are an auditory learner, create audio recordings of you reading the material to memorize and then listen to the recording over and over again.
4. Take bite size bits of information and learn them completely before moving on to new information. Board study is a marathon not a cram session.
5. Don't forget that this is a general template for a study schedule. You can modify it to suit your needs. If you have already read the texts, then you don't have to do this again. If you already have flashcards created, then you won't need to make them. Find ways to create shortcuts for yourself. If it takes you three hours to create flashcards, then find another method for creating study tools. Everyone is different. Everyone learns differently.
6. Spend time reviewing the material you have learned. Memory is like a cow path, you need to review, review, and review to make the information stick. You can never review too much. You may also read ahead. It will help you if you have read through Maciocia FCM before the test.
7. When reading, read smart. Preview the chapter, go over the questions at the end of each chapter in Maciocia before starting to read. Do an overview of the material. Skimming is okay. Highlighting the information is smart. Taking notes, circling information or using colored pens is also smart way of studying.
8. Review everything you have learned previously before learning new material. Review everything you have learned at the end of each study session including all new information you have learned that day. Then, start the next study session with a review session first. Review everything that you previously learned before moving onto new material. The challenge of board studying is holding all the information from your entire education in your brain long enough to take a test. Discipline helps. Your brain is a muscle and its capacity to memorize will grow with regular study sessions.



Week: 1

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Basic Theory and Zang Fu Theory

of Study Hours/Day: 3

This class takes you back to the basics. It covers the basic theory of OM medicine and basic Zang Fu. It is much like a Western Medicine Anatomy and Physiology class.

Objective: Get the basics down. Most of this class is just straight memorization. With memorization material, the trick is to review it daily. Memorizing it on Monday and not looking at it again for 3-4 days, for a week, or for a month means you will forget it. Make sure a part of each study session is spent on reviewing the material you have previously learned.

Each day is divided into two activities; reading from the source text when available and creating study material from the material in class. Reading is always optional. Reading is provided in case you did not learn the concepts covered in school.

“Memory is like a cowpath. You must review, review, review the information to leave a mark. Study Smarter, Not Harder!”



Week 1

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Basic Theory and Zang Fu Theory

Day 1:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 1-4: Yin Yang Theory, Five Element Theory, Vital Substances, Transformation of Qi
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Yin Yang Theory, Five Element Theory, Vital Substances, Transformation of Qi

Day 2:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 19- 22: Six Extraordinary Yang Organs, Internal Causes of Disease, External Causes of Disease, Miscellaneous Causes of Disease
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Six Extraordinary Yang Organs, Internal Causes of Disease, External Causes of Disease, Miscellaneous Causes of Disease

Day 3:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 5: Functions of the Internal Organs – Introduction, Chap. 7: Functions of the Liver, Chap. 6: Functions of the Liver, Chap. 11: Functions of the Lungs
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Introduction to Zang Fu theory, Liver Functions, Heart Functions, Pericardium Functions

Day 4:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 9: Functions of the Spleen, Chap. 8: Functions of the Lung, Chap. 10: Functions of the Kidney, Chap. 13: Functions of the Yang Organs, Chap. 16: Gallbladder Functions
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Spleen Functions, Lung Functions, Kidney Functions, Gallbladder Functions

Day 5:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 5: Functions of the Internal Organs – Introduction, Chap. 7: Functions of the Liver, Chap. 6: Functions of the Liver, Chap. 11: Functions of the Lungs
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Small Intestine Functions, San Jiao Functions, Stomach Functions, Large Intestine Functions, Bladder Functions

Day 6:

Spend the day reviewing the material you have learned this week. If you didn't have time to study everything, please make sure you do so over the weekend.

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up for next week's study session.



Week: 2

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis I: Introduction to diagnosis and Five Element Body Type, Physiognomy and Pediatric Digital Exam and 4 Pillars
of Study Hours/Day: 3

Foundations was a snapshot of what is happening in the body when the body is functioning as it should. Diagnosis I starts to exam what symptoms manifest when there is pathology in the body.

Objective: There is a lot of material to memorize in this section. The schedule is set up for 6 days of studying. However, if you need to slow down the schedule, please do so. If it takes you two weeks to memorize all the material in this class, that is okay. There will be less to memorize next week when we cover Tongue and Pulse.

