

BOOKLET OF INFORMATION FOR APPLICANTS FOR CERTIFICATION

by the American Board of Facial Plastic
and Reconstructive Surgery, Inc.®

AND FELLOWS
of The Educational and Research Foundation
for the American Academy
of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

July 2001 — June 2002

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ABOUT THIS BOOKLET

The *Booklet of Information* provides information for applicants for certification by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Inc.® and for Fellows of the Educational and Research Foundation for the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. The examination described herein tests both groups of surgeons. The examination is funded in part by the FPS Fellowship Examination Corporation, a non-profit educational organization established to assist in testing graduate fellows completing training programs in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery.

This booklet is published annually to advise applicants of policies and procedures governing examination and certification. The Board reserves the right to modify its policies and procedures without issuing a new booklet of information.

Each edition of this booklet supersedes all previously published editions. Applicants are advised to ensure that they have the most recently published booklet.

Application materials and reading lists. An *Application for Certification* is available from the Board office (703-549-3223), as is the *Examination Reading List*. The *Graduate Fellowship Curriculum Compendium and Bibliography* are available from the Educational Foundation office (703-299-9291). The examination draws from both sources, and from the general literature.

Study of these materials should supply necessary information concerning submission of application materials, preparation for the examination, and procedures for certification. Adherence to procedures will ensure the timely review of each applicant's credentials throughout the certification process.

Inquiries about the Board examination or certification process may be addressed to the Board Secretary through the ABFPRS office, 115C South St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

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SPONSORING ORGANIZATIONS

American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

American Rhinologic Society

Arkansas Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Canadian Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Canadian Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Facial Plastic Surgery Society of St. Louis

Florida Society of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery

Florida Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Georgia Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Greater Atlanta Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery Society

Indiana Otolaryngology Society

Marion County (Ind.) Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Michigan Oto-Laryngological Society

Minnesota Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Missouri Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

New Jersey Society of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

New York Facial Plastic Surgery Society

New York State Society of Otolaryngology

North Carolina Ear, Nose and Throat Society

Northwest Academy of Otolaryngology

Pennsylvania Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

Texas Society of Facial Plastic Surgery

PURPOSES OF THE BOARD

The American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Inc.® is a nonprofit corporation established in 1986. Its mission is to improve the quality of medical and surgical treatment available to the public by examining for professional expertise in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery.

To carry out this mission, the Board has established a mechanism for the education, qualification, training, review, and certification of surgeons specializing in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery.

The specific objectives of the Board are:

- ▶ To establish standards of qualification for facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons.
- ▶ To determine which candidates fulfill these standards of qualification.
- ▶ To conduct examinations of such candidates and issue certificates upon satisfactory completion of requirements.
- ▶ To improve and broaden the opportunities for graduate education and training of facial plastic and reconstructive surgeons.

The Board is neither an educational institution nor a licensing body, and the certificates it issues are neither degrees nor legal licenses to practice medicine or the specialty of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery. Possession of a Board certificate indicates neither total qualification for practice privileges nor exclusion of others not so certified. Board certification in no way limits the professional activities of any licensed physician in delivery of legitimate healthcare services. Finally, certification implies no intent by the Board for its diplomates to gain special privileges, recognition, or hospital staff positions or to define who shall or shall not perform facial plastic and reconstructive procedures. The Board is not a primary source of censure or primary review of ethical problems.

DEFINITION OF THE SPECIALTY

The Board interprets the term “facial plastic and reconstructive surgery” in a comprehensive but specific manner. The discipline requires a prerequisite knowledge embracing the basic sciences of anatomy, biochemistry, embryology, genetics, histology, immunology, microbiology, pathology, pharmacology/ toxicology, and physiology, and other areas common to all surgical specialties. The discipline also requires essential clinical skills requisite to diagnosis and preoperative, operative, and postoperative management of the following areas of primary responsibility in the head and neck region:

