Overview

Congratulations on your desire to find out more about the CAP's Advanced Practical Pathology Program in USFNA (USFNA AP³)—or perhaps you have already decided to apply! This manual will address your questions regarding program eligibility, design, and requirements for obtaining your USFNA Certificate of Recognition.

The CAP created the USFNA AP³ for licensed pathologists who are currently performing FNAs and who want to expand their practice to include ultrasound-guided FNA. As a result of completing the USFNA AP³, qualified program participants will be able to:

- Describe the basic physics of ultrasound imaging (e.g., sound waves, acoustic impedance, reflection, refraction, and attenuation) and what it means in terms of the benignancy or malignancy potential of the anatomic structure that is being examined.
- From the ultrasound images that are provided, identify the ultrasound criteria, diagnostic status (e.g., benign, malignant, or indeterminate) and part(s) of the lesion to be sampled.
- Correctly identify the ultrasound equipment components and use them to identify anatomy (specifically in the neck).
- Using a phantom device and the correct ultrasound equipment (and the USFNA techniques), identify the normal and abnormal anatomic structures.
- Using a phantom device, ultrasound equipment, and the FNA technique that is best suited for the abnormality type and location, guide the placement of the needle into the lesion.
- From obtained samples, create a slide smear that includes evenly spread, preserved cells.
- Before, during, and after the procedure, provide the appropriate communication in order to maintain patient comfort that results in the need for a minimal number of aspirations in order to achieve an adequate sampling from the identified lesion(s).
- Using interview techniques, findings from a physical examination, and past medical histories, correlate evidence to findings in ultrasound.
- Describe the use and limitations of other imaging procedures that can be used to help identify abnormalities in specific anatomic sites and correlate the findings to what is seen in ultrasound.
- Describe the elements of a comprehensive business plan to prepare your laboratory or practice in order to perform USFNAs and care for the patients who require this procedure.
- Using sample patient cases, determine the correct CPT codes and modifiers.
- Upon completion of the USFNA procedure, describe the components of a complete and accurate post-procedure cytopathology report.
- Using sample patient cases, determine correct CPT codes and modifiers.
- Upon completion of the USFNA procedure, describe the components of a complete and accurate post-procedure cytopathology report.
To participate in the USFNA AP\textsuperscript{3}, you must complete and submit an application and pay the registration fee. Participants will receive notification regarding the disposition of their application within two-to-four weeks from the date when it was submitted.

Read on to learn how the USFNA AP\textsuperscript{3} provides you with the opportunity to learn the new skills and be recognized in an emerging area for pathologists!

**Note:** Advanced Practical Pathology Programs are intended to be learning activities. Completion of this program alone does not necessarily indicate competence. The CAP does not endorse, guarantee, nor warrant (and expressly disclaims) any and all liability for the job performance of physicians who participate in this program.
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Program Purpose

The College of American Pathologists (CAP) is the leading organization of board-certified pathologists. The CAP serves patients, pathologists, and the public by fostering and advocating excellence in the practice of pathology and laboratory medicine. The CAP seeks to create new and enhanced roles for the pathologist over the next generation, as well as create greater recognition for pathologists as physicians who are actively involved on the patient care team. The USFNA AP\(^3\) directly contributes to the College’s vision of transforming the role of the pathologist as a leading health care provider in a practical, coordinated, and systematic manner.

This AP\(^3\) provides significant hands-on practice on how to place needles into lesions using ultrasound guidance. A noted pathologist and candidate who achieved one of the first Certificates of Recognition made the following comments about the CAP USFNA AP\(^3\):

- Dedicated practice on the phantom is one of the first and key steps in the acquisition of USFNA skills.
- Indeed, ultrasound is a tool that the pathologist can easily learn and that provides a new dimension to patient care. Any pathologist who routinely performs FNAs can easily incorporate ultrasound to augment the care that he or she already provides.
- Ultrasound imaging allows the pathologist to better understand the target in many ways that are not available by using a manually-directed sampling.
- USFNA allows for a more thorough sampling of a palpable nodule.
- If a pathologist is strongly motivated to provide the very best care for patients, he/she should give careful consideration to adding USFNA to his/her practice and should do so now.

