



TAIWAN MEDICAL ACCREDITATION COUNCIL

醫學院評鑑委員會

History

The Taiwan Medical Accreditation Council (TMAC) was established by the late Professor Kun-Yen Huang, founder and former Dean of the National Cheng Kung University College of Medicine, who sought global recognition of Taiwan's medical education through the establishment of an independent organization that accredits all medical schools in the country according to international standards. The impetus for the birth of TMAC came after the National Committee on Foreign Medical Education and Accreditation (NCFMEA) of the United States Department of Education, which is charged with reviewing and determining whether the standards of accreditation of medical schools used by foreign countries are comparable to those in the U.S., deemed the Taiwanese standards as "not comparable" in 1998. Within one and a half years of being approved by the Ministry of Education Deans' Conference (in which the deans of all medical schools participated), the structure and process of accreditation were approved and the accreditation criteria developed with understanding and consideration of the local medical education system and with consultation of the

the surveyors of a team in terms of professional field, affiliation (public vs. private schools), gender, age, etc., and to ensure that there are no conflicts of interest with the school being accredited. Surveyors must observe the following rules:

- they and their close relatives cannot have been full- or part-time staff or students of the school during the past three years,
- they cannot receive gifts from the school,
- they must maintain confidentiality of all information obtained during the accreditation process including training workshops and on-site visit
- they cannot comment upon or criticize the school publicly or in the media

Surveyors are given two months to review the self-assessment package of the school that is being considered for accreditation. The site visit for a full review of a medical school requires four days, but surveyors convene at a hotel on the evening before the visit to carry out preparations and delegate responsibilities. Follow-up visits usually last two to



Briefing with Dean and Administrators during the Accreditation



three days, depending on the content of the review. The main purpose of the site visit is to observe teaching in various forms, e.g. lectures, classes, conferences, out-patient and bedside teachings, and to interview different parties, including staff, faculty, and students. The team may split up into groups of two or three to review the main teaching hospitals. Surveyors meet

each evening to exchange and discuss their observations. At the end of the site visit, the team leader provides a brief report of the team's findings to the school. He or she collects reports from the individual surveyors and submits a complete report to TMAC within three weeks following the site visit. The report includes a concrete listing of the strengths and weaknesses of the school, as well as recommendations of the team which assist council members in reaching a final decision about the school's accreditation status during the subsequent council meeting.

Table 2: General Schedule of Activities during Site Visit for Full Review

Day	Morning	Lunch	Afternoon	Evening
D0				Team assembles for pre-visit meeting
D1	Briefing and tour of school	Review meeting records and documents	Observe teaching	Team debriefing
D2	Observe teaching	Interview students and interns	Interview basic science faculty and observe teaching	Team debriefing
D3	Observe teaching	Interview clinical faculty	Visit CFD*, interview staff, and observe teaching	Discussion of standards compliance
D4	Student affairs and counseling	Interview President and Board Members of university and Dean of medical school, and provide brief feedback to school		

