Pennsylvania
STATE BOARD OF COSMETOLOGY
Content Outlines
Current as of October 2019

THEORY EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

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Notice: As of November 24th, 2014, the Pennsylvania Board of Cosmetology no longer requires a hands-on practical examination in order to acquire a license for the following: Cosmetologist, Esthetician, Nail Technician, Natural Hair Braider, Cosmetology Teacher, Esthetics Teacher, Nail Technology Teacher and Natural Hair Braiding Teacher.

As of November 25th, 2014, candidates will be required to take a new “combined” theory/procedural skill computer based exam. Any candidate who has not passed both the current theory/practical exams as of Nov 24th will be required to take the new combined theory/procedural skill exam in order to get a license.

THEORY EXAM CONTENT OUTLINES

CONTENT OUTLINE — COSMETOLOGIST
110 SCORED ITEMS (100 GENERAL, 10 STATE)
25 PRETEST ITEMS (20 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (25% TO 35%)
   A. Safety
      1. Draping
         a. Sanitation
         b. Procedures
      2. Prevention of salon accidents
         a. Maintaining safe working conditions
         b. Labeling
         c. Storing chemical products
         d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)
         e. Thermal appliances
      3. First aid/OSHA
         a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
         b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
   B. Sanitation and disinfection
      1. Personal hygiene
      2. Sanitation of implements and tools
      3. Single-use items
      4. Dispensing products
      5. Prevention of infectious disease/referral
      6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces
   C. Client contact
      1. Ethics
      2. Communication
      3. Record keeping

II. TRICHOLOGY (4% TO 10%)
   A. Structure of hair
   B. Hair type
      1. Pigment
      2. Wave pattern/follicle formation
      3. Texture
      4. Density
      5. Porosity
      6. Elasticity
   C. Hair growth phases

III. SHAMPOO / SCALP ANALYSIS (4% TO 8%)
   A. Purpose and chemistry of shampoos and conditioners
   B. Scalp conditioning services
   C. Procedure
   D. Scalp massage
   E. Scalp analysis/Disorders and diseases of scalp
   F. Procedures for clients with special needs

IV. STYLING (4% TO 10%)
   A. Determination of appropriate hair style
      1. Hair texture and types
      2. Hair condition
      3. Hair length
      4. Face shape
   B. Hair design techniques
      1. Wet styling
      2. Comb out
      3. Blow-dry styling
   C. Thermal styling
      1. Special considerations
      2. Tools
      3. Procedures
   D. Artificial hair
   E. Products and styling aids

V. HAIRCUTTING (8% TO 12%)
   A. Shaping and cutting
   B. Determination of appropriate style
      1. Length, structure, and conditions
      2. Establishing guideline
   C. Blunt/one-length, graduated, and layered haircuts
      1. Elevation
   D. Thinning/texturizing
   E. Using a razor
   F. Using clippers
   G. Using scissors/shears
VI.  HAIR COLOR, BLEACHING/LIGHTENING, AND TINTING (13% - 17 %)
A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude coloring, bleaching/lightening, or tinting services
B. Effects of hair structure and natural hair color on tone and intensity of outcome
C. Preparing hair to receive coloring, bleaching/lightening, or tinting services
D. Products
E. Tools, implements, and materials
F. Mixing
G. Application, processing, and removal
H. Highlighting techniques
I. Determining color level and tone
J. Corrective color
K. Color-specific safety
L. Special procedures - Color theory
   1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
   2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals
   3. Patch test and strand test

VII. PERMANENT WAVING (13% TO 17%)
A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude permanent waving services
B. Effects of hair structure and condition on desired outcome
C. Preparation
D. Products
E. Tools, implements, and materials
F. Applying, processing, and removing products
G. Techniques of wrapping hair with rods and other tools
H. Special Procedures
   1. Over processed or damaged hair
   2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals

VIII. CHEMICAL STRAIGHTENING AND RELAXING (13% TO 17%)
A. Scalp and hair conditions that preclude chemical straightening and relaxing services
B. Effects of hair structure on desired outcome
C. Preparation
D. Products
E. Tools, implements, and procedures
F. Applying, processing, and removing products for chemical straightening and relaxing
G. Curl reformation/soft curl perm
H. Special procedures
   1. Overprocessed or damaged hair
   2. Hair with metallic dyes, compound dyes, and minerals
   3. Strand test

IX. ESTHETICS (4% TO 8%)
A. Skin conditions that preclude esthetic services
B. Skin conditions that benefit from esthetic services
C. Skin diseases and disorders
D. Special procedures for skin services on sensitive, acne-prone, or aging skin
E. Preparation
F. Tools, implements, and materials
G. Facial services
   1. Purpose and procedures
   2. Types of products
   3. Applying and removing products
   4. Using electric skin devices and equipment
   5. Extractions
H. Massage manipulations
   1. Makeup application
      1. Procedures
      2. Products
      3. Removal
      4. Corrective makeup
      5. Color theory
   J. Hair removal
      1. Waxing and other depilatory techniques
      2. Tweezing

X. NAILS (4% TO 8%)
A. Nail structure
B. Recognizing nail disorders and diseases
C. Clients’ health conditions that preclude service
D. Massage
E. Manicure/Pedicure
   1. Products
   2. Procedures
   3. Tools, implements, and materials
   F. Applying, maintaining, and removing nail enhancements/artificial nails
CONTENT OUTLINE —
NAIL TECHNICIAN (MANICURIST)
60 SCORED ITEMS (50 GENERAL, 10 STATE)
15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30% TO 40%)

A. Safety
   1. Preparation
      a. Sanitation
      b. Procedures
   2. Prevention of salon accidents
      a. Maintaining safe working conditions
      b. Labeling
      c. Storing chemical products
      d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)