- ▶ **Congenital diseases and disorders**, including genetic and non-genetic (familial).
- ▶ **Acquired diseases and disorders**, including degenerative, developmental, iatrogenic/ complications, idiopathic, infectious, inflammatory, metabolic/endocrine, neoplastic benign, neoplastic malignant, psychogenic, traumatic, vascular, and other.
- ▶ **Medical management of diseases and disorders**, including complications, diagnosis/assessment (hematology, radiology, special tests), disease prevention, emergencies, medico-legal, office/ambulatory, psychology/ psychiatry, rehabilitation, preoperative treatment, intraoperative treatment, postoperative treatment, nonoperative treatment, and other.
- ▶ **Reconstructive surgery**, including complications, congenital defects, emergencies, laser, neoplasia/ablation and repair, orthognathic/dental, scar revision, septal/sinus surgery, skeletal/maxillofacial/craniofacial surgery, Mohs’ surgery, grafts, flaps, other soft tissue techniques, soft tissue and skeletal trauma, and other.
- ▶ **Cosmetic surgery**, including blepharoplasty, chemical peel/skin exfoliation, complications, dermabrasion, direct browlift, emergencies, forehead lift, filling agents/implants, hair replacement, laser, liposuction/lipoaugmentation, malar/submalar augmentation, otoplasty, rhinoplasty, rhytidectomy, skeletal augmentation, and other.

THE MEANING OF CERTIFICATION

Certification by the Board signifies excellence in the field of facial plastic and reconstructive surgery. Surgeons who receive this designation may refer to themselves as Board-certified in Facial Plastic Surgery or as a Diplomate of the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Inc.[®] under principles and limitations set forth in the Draft Guidelines for Truthful Advertising of Physician Services, prepared by the office of General Counsel of the American Medical Association, and state and federal regulations.

The Board does not recognize or use the term “board-eligible” or “board-qualified.” When a request is received regarding the status of a physician, the Board will only state whether the physician is or is not certified. The Board believes it is inappropriate to provide any additional information.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

The following qualifications are minimum requirements for acceptance into the certification process:

- ▶ **Adherence to code of ethics.** The applicant shall possess high moral and ethical standards as determined by, and in the sole discretion of, the Board.
- ▶ **Education.** The applicant shall be a graduate of an accredited school of medicine and have completed an acceptable graduate medical education program. Acceptable programs are those approved by the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education in the United States, or by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons in Canada.
- ▶ **Licensure.** The applicant shall submit verification of a valid, non-restricted medical 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. A temporary limited license such as an educational, institutional, or house staff permit is not acceptable to the Board. Individuals who do not require licensure because of their acceptance of an

offer to practice medicine in a foreign country or their status on active duty as commissioned officers of the medical service of the armed forces of the United States or Canada may receive special consideration.

- ▶ **Board certification.** The applicant must have earned certification by the American Board of Otolaryngology and/or the American Board of Plastic Surgery, or by the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada in the fields of otolaryngology and/or plastic surgery.
- ▶ **Experience.** The applicant must be in practice for a minimum of two years and demonstrate to the Board’s satisfaction a primary interest in facial plastic and reconstructive surgery. The credentialing process typically requires submission of detailed case reports of a large number of facial plastic and reconstructive procedures.

The Board reserves the right to ask applicants to demonstrate qualifications beyond the minimum or, under rare and exceptional circumstances, to consider alternatives to these requirements. The Board also reserves the right to request information about any applicant from the National Practitioner Data Bank and the Federation of State Medical Boards and to ask applicants to submit any additional information it deems necessary to verify that the applicant meets all requirements.

CERTIFICATION PROCESS

To become certified by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Inc.[®], applicants must complete a two-phase process. In the first phase, applicants must verify their credentials, training, and experience. In the second phase, they must demonstrate their knowledge of the specialty by passing a rigorous written and oral examination. Applicants must successfully pass both phases to become certified.

To pass each phase, applicants must accumulate points. A minimum of 1,000 total points is required, with a minimum of 250 points required from phase one, a minimum of 500 required from phase two, and no more than 750 permitted from either phase.

Phase one points. The minimum number of points required in this phase (250) must be earned by submitting operative reports on 50 patient cases per year for each of two consecutive years within the past five years. Each case must report at least one facial plastic or reconstructive procedure, and may describe multiple procedures. (For more information on acceptable cases, see question 13 on the Application for Certification.)

Additional points may be earned for facial plastic or reconstructive procedures performed beyond the minimum required in the operative reports. To count, procedures must be performed during the same two consecutive years within the past five years. The total number of procedures performed during each year shall be averaged and awarded points as described below. Multiple procedures described in operative reports may be included in the tabulation.

- ▶ An average of 51 to 150 additional procedures per year earns 2.5 per procedure, for a possible additional 250 points.
- ▶ An average of 151 to 500 additional procedures per year earns .714 points per procedure, for a possible additional 250 points.