Each day is divided into two activities; reading from the source text when available and creating study material from the material in class. Reading is always optional. Reading is provided in case you did not learn the concepts covered in school.



Week 2

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis I: Introduction to diagnosis and Five Element Body Type, Physiognomy and Pediatric Digital Exam and 4 Pillars

Day 1:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 23: Diagnosis by Observation
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Observation

Day 2:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 24: Diagnosis by Hearing and Smelling
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Hearing and Smelling

Day 3:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 23: Diagnosis by Interrogation
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Interrogation: 1st third of the video material

Day 4:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 23: Diagnosis by Interrogation
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Interrogation: 2nd third of the video

Day 5:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 23: Diagnosis by Interrogation
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Interrogation: last third of the video

Day 6:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 25: Diagnosis by Palpation
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Palpation

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up for next week's study session.



Week: 3

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Tongue and Pulse: Tongue Diagnosis, Pulse Diagnosis, Tongue and Pulse for Case Studies, Tongue and Pulse Case Studies

of Study Hours/Day: 3

In this class, we will cover what you need to know for Tongue and Pulse for the NCCAOM Foundations exam. We will also cover approach case studies using tongue and pulse as a quick and efficient diagnostic tool.

Objective: This is a light week. There are only 28 pulse pictures to know for the exam. Tongue is relatively straight forward. What is important is knowing how to break down tongue and pulse to use for case studies.

Each day is divided into two activities; reading from the source text when available and creating study material from the material in class. Reading is always optional. Reading is provided in case you did not learn the concepts covered in school.



Week 3

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis I: Introduction to diagnosis and Five Element Body Type, Physiognomy and Pediatric Digital Exam and 4 Pillars

Day 1:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 23: Diagnosis by Observation: tongue diagnosis starts on page 324
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Tongue Diagnosis video

Day 2:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 25: Diagnosis by Palpation: Pulse diagnosis starts on page 374
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Diagnosis by Hearing and Smelling

Day 3:

- **Read:** No reading associated for today
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Please memorize the different ways that tongue and pulse will manifest according to Zang Fu pattern syndromes.

Day 4-6:

- **Review Days:** Use the next 3 days to review what you have learned from week 1-3 and catch up on studying if you have fallen behind.

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up for next week's study session.



Week: 4

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis II - Zang Fu Patterns

of Study Hours/Day: 4-5

In this class, we will cover all the Zang Fu patterns covered in FCM by Maciocia. Your exam is based on Zang Fu Theory. If you come from a Five Element or Classical Medicine school, you will want to do the assigned reading.

Objective: You want to become a master at *differentiating* Zang Fu patterns. Getting these patterns down is essential to mastering the case studies on the exam. Check in with your preconceived ideas about a pattern. For example, many students see poor appetite and immediately jump to Spleen Qi Deficiency as the cause. Yet, poor appetite is a symptom in many patterns: food stagnation, liver qi stagnation, and damp accumulation. Focus on seeing which symptoms show up across multiple patterns and which symptoms appear in only one pattern. The latter point to a clear diagnosis. A good way to study for this section is to first learn the individual patterns for each organ and then start working on cross comparing similar patterns to see how they are similar and what makes them different. I do a lot of this practice in the video class.

There is a lot of material in this class to learn. It might take you longer than 1 week to completely master it. The study schedule suggests learning 2 organs' patterns each day plus the reading. This might be where you slow down the class and spend an extra week or two mastering the material in this class. Week 5 case studies does not have reading assignments or assigned studying. There will be enough time to work through Week 4 assignments.

Each day is divided into two activities; reading from the source text when available and creating study material from the material in class. Reading is always optional. Reading is provided in case you did not learn the concepts covered in school.



Week 4

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis II - Zang Fu Patterns

Day 1:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 32: Heart and Chap. 39: Small Intestines patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Heart and Pericardium patterns

Day 2:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 34: Liver and Chap. 41: Gallbladder patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Liver and Lung patterns

Day 3:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 35: Lung and Chap. 40: Large Intestine patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Lung and Large Intestine patterns

Day 4:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 36: Spleen and Chap. 38: Stomach patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Spleen and Stomach patterns

Day 5:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 37: Kidney and Chap. 42: Urinary Bladder patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Kidney and Urinary Bladder patterns

Day 6:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 33: Pericardium patterns
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Pericardium patterns

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up for next week's study session.