During the two-day workshop, participants have several hours of practice using the ultrasound equipment in order to perform FNAs under expert supervision.

The following groups and people will benefit from pathologists earning a USFNA AP\(^3\) certificate:

- **Laboratories and pathology departments/groups** – It is anticipated that some laboratories and pathology groups will directly purchase the program on behalf of an employed/contracted pathologist. Laboratories and pathology groups who do so will benefit from having increased confidence in the oversight of their USFNA programs and increasing the visibility of these programs to others. They may become preferred providers of the USFNA procedure. The availability of one or many pathologists holding USFNA certificates can position the laboratory, department, or group as a local expert in ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspiration best practices (and may attract pathology recruits who aspire to work with recognized mentors in best practice settings).

- **Most importantly, the patients** – The availability of one or more pathologists with USFNA certificates in the health care setting provides patients the assurance that their FNA test results are accurate and timely. Accurate test results facilitate the inputs to the clinician’s treatment decisions.
Program Elements

The CAP designed the USFNA AP³ for pathologists with intermediate or higher skill level in performing fine-needle aspirations who wish to expand their practice to include ultrasound-guided FNA techniques. Participants who will benefit the most from the USFNA pathology program will include pathologists who have successfully completed at least 50 FNA procedures in the current year (including performance of tasks such as patient interaction, specimen collection [including the placement of the FNA needle], pathology interpretation of the sample, and the sign-out of the pathology report). Setting prerequisites is a common method for targeting education programs.

All CAP Advanced Practical Pathology Programs have four elements. The USFNA AP³ elements are specified below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CAP AP³ Elements</th>
<th>USFNA AP³ Elements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1. QUALIFICATIONS</strong></td>
<td>Participants must be American Board of Pathology (ABP) certified in Anatomic Pathology (AP) or Anatomic Pathology/Clinical Pathology (AP/CP) or Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada (RCPS) certified or American Osteopathic Board of Pathology (AOBP) certified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>International participants who are not certified by the above and have been board certified in their country of residence must contact the CAP in order to determine eligibility. Eligibility will be determined on a case-by-case basis.</td>
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<tr>
<td>CAP AP³ Elements</td>
<td>USFNA AP³ Elements</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. CORE CURRICULUM</td>
<td>Participants must complete the CAP’s USFNA AP³ Workshop Pre-work and Workshop (16 CME credits).</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- The USFNA Workshop Pre-work takes approximately six hours to complete and must be completed before attending the workshop. Currently, no CME credit is available for completing the pre-work. The pre-work consists of reading and watching videos.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- The USFNA Workshop is two days of instructor-led training and assessment. Class size is structured to ensure individualized attention.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Go to pages 11–13 to see a more detailed description of the content and activities that are taught in the workshop.</td>
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</table>
### 3. COGNITIVE ASSESSMENT

Participants must successfully complete a cognitive assessment.

- The USFNA cognitive assessment will consist of multiple-choice questions and will be delivered online in a proctored environment.

- Participants are eligible to take the cognitive assessment after completing the required USFNA AP³ core curriculum (see Element 2, above) and successfully passing the two practical assessments (see Element 4, below). It is strongly recommended that participants take the cognitive assessment within three weeks of completing the workshop.

- The USFNA AP³ cognitive assessment will be delivered through an arrangement with a testing vendor—PSI ([http://corporate.psionline.com/](http://corporate.psionline.com/)). AP³ participants will be responsible for all associated travel expenses to a nearby testing center and for contacting PSI to arrange a time to take the assessment. For details on how to schedule an assessment in a nearby testing site, please refer to the Candidate Information Bulletin.

- Participants who do not receive a passing score may retake the cognitive assessment up to two times. Assessment retakes will be available through the testing vendor. After a second retake attempt, participants who do not pass are no longer eligible to receive the Certificate of Recognition. The participant is responsible for all associated travel expenses.
4. PRACTICAL ASSESSMENT

Participants must successfully complete two practical assessments at the faculty-led workshop (which consist of the following):

- Experience each assessment separately in a private setting during the workshop. The two assessments are slide smear and (ultrasound-guided) needle placement.