Applicants who complete a 12-month Foundation-approved fellowship earn an additional 250 points. Fellowships of less than 12 full months earn no points. The fellowship year may not be selected as one of the two report years.

Phase two points. The points that may be accumulated by a candidate who successfully passes both the written and oral parts of the examination are between 500 (the number of points required to pass the examination) and 750 points (the number of points permitted in this phase). A candidate must pass both the written and oral parts of the examination, which are graded separately, in order to pass the complete examination. A candidate who fails to achieve a minimum passing grade of 500 on the combined parts receives no points toward certification.

APPLICATION FOR EXAMINATION AND CERTIFICATION

To apply for certification, candidates must submit a complete application, including all materials requested on the application and the examination fee, with a postmark date no later than January 15, 2002. Applications that are incomplete or postmarked after January 15, 2002, will be returned without consideration.

During February and March, completed applications will be reviewed by the ABFPRS Credentials Committee for compliance with phase one standards regarding credentials, training, and experience. A successful applicant will have all credentials in order and show a minimum of 250 points in training and experience.

By April 15, 2002, applicants will be notified as to whether or not they have passed phase one and are eligible to sit for the Board examination (phase two). The notification letter will be accompanied by hotel and travel information, together with the date, time, and location of the examination and the specific room to which the candidate is to report.

The examination will be held June 22-23, 2002, in Washington, D.C. At a mandatory registration session, candidates will receive their identification number and personal examination schedule. Examination scores will be reported to applicants within 30 days. Scores also will be reported to the Credentials Committee, which will total phase one and two scores and recommend to the Board those candidates who meet the Board's standards for certification. The Board will consider the committee's recommendation at its next regularly scheduled meeting and notify candidates of its action.

The Board regularly meets one time each year, on a day during or near the fall meeting of the American Academy of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery. It may meet at or near the time of the Academy's spring meeting or during the examination weekend. Notice of acceptance will be mailed within two weeks of Board action. The Board reserves the right to reject any application for the examination or certification for reasons bearing on its purpose as a board.

Change of address. It is the responsibility of the applicant to immediately notify the Board office of any change in mailing address that takes effect during the certification process. Notification should be sent to ABFPRS, 115C South St. Asaph Street, Alexandria, VA 22314.

Fellowship rules. Certain special rules apply to graduate fellows of the Foundation who are taking the examination to fulfill educational requirements. Fellowship applicants must sit for the examination the year the fellowship is completed unless a written request for deferment is granted by the Foundation. The Foundation may grant deferment two times. Upon passing the examination, fellowship candidates have up to five years to accumulate the minimum number of points for training/experience, as noted above, for certification by the American Board of Facial Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Inc.[®] To be considered for certification this year, a completed application must be postmarked no later than January 15, 2002. A graduate fellow does not receive Board certification until he/she has completed all requirements.

CERTIFICATION FEES

The fee for ABFPRS certification is U.S. \$2,500 for new applicants or reapplicants and is due upon application for the examination. The fee for reapplication to phase one only is U.S. \$1,500. The fee for reapplication for the examination only is U.S. \$1,000 for both parts, or U.S. \$750 for either part alone.

The fee for examination of surgeons in the Foundation fellowship program is U.S. \$1,000 and is due upon registration for the examination. The fee for certification of graduate fellows who previously passed the examination is U.S. \$1,500.

The applicable fee must be paid by January 15, 2002, and no application will be processed without it. Late applications will be accepted until February 15, 2002, if accompanied by the penalty fee of \$300. No applications will be accepted after that date.

If an applicant is not accepted for the examination, the \$1,000 examination fee will be refunded.

Applicants who are accepted for the examination, but who withdraw in writing up to 30 days in advance of the examination, will be refunded the exam fee only (\$1,000). If they reapply in another year, they must resubmit their application and meet any new requirements or fees. Applicants who withdraw less than 30 days in advance of the examination may apply to the Executive Committee for a refund of 50 percent of the examination fee. Each such request will be decided on an individual basis.

Applicants who do not pass the examination or who fail to accumulate sufficient points for certification may request that their examination and/or certification scores be reviewed. An administrative fee of U.S. \$300 must accompany a written request for either review (see page 14 for details).

All fees must be paid in U.S. dollars. Applicants residing outside the United States must submit payment in the form of an international money order.

A fee of U.S. \$25 will be charged for any check returned by the bank for insufficient funds.