B. Sanitation and disinfection
   1. Personal hygiene
   2. Implements and tools
   3. Single-use items
   4. Applying creams
   5. Prevention of infectious disease
   6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces
   7. Cleaning and disinfecting whirlpool pedicure foot tubs and filters

C. Client contact
   1. Ethics
   2. Communication
   3. Record keeping

II. NAIL STRUCTURE AND NAIL ANALYSIS (15% TO 20%)

A. Nail structure
B. Nail conditions that preclude treatment
C. Health conditions that preclude treatment

III. PROFESSIONAL SERVICES (30% TO 40%)

A. Massage
   1. Muscles, bones, and nerves of fingers/hands/arms
   2. Muscles, bones, and nerves of toes/feet/legs
B. Manicure/Pedicure
   1. Products
      a. Disposal
      b. Handling
   2. Procedures
   3. Tools, equipment, and materials
   4. Preparing hands and feet for services
   5. Conditioning nails and cuticles
   6. Basic manicure/pedicure
      a. Grooming and trimming cuticles
      b. Buffing
      c. Shaping
      d. Polishing

IV. NAIL ENHANCEMENTS (12% TO 18%)

A. Application and removal
   1. Nail tips
   2. Gels and acrylics
B. Tools, equipment, and products
C. Maintenance
D. Nail Repair
I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30% TO 40%)
   A. Safety
      1. Draping
         a. Sanitation
         b. Procedures
      2. Prevention of salon accidents
         a. Maintaining safe working conditions
         b. Labeling
         c. Storing chemical products
         d. Material Safety Data Sheets
         e. Thermal/electrical appliances
      3. First aid/OSHA
         a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
         b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects
   B. Sanitation and disinfection
      1. Personal hygiene
      2. Sanitation and disinfection of implements and tools
      3. Single use items
      4. Product application
      5. Sanitation and disinfection of work surfaces
   C. Predisposition/Patch Tests
   D. Client contact
      1. Ethics
      2. Communication
      3. Record keeping

II. ESTHETIC SCIENCE AND SKIN ANALYSIS
   (15% TO 20%)
   A. Skin structure and anatomy
   B. Purpose of skin analysis
   C. Skin conditions that benefit from services
   D. Skin conditions that preclude skin services
   E. Skin disorders and diseases

III. FACIALS (20% TO 25%)
   A. Application, removal, and purpose of products
      1. Lotions and creams
      2. Exfoliants
      3. Masks/packs
   B. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment
   C. Facial procedures
   D. Special considerations
      1. Microdermabrasion
      2. Chemical peel
      3. Disincrustation
      4. Aromatherapy
   E. Massage/Anatomy

IV. HAIR REMOVAL (16% TO 20%)
   A. Tweezing
   B. Waxing
   C. Tools, implements, materials, and equipment

V. MAKEUP (10% TO 15%)
   A. Purpose
   B. Types of cosmetics
   C. Brushes and other implements, tools, and materials
   D. Color theory
   E. Application and removal procedures
   F. Corrective makeup
   G. Application and removal of artificial eyelashes

VI. ELECTRICITY AND ELECTROTHERAPY
   (5% TO 10%)
   A. Galvanic current
   B. High frequency current
   C. Light therapy

CONTENT OUTLINE — TEACHER
60 SCORED ITEMS (50 GENERAL, 10 STATE)
15 PRETEST ITEMS (10 GENERAL, 5 STATE)

I. TEACHING METHODS (14%)
II. ASSESSMENT TOOLS (16%)
   A. Why
   B. How
   C. What

III. DETERMINING EFFECTIVE INSTRUCTION (36%)
   A. Establishing goals and objectives
   B. Determining essential knowledge, skills, and abilities
   C. Understanding outcomes

IV. THE LEARNER AND LEARNING ENVIRONMENT
   (34%)
   A. Learning styles
   B. Individual differences
   C. Motivation
   D. Record keeping
   E. Classroom arrangement
I. RULES, REGULATIONS, AND SAFETY (30-40%)

A. Safety
   1. Draping
      a. Sanitation
      b. Procedures
   2. Prevention of salon accidents
      a. Maintaining safe working conditions
      b. Labeling
      c. Storing chemical products
      d. Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS)/Safety Data Sheets (SDS)
      e. Thermal appliances
   3. First aid/OSHA
      a. Handling blood-contaminated tools
      b. Disposing of blood-contaminated objects

B. Sanitation and disinfection
   1. Personal hygiene
   2. Implements and tools
   3. Single-use items
   4. Applying products
   5. Prevention of infectious disease
   6. Cleaning and disinfecting work surfaces

II. CLIENT CONSULTATION/CONTACT (8-12%)

A. Ethics
B. Communication/Consultation
C. Record keeping
D. Analysis to provide proper service
   1. Face shape and structure
   2. Scalp and hair analysis

III. PHYSIOLOGY AND TRICHOLOGY (24-30%)

A. Diseases and disorders of hair and scalp
B. Anatomy of the head and neck
C. Hair structure and growth cycle
   1. Hair type and wave pattern

IV. SHAMPOO AND SCALP TREATMENTS (10-14%)

A. Purpose and chemistry of shampoos and conditioners
B. Scalp conditioning services
C. Procedure
D. Scalp Massage
E. Procedures for clients with special needs

V. BRAIDING (10-14%)

A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
C. Placement, design, and direction
D. Using extensions
E. Maintenance
F. Finishing techniques

VI. LOCK STYLE AND PROCEDURES (6-10%)

A. Purpose, definitions, and techniques
   1. Comb technique
   2. Palm roll
B. Tools, implements, materials, and products
C. Placement, design, and direction
D. Developmental phases
E. Maintenance