- Skills to be assessed on the slide smear practical assessment include:
  - Expelling
  - Dividing
  - Creating the smear
  - Inspecting the smear visually

- Skills to be assessed on the needle placement practical assessment include:
  - Equipment preparation
  - Patient preparation
  - Viewing anatomy under ultrasound
  - Measuring a target lesion in a phantom
  - Needle placement using a tangential and perpendicular approach

- Participants who do not pass the practical assessments may retake the assessment up to two times. Additional practice and coaching is available to participants who do not pass on the first or the second attempt.

Participants who successfully complete the USFNA AP³ elements will receive a Certificate of Recognition (valid for a five-year period).

No certificate awarded if all elements are not met.
Core Curriculum

ACCREDITATION
The College of American Pathologists (CAP) is accredited by the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

FACULTY-LED MODULES

Workshop Introduction

Length: 30 minutes
The goal of this module is to introduce the two-day workshop to the participants. We will introduce why performing USFNAs is such a transformational skill for the field of pathology. In addition, various patient care settings will be introduced (showing how a USFNA practice may be implemented).

Slide Preparation Techniques (including assessment)

Length: 2 hours
The goal of this module is: From obtained samples, use proper technique to create a slide smear that includes evenly spread, preserved cells. Participants will learn the proper way to create slide smears, given a chance to practice, and then will be assessed on their ability to demonstrate the proper techniques.

Module Objectives

- Perform the steps to create a well crafted slide smear
  - Expel the harvest on to a slide (in preparation for smearing).
  - Create a smear of ideal harvest that contains mostly epithelial, inflammatory, or mesenchymal cells that are representative of the target lesion.
  - Demonstrate concentration and smear preparation technique in a harvest with significant dilution with blood or other fluid content.
  - Visually identify features of a well-crafted smear (including: even thickness, well preserved cells throughout the material, oval smear configuration, etc.).
  - Create more than one smear from a single harvest.
- Visually identify potential errors that can occur when creating a slide smear
  - Recognize artifacts that are caused by deficiencies in sample preparation techniques (for example: lines/empty areas that indicate scraping, etc.).
  - Analyze smears for various artifacts that are caused by suboptimal sample preparation techniques.
- Describe how to correct your technique to avoid errors in the slide smear creation process
Core Curriculum (continued)

FACULTY-LED MODULES (continued)

Ultrasound Physics With Applications (Parts 1 and 2)

Length: 2 hours, 30 minutes

The goal of this module is to help participants understand the basics of ultrasound physics, transducers, and ultrasound image patterns (such as artifacts) so that they can effectively use this tool for the USFNA procedure. This module provides an overview and practice of ultrasound equipment operation in preparation for performing the USFNA procedure (including the examination of neck anatomy).

Module Objectives

- Describe the principles of sound (including speed, frequency and hertz, wavelength, attenuation, and echo patterns in tissue)
- Explain ultrasound features such as focal zone, Time gain compensation, extended field of view, and resolution
- Explain how transducers work
- Describe Color-Flow and Power Doppler
- Describe specific image patterns that are key in the interpretation of ultrasound images
- Identify common physical elements of ultrasound equipment
- Describe the functional use of the common elements
- Identify variable elements of ultrasound equipment and how they are used in the USFNA procedure
- Using ultrasound equipment, identify neck/thyroid anatomy in an ultrasound image
- Demonstrate correct ways to position the transducer for optimal viewing of the thyroid anatomy
- Identify key aspects of annotating an ultrasound image
- Using ultrasound and a phantom, demonstrate reaching a target and visualizing the needle

Ultrasound Criteria

Length: 1 hour

The goal of this module is to show sample images and to teach participants to: identify the sonographic criteria and the diagnostic status (eg, benign, malignant, indeterminate) and to identify the parts of the lesion that are to be sampled.
Needle Placement

Length: 2 hours plus optional dinner-time practice

The goal of this module is to teach participants (using ultrasound guidance) how to demonstrate specific needle techniques on a phantom device in order to guide the needle into the specific targets.

Module Objectives

- Guide the needle using the following technical approaches:
  - Perpendicular approach (shorter distance).
  - Parallel approach (view the needle).
  - For mixed solid and cystic lesions, insert the needle into the solid part.