In the unlikely event that the Board should have to postpone an examination session, all fees will be applied to the next scheduled session.

THE EXAMINATION

The examination will be administered once each year in Washington, D.C. Each examination session will allow approximately 100 candidates to be examined. As examination space is limited, available spaces will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, in accordance with application postmark dates.

The examination process requires on-site registration, a mandatory orientation to examination protocols and security procedures, and a full eight hours of examination over a two-day period. Candidates should arrive well-rested, as the examination requires intense concentration. The written test contains 300 multiple-choice test items and is given in a five-hour period. The oral test

contains 12 oral protocols and is administered in three sessions. Candidates may be sequestered during the examination for purposes of maintaining security.

For specific details of the examination, candidates should refer to the Examination Guide, which is published each year and distributed to eligible candidates.

Any candidate wishing to obtain the *Graduate Fellowship Curriculum Compendium* or *Bibliography*, upon which much of the examination is based, may do so by contacting the AAFPRS Foundation at (703) 299-9291. It is also recommended that candidates request a copy of the *Examination Reading List* from the ABFPRS office at (703) 549-3223 or email <reading list@abfprs.org>.

EXAMINATION SCHEDULE

The examination schedule is as follows. Written and oral examination sessions will be held concurrently.

Saturday morning:	Mandatory Registration and Orientation Session
Saturday afternoon:	Written Examination — Part A
Saturday evening:	Oral Session 1
Sunday:	Written Examination — Part B and Oral Sessions 2 & 3

Candidates must attend all sessions to which they are assigned at the times specified. If they are delayed for any reason, they should notify the Board staff immediately. Any candidate who misses registration and orientation may, at the discretion of the Board, be denied permission to sit the examination. No admission will be granted to candidates who arrive more than 15 minutes late. No candidate may leave the examination once it has started. Any candidate exhibiting disruptive behavior will not be admitted to or will be asked to leave the examination.

SPECIAL SITUATIONS

Examination of candidates with disabilities. Candidates requiring special arrangements must make their needs known to the Board at the time of application. The Board will make reasonable accommodations as necessary.

Substance abuse or chemical dependency. Applicants with a history of abuse or dependency will not be admitted to the certification process unless they satisfy the Board that they have completed a treatment program and are free of such abuse or dependency.

Examination irregularities. The Board protects the validity of examination scores by every means possible, by assuring integrity in test administration and honesty in test taking. It will not report a score that it has determined is invalid due to any irregularity and therefore misrepresentative of the candidate's knowledge and competence.

Irregularities in test administration, such as defective test booklets or power outages in the examination room, are usually minor, rarely affect a candidate's ability to finish the test, and are handled by standard procedures. If the candidate is unable to finish the exam or the Board determines that a procedural irregularity has adversely affected his or her performance, the candidate will be invited to sit the next examination at no additional charge.

Irregularities in test taking, such as giving or receiving aid during the examination or unauthorized possession, reproduction, or disclosure of examination questions before, during, or after the examination, may be sufficient cause for the Board to terminate an applicant's participation in the examination, to invalidate the results of the examination, to withhold an applicant's scores or certificate, to bar an applicant permanently from all future examinations, to revoke a certificate, or to take other appropriate action.

Proctors will circulate among candidates during the written examination, and any suspicion of any irregularity may result in the candidate's removal to a more isolated area or termination of his or her

participation in the examination. Suspected irregularities will be investigated via statistical comparison to answers of other candidates. If a probability of irregularity exists, the Board will afford the suspected individual procedural due process in order to assure fairness in the determination as to whether an irregularity has occurred.

RIGHT TO REVIEW

In accordance with the *Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing* — jointly published by the American Psychological Association, the American Educational Research Association, and the National Council on Measurement in Education — the Board provides an appeal process to any applicant who wishes his or her examination or certification scores reviewed. An administrative fee of U.S. \$300 is charged for each part of the review.

For the examination, the \$300 fee covers rescoring the written examination and providing the examinee with a detailed analysis of test performance according to content areas of the examination. A complete review of the oral examination ratings also is conducted, and the total examination score is re-computed. The review does not include access to written test booklets, answer keys, or other secure test materials.

For certification (phase one), the \$300 fee covers a review of the complete application, including all operative reports by the ABFPRS Credentials Committee. The applicant is provided with a detailed report of additional training, experience, or credentials required to be eligible for certification.

