

Summary of Current Context – AOM Profession

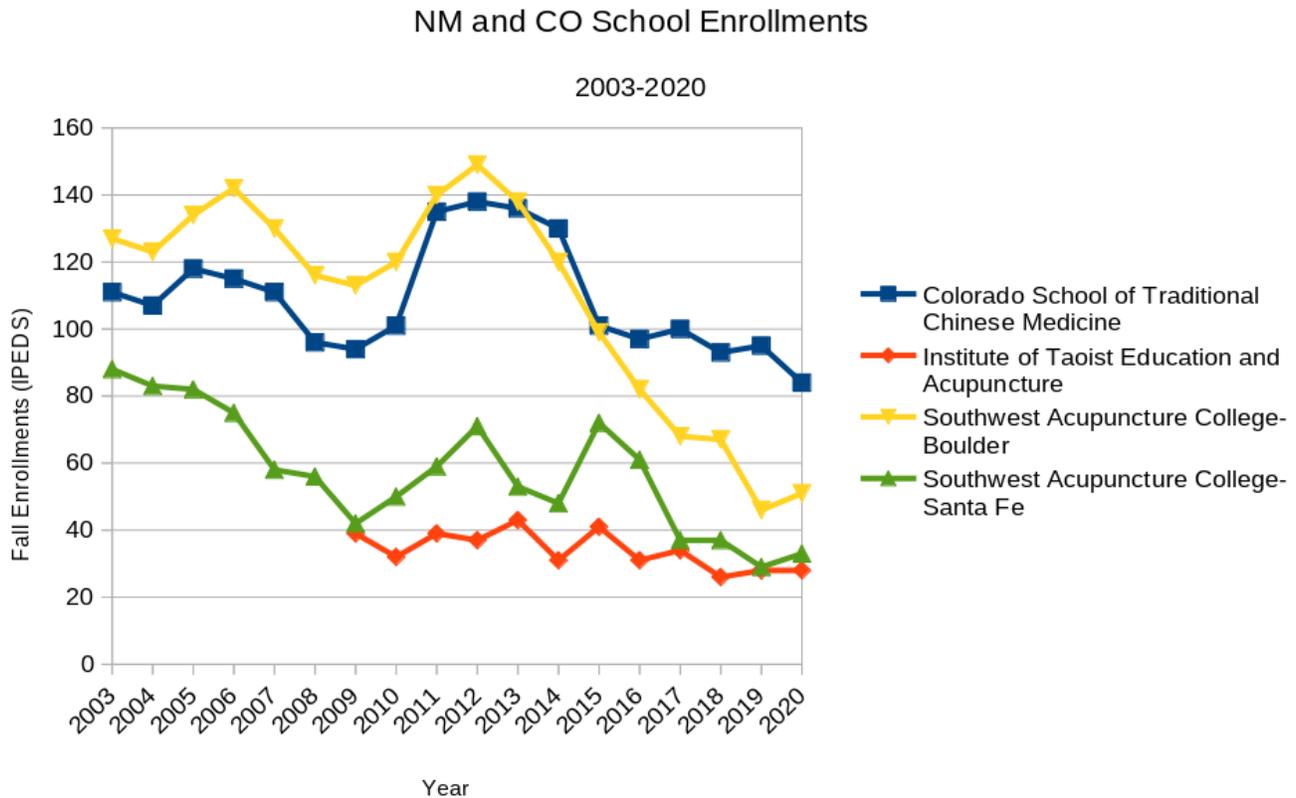
The following pages include some background information about the AOM profession in the USA. Sources include Google Trends databases (<https://trends.google.com>), the federal government's Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS - <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>), Acupuncture Today (<https://mailinglists.mpamedia.com/mpacms/cc/breakdown/acupuncturists.php>).