Patient Cases, Parts 1 and 2

Length: 4 hours

This module focuses on the common (and not so common) diseases that are found in the breast, thyroid, and in the other anatomic areas. Participants will present and discuss cases in small groups and come to the final diagnosis. Participants will also have time to do additional needle placement practice in preparation for the needle placement assessment.

Medical Coding

Length: 30 minutes

Faculty will discuss the current codes, recent changes, and modifiers that they use in order to get the proper reimbursement. Discussions will also focus on the things that cannot be billed and also on the things that may cause billing audits. Since what is allowable varies across states and geographic locations, multiple faculty will provide inputs based on their work setting. Tips on where to go to get proper advice will also be discussed.
Workshop Agenda

Participants should plan on staying for the entire workshop as completion of all CME is a requirement to obtain the Certificate of Recognition. In addition, early departure from the workshop may impact performance of the cognitive and practical assessments.

Prior to attending the workshop, participants should complete the pre-work binder. The workshop is two days in length. The agenda is provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:00–8:00 AM</td>
<td>Check-in and Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00–8:30 AM</td>
<td>Workshop Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8:30–10:30 AM</td>
<td>Slide Preparation Techniques (including assessment)</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:30–10:45 AM</td>
<td>Morning Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45–11:45 AM</td>
<td>Ultrasound Physics with Applications, part 1</td>
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<tr>
<td>11:45 AM-12:45 PM</td>
<td>Group Lunch</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45–2:15 PM</td>
<td>Ultrasound Physics with Applications, part 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>2:15–3:15 PM</td>
<td>Ultrasound Criteria</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:15–3:30 PM</td>
<td>Afternoon Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3:30–5:30 PM</td>
<td>Needle Placement</td>
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<tr>
<td>5:30–7:30 PM</td>
<td>Needle Placement Practice, Pizza Dinner</td>
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</table>
### Workshop Agenda (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7:30–8:00 AM</td>
<td>Continental Breakfast</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:00–8:15 AM</td>
<td>Day 2 Opening</td>
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<tr>
<td>8:15–10:15 AM</td>
<td>Patient Cases, Part 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:15–10:30 AM</td>
<td>Morning Break</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:30 AM–12:30 PM</td>
<td>Patient Cases, Part 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:30–1:30 PM</td>
<td>Group Lunch</td>
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<td>Optional US Core Needle Biopsy demonstration (20 minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30–1:50 PM</td>
<td>Needle Placement Assessment and Coding Overview</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:50–4:30 PM</td>
<td>Needle Placement Practical Assessment &amp; Medical Coding Discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>4:30–4:45 PM</td>
<td>Workshop Closing</td>
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</table>
Additional Participation Information

ENROLLMENT
- There is no CME-only option with the USFNA AP^3.
- The Cognitive and Practical assessments are only available to USFNA AP^3 participants.

ASSESSMENT SCHEDULING
- For maximum learning and performance effectiveness, the CAP advises program participants to follow the guidelines that are provided below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Completion Guidelines</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>CME</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participants should complete the USFNA AP^3 core curriculum before completing the cognitive assessment.</td>
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PROGRAM COMPLETION
USFNA AP^3 participants need to complete the CME and submit assessment requirements within one year following completion of the workshop. Otherwise, a new application and enrollment fee are required.

CERTIFICATE NOTIFICATION
Upon receipt of all components of the program, the CAP will notify the participant in three months if the participant met all of the requirements for successful completion of the USFNA AP^3 Certificate of Recognition. The participant will receive the certificate in four-to-six weeks after notification.
Certificate Maintenance

USFNA Certificate of Recognition Maintenance and Renewal Requirements

The USFNA maintenance and renewal requirement is intended to ensure that USFNA Certificate of Recognition holders maintain and apply an appropriate level of expertise in the conduct of ultrasound-guided fine-needle aspirations in support of their practices (in order to ensure quality patient care). To be eligible for USFNA renewal, the certificate holder must submit performance documentation (as outlined below).

PERFORMANCE DOCUMENTATION

The certificate holder must submit five original pathology reports that include the results from a USFNA procedure. Each report must include the following:

- A procedure date that is no more than 12 months prior to the date of the renewal application
- Documentation that the certificate holder performed the USFNA procedure
- A clearly stated final diagnosis

Note: All reports should adhere to the standard report format of your laboratory.