*CFD: Center for Faculty Development

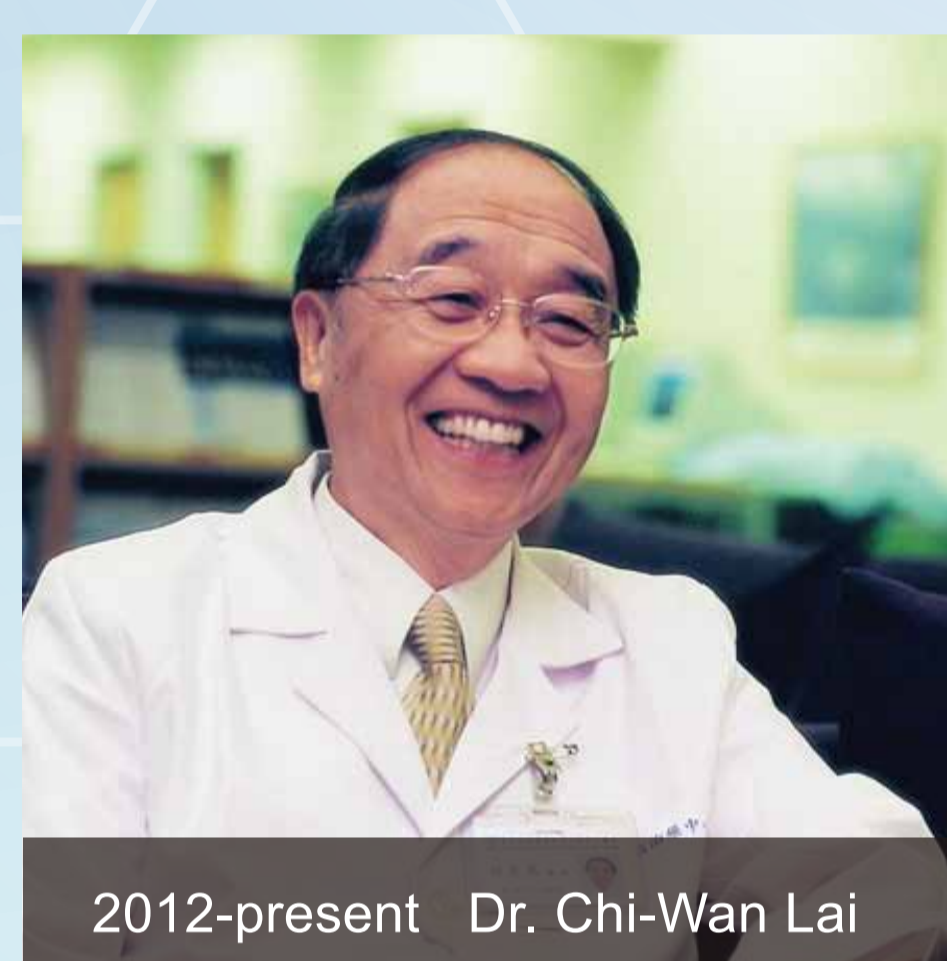
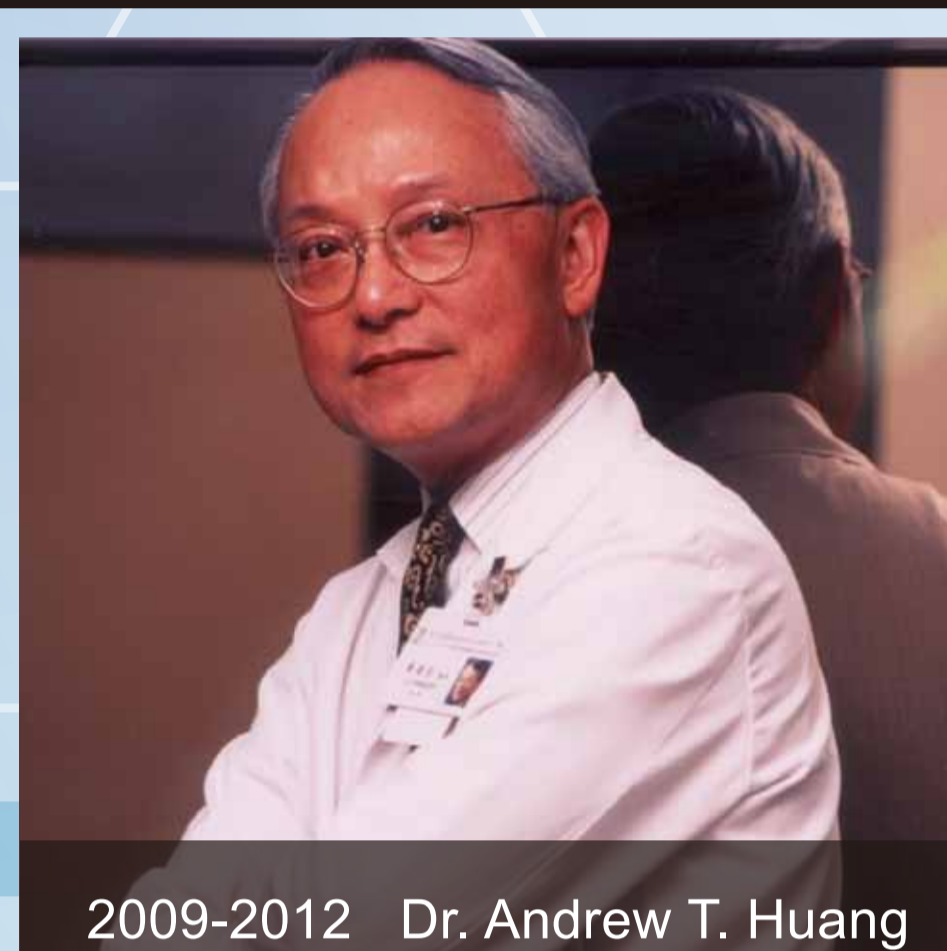
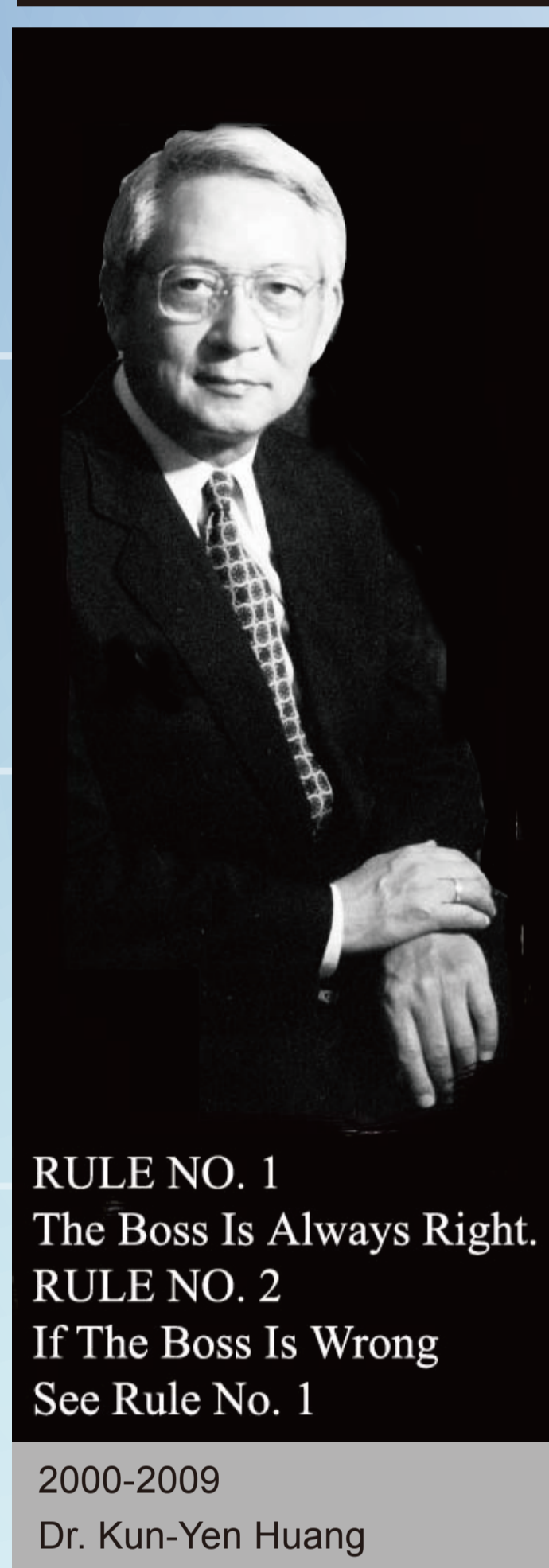
TMAC awards one of four accreditation statuses to each school: fully accredited, accredited with conditions, on probation, or non-accredited. Those that are conditionally accredited must correct their deficiencies within a stipulated period. The results are announced through the Ministry of Education's website. Currently, there are twelve medical schools in Taiwan, among which four are public. In 2013, nine of the schools were fully accredited, two conditionally accredited, and none on probation; one new medical school that was established in 2009 was undergoing annual review. TMAC does not rank medical schools.