Requests for review must be made in writing within six months following the examination or Board action on certification. The review process will be completed no later than three months prior to the next examination. The Board reserves the right to make appropriate rulings, interpretations, decisions, and departures from the *Standards*, and its decisions are not subject to further appeal. The review process is the exclusive remedy for a dissatisfied examinee.

RE-EXAMINATION AND SUBMISSION OF NEW OPERATIVE EXPERIENCE REPORTS

Candidates who do not receive passing scores on both the written and oral parts of the examination may be eligible upon reapplication to sit again for the examination. Candidates must retake only that portion of the examination (written or oral) which they failed. Candidates may apply to retake the examination three times.

If after three attempts, sufficient points are not earned to pass the examination, the Board may require candidates to satisfactorily complete Board-approved additional training before being eligible to reapply.

Candidates for certification who achieve the minimum number of points required in phase one (250) and phase two (500) of the certification process but who fail to accumulate the minimum number of points required for certification (1,000) may apply to resubmit phase one operative experience reports for any new two-year period that occurs within five years of passing the examination.

The fee for re-examination is U.S. \$1,000; the fee for review of a new phase one application is U.S. \$1,500.

CERTIFICATION AND REVOCATION

The Board shall issue a certificate to all candidates who satisfactorily complete all requirements set forth in this *Booklet of Information*.

The Board will not issue a certificate, and may revoke any certificate already issued, if it shall determine that the person involved:

- ▶ Did not possess the required qualifications and requirements for either phase of the certification process.
- ▶ Misstated or withheld information in his or her application or made any other intentional or unintentional misrepresentation to the Board.
- ▶ Has been convicted of a felony or misdemeanor involving moral turpitude, and in the opinion of the Board, having a material relationship to the practice of medicine.

- Had a license to practice medicine revoked, or shall have been disciplined or censured by any court or other body having proper jurisdiction and authority because of any act or omission arising from the practice of medicine.

All persons to whom the Board has issued a certificate shall report immediately to the Board if any adverse action enumerated above has been taken against them.

If the Board determines that there is just cause to withhold or revoke a certificate, the person shall be informed in writing of the reasons for the Board's action. Such action by the Board shall be considered final unless the person requests a review of such action within 30 days after the Board's notice has been mailed.

Certificates are the property of the Board and all copies of a person's certificate must be returned to the Board upon revocation.

Reinstatement. The Board may consider restoring Diplomate status to a surgeon whose certificate has been revoked if (1) he/she demonstrates to the Board's satisfaction that the deficiency that led to revocation has been removed or corrected, and (2) he/she again successfully completes all current requirements for ABFPRS certification.

MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION

ABFPRS certificate issued in 2001 and thereafter will be valid for 10 years. Certificates issued prior to that date without an expiration date will remain valid; however, surgeons who achieved certification prior to 2001 will be eligible to enter the maintenance of certification program if they wish.

The ABFPRS maintenance of certification program will embrace the following four principles: professional standing, evidence of lifelong learning, demonstration of cognitive expertise, and practice performance.

Until such time as the maintenance of certification program is in place, diplomates who want to renew their certification may do so via the current process for earning the primary ABFPRS certificate.

IMPORTANT DATES FOR ABFPRS CERTIFICATION

Oct. 15, 2001	Application materials available for the next ABFPRS certification cycle.
Jan. 15, 2002	Last postmark date for application materials and \$2,500 fee. Note: Examination space is limited; available spaces will be assigned on a first-come, first-served basis, in accordance with application postmark date. Only fully complete applications will be processed.
Jan. 15–Feb. 15	Applications accepted with \$300 penalty fee.
Feb. 15	No applications accepted after this date.
Feb.–March	Credentials Committee reviews applications.
April 15	Applicants notified of acceptance for examination. Note: If applicant is not accepted for exam, the \$1,000 examination fee will be refunded.
May 22	Last date for candidates to postmark written notification of withdrawal from examination. Note: Examinees who withdraw by this date will be refunded the \$1,000 examination fee only. After this date, partial refunds may be granted upon application to the Executive Committee.
June 22-23	Written and oral examinations administered in Washington, D.C.

FUTURE EXAMINATION DATES AND SITES

Year	Month/Day	Location
2002	June 22–23	Washington, D.C.
2003	June 21–22	Washington, D.C.
2004	June 26–27	Washington, D.C.

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