Week: 5

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Treatment Principles

of Study Hours/Day: 3

Treatment principles are an important subject on the NCCAOM Foundations exam. You might see questions asking to give the treatment principle for a particular case. I have organized them in such a way that they are quickly memorized. Study smarter, not harder!

This week's classes will look first at treatment principles for the Zang Fu patterns, categorize them and then we will look at how to use Treatment Principles for case studies.

Objective: Your goal is to become a master of treatment principles by the end of this week.

There are no reading assignments this week. Focus on learning the treatment principles in the course book. It is a light week so you have the remaining time to catch up on previous weeks' assignments or spend your time reviewing the material you have learned so far.



Week 5

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Treatment Principles

Day 1:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Blood and Yin Deficiencies

Day 2:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Yang and Qi Deficiencies

Day 3:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Blood Stasis, Qi Stagnation and Food Stagnation

Day 4:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Fire, Phlegm and Damp

Day 5:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Worms, Vessel Obstruction, Yang Rising, Cold, Dryness, Exterior Invasion

Day 6:

- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Liver Overacting, Qi Rebellious, Wind

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up for next week's study session.



Week: 6

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: Diagnosis III – Case Study Analysis

of Study Hours/Day: 3

This class explores memorization strategies, teaching you how to gain command of the vast amount of information needed to pass your exam. The second part of this class teaches you how to logically take a multiple-choice exam, focusing on methods to eliminate the tendency to guess at the correct answer. This class completes with the TCM Review Seminars method to the dissection of Case Studies.

Objective: There is no memorization work or daily break down for studying for this week. Please spend this week getting caught up on information from the previous weeks. If you are not doing well with case studies, please go back and review Diagnosis Tongue and Pulse and Diagnosis II – Zang Fu Patterns. Practice Case Study Analysis using the case study quizzes on the quiz site.



Week: 7

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: TCM Diagnostic Theories

of Study Hours/Day: 3

TCM is a medicine comprised of numerous micro-diagnostic systems. In this class, we go through some of the lesser used theories that pre-date Zang Fu Theory such as 8 Principles, Shang Han Lun, Wen Bing Lun, etc.

Objective: Patterns in these theories resemble each other. They also look very similar to Zang Fu patterns. Your goal is to tease out the symptoms that differentiate these patterns from each other. This is how you will be tested as well. I cover the key symptoms to know which help you with differentiation in the class. Your goal is to become a master of differentiating one pattern from another and master of each diagnostic theory.

Each day is divided into two activities; reading from the source text when available and creating study material from the material in class. Reading is always optional. Reading is provided in case you did not learn the concepts covered in school.



LEADERS IN ALTERNATIVE BOARD REVIEW

Week 7

Class: NCCAOM Foundations: TCM Diagnostic Theories

Day 1:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 30: Eight Principle Diagnosis and Chap. 31: Qi, Blood and Body Fluids
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Eight Principle Diagnosis and Qi, Blood and Body Fluids

Day 2:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 43: Six pathogens and Chap. 49: Five Elements
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Six Pathogens and Five Elements

Day 3:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 44: Six Stages and Chap. 45: Four Levels
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Six Stages (Shang Han Lun) and Four Levels (Wen Bing Lun)

Day 4:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 46: Three Burners
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Three Burners (San Jiao) and handout on pattern comparisons for this section

Day 5:

- **Read:** FCM, Chap. 47: Channel Pathologies
- **Review and create study material from the video class:** Channel Pathologies

Day 6:

- Review what you have learned so far or use this day to catch up.

Day 7:

Day off! Rest up.

This is the last week of scheduled classes. It doesn't necessarily mean you are ready to take the exam. You want to make sure you have all the information I present memorized before you test. Some students manage this in 7 weeks. Other students take 12 weeks, 16 weeks even 20 weeks depending on their backgrounds, person

schedules, etc. Please take the time to assess how well you know the information before you decided you are ready to test. The exam is adaptive (most of the time) and will find your weak spots. Make sure you are *“Prepared to Pass!”* so you are *“One and Done!”*