Impact and Future Development

Since its inception in 1999, TMAC has accomplished its mandate as an independent agency which is responsible for the accreditation of all medical schools in Taiwan. Its recommendations have been adopted by medical schools for continuous quality assurance in medical education. TMAC has made a conscientious effort to improve and upgrade its work by learning from others' experiences, particularly the LCME, and through conducting workshops, participating as international observers in LCME on-site visits, attending LCME committee meetings on the determination of comparability of foreign accreditation standards, and undertaking extensive revision between 2010 and 2013 of its standards and self-assessment process. It has also striven to enhance the quality of its accreditation reviews through the selection and training of its surveyors and survey team leaders, and through receiving input from its teams and various stakeholders. TMAC hopes to cooperate further with the different agencies that are involved in medical education in Taiwan, to work with all medical schools in faculty recruitment and development, admission of medical students, and reform of curriculum, and to collaborate with international accreditation organizations such as the WFME, the ECFMG, and the Association for Medical Education in the Western Pacific Region (AMEWPR) in order to meet global standards of medical accreditation by 2023.



The Chairpersons of TMAC



criteria of the Australian Medical Council (AMC), the U.S. Liaison Committee on Medical Education (LCME), and the World Federation of Medical Education (WFME). TMAC was established on July 1, 2000 and began its work with the accreditation of four medical schools during the following April – two national and two private – including one that was newly established. In 2002, the NCFMEA determined that Taiwan's accreditation standards were "comparable", and in 2009 reiterated that decision in its re-evaluation of that year.

Structure

The Taiwan Medical Accreditation Council consists of thirteen members who are primarily senior university faculty members or physicians with a proven record of longstanding dedication to medical education from various fields. Special efforts are made to include those with expertise in education, educational psychology, and liberal arts education, as well as senior physicians not working at medical centers whose views reflect the needs of local communities. Council members are elected every three years and two-thirds of current members are typically re-elected in order to ensure continuity of the organization. New members are chosen through nominations from various sources, including the Ministry of Education (MOE) and the Deans' Conference. The responsibilities of the council members are to review and finalize policies related to the accreditation of medical schools, to institute regulations pertaining to accreditation criteria and self-assessment, to select an adequate pool of surveyors, to establish guidelines regarding conflicts of interest among these surveyors, and to reach final decisions on the accreditation of medical schools.

Process

A full review of a medical school is conducted every seven years with follow-up visits taking place every two to three years during the interim. A newly established medical school will be reviewed on an annual basis until its first batch of students has graduated before it can be formally accredited. Schools are assessed in the following areas: (1) administration and resources; (2) curriculum and teaching in the three broad domains of medical education: general education, humanities, and ethics; basic biomedical sciences education; and clinical education; (3) number and qualifications of faculty members; (4) faculty development; (5) student affairs and counseling.

Table 1: Process and Schedule of Accreditation

Process	Schedule
Announcement of schools and types of review	March
Orientation for medical schools	April
Institutional self-assessment and report submission	May to August
Surveyors workshop	September
Review of self-assessment reports by surveyors	September
Site visits by survey teams	October to December
Decision on accreditation status	the following March

Survey teams conducting full accreditation reviews consist of nine surveyors, while those administering follow-up reviews typically number five or seven members. Each team is led by a TMAC council member, and surveyors are recruited from a pool of experts. Each team responsible for full reviews also includes two senior Taiwanese medical educators currently working abroad. Care is taken to achieve balance among