Please note that in accordance with HIPPA guidelines, all patient identification information must be removed from the reports prior to submission. This includes all patient identifying information (eg, name, date of birth, account number, phone number), specimen identification information (case and block number), and accession numbers.

Further, to facilitate a blind review of assessment submissions and to ensure an objective and reliable scoring process, we ask that you remove all physician identification information from the reports prior to submission. This includes your name, the name and contact information of your institution, and the names of the reference laboratories (and other physicians) involved with the case.
EVALUATION CRITERIA

The standard pathology reports will be evaluated by content experts in order to ensure that they contain adequate documentation of the USFNA procedure and clear diagnosis information (based on the procedure). These criteria include:

- Patient demographics (age, gender, and other pertinent or customary case information)
- Date of the procedure
- Adequacy statement
- Anatomical site and location
- Sampling method
- Final diagnosis

MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL FEE

The fee for maintenance and renewal is $200. This does not include the costs that are associated with participation in CAP USFNA Technical Updates or other CME.

NOTIFICATION OF MAINTENANCE AND RENEWAL DEADLINE

CAP Learning will notify the certificate holder one year in advance of the date his/her certificate expires. Additional reminder notifications will be sent six months, three months, and one month prior to the expiration date.
Program Registration

HOW TO ACCESS THE REGISTRATION FORM
The USFNA AP³ registration form is located on the USFNA AP³ page in the CAP Learning Portal. You will need to answer “Yes” to at least one of the eligibility requirements. If you do not meet the eligibility requirements, but you are interested in this program, please contact ap3@cap.org.

HOW TO REGISTER
In order to start the USFNA AP³ enrollment process, submit your completed USFNA AP³ registration form, along with your payment, via email to ap3@cap.org, fax to 847-832-8006, or mail to:

College of American Pathologists
CAP Learning, AP³
325 Waukegan Road
Northfield, IL 60093

REGISTRATION FEES
USFNA AP³ Fee*: CAP Member
Fee includes all online courses, the two-day workshop, the cognitive assessment, the practical assessment, and the CAP Certificate of Recognition (upon successful completion of all AP³ requirements). The current fee for the USFNA AP³ program is located on the registration form.

* Fees exclude travel expenses (airfare, lodging, some meals, etc.)

AP³ PROGRAM COMPLETION
USFNA AP³ participants need to complete and pass the CME and the cognitive assessment and practical assessment within one year following the completion of the workshop. Otherwise, a new registration form and enrollment fee is required.
Program Registration (continued)

CANCELLATION POLICY

Please contact the CAP should you decide to cancel your registration in the program. The CAP will refund your registration fee (less a $100 processing fee) if you cancel prior to beginning the curriculum. After that, the CAP will consider refunds on a case-by-case basis. No refunds will be issued for online course cancellations that are received after the coursework is initiated.

Should you need to cancel your workshop registration, please contact the CAP as soon as possible. The CAP will apply your payment to a future USFNA AP³ (provided that you cancel within two weeks prior to the workshop).

The CAP reserves the right to cancel any AP³ CME workshop without prior notice for insufficient pre-registration or for any other reason. The CAP is not responsible for airline or hotel cancellation penalties or any other losses that are incurred as a result of cancellation.

WITHDRAWAL AND REFUND POLICY FOR AP³ PARTICIPATION

Participants may withdraw from CAP AP³ at any time. To withdraw, please submit a written request to the CAP Council on Education. If you currently hold a USFNA AP³ Certificate of Recognition, the effective date of the certificate will cease on either the date of notification or on a future date that you specify (provided that the future date is no later than the anniversary date of the certificate).

The CAP will manage participant requests for a program fee refund on a case-by-case basis. You must submit your refund request in writing separately from your request to withdraw from CAP AP³. The CAP will refund your registration fee (less a $100 processing fee) if the request to withdraw occurs prior to you beginning the CAP AP³ curriculum.

QUESTIONS?

Please contact:

CAP Learning, AP³
College of American Pathologists
325 Waukegan Road
Northfield, IL 60093
Tel: 800-323-4040 (option 1)
Fax: 847-832-8006
Email: ap3@cap.org

Find additional information on this and other AP³ programs in the CAP Learning Portal at cap.org/learning.