1. Acupuncturist Distributions in the USA in 2022

Rank	State	LAc's		AFEA Grads		% AFEA	Sch	Rank	State	LAc's		AFEA Grads		% AFEA	Sch
1	Maine	272		26		9.6%		31	Indiana	270		2		0.7%	
2	Alaska	137		9		6.6%		32	New Mexico	684		5		0.7%	X
3	Kentucky	108		6		5.6%		33	Ohio	417		3		0.7%	X
4	Vermont	220		12		5.5%		34	Hawaii	418		3		0.7%	X
5	Louisiana	87		4		4.6%		35	Utah	141		1		0.7%	
6	South Carolina	178		8		4.5%		36	Wisconsin	473		3		0.6%	X
7	New Hampshire	156		7		4.5%		37	Oregon	1643	23271 55%	8	58 12%	0.5%	X
8	Florida	2919	6302 15%	130	282 59%	4.5%	X	38	Idaho	206		1		0.5%	
9	Tennessee	249		11		4.4%		39	Illinois	1108		5		0.5%	X
10	North Carolina	631		25		4.0%	X	40	Minnesota	576		2		0.3%	X
11	Mississippi	26		1		3.8%		41	Arizona	847		2		0.2%	X
12	Iowa	80		3		3.8%		42	Connecticut	426		1		0.2%	X
13	Montana	135		5		3.7%		43	California	14137		21		0.1%	X
14	Rhode Island	112		4		3.6%		44	Texas	1925		1		0.1%	X
15	Georgia	485		17		3.5%		45	New Jersey	1293		0		0.0%	X
16	Virginia	507		14		2.8%		46	District of Columbia	88		0		0.0%	
17	West Virginia	39		1		2.6%		47	Nebraska	55		0		0.0%	
18	Missouri	186		4		2.2%		48	Delaware	48		0		0.0%	
19	Kansas	105		2		1.9%		49	Wyoming	46		0		0.0%	
20	Michigan	317		6		1.9%		50	South Dakota	23	1589 4%	0	0 0%	0.0%	
21	Nevada	192		3		1.6%	X	51	Puerto Rico	15		0		0.0%	
22	Arkansas	65		1		1.5%		52	North Dakota	14		0		0.0%	
23	Massachusetts	1504	11683 28%	23	152 32%	1.5%	X	53	Guam	5		0		0.0%	
24	Oklahoma	66		1		1.5%		54	Virgin Islands	2		0		0.0%	
25	Alabama	69		1		1.4%			US TOTAL	42338		478		1.1%	
26	Maryland	1035		13		1.3%	X								
27	New York	3511		40		1.1%	X								
28	Washington	1342		15		1.1%	X								
29	Pennsylvania	784		8		1.0%	X								
30	Colorado	1961		20		1.0%	X								

Comments: This table shows the total number of acupuncturists (LAc's) in US states in 2022, from Acupuncture Today magazine's practitioner density data. It also shows the number of AFEA/WICA grads, by state. States are ranked according to the proportion of all licensed practitioners in the state who are AFEA/WICA grads. The green zone represents areas of the country where more than 3% of practitioners are Academy or WICA grads. Yellow represents the states with 1%-3% AFEA grads. Orange represents the states with more than zero but less than 1%, and red represents areas of the country with zero AFEA graduates. Purple "X" cells indicate states which have at least one acupuncture school. Maine is the state with the highest proportion of AFEA/WICA grads (9.6%). Northern New England generally and states in the Southeastern US have high concentrations of AFEA grads. AFEA graduates appear to be disproportionately concentrated *in states without acupuncture schools*. For example, 59% of all AFEA graduates are located in only 15 states (green zone). Only two of those states (13%) have acupuncture schools (one of these is Florida). By contrast, only 15% of all US LAc's are located in those same 15 states. The orange zone represents the 14 states that have 55% of all LAc's in the USA, but only 12% of AFEA grads. Note that 11 of these 14 states (79%) also have acupuncture schools.

2. Recent Enrollments in AOM Schools in Two US States



Comments: This chart provides 17 years of data on acupuncture school enrollments (taken from IPEDS – <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/use-the-data>) from four AOM schools, located in two specific US states -- Colorado and New Mexico. Prior to the 2008 financial crash, enrollments were generally in decline. After 2009 there was a sharp uptick in enrollment, particularly noticeable at CSTCM (blue line) and SWAC/Boulder (yellow line). After about 2012, however, enrollments began declining again. This pattern of decline is particularly striking in the case of SWAC/Boulder, with enrollments dropping by two-thirds between 2012 and 2020. Enrollments at the smallest school in the group, ITEA (red line), remained generally stable from 2009 (earliest data) until about 2015, after which some evidence of decline has been apparent.

2.(A) - SWAC Closure Notification



Date: 08/05/2021

To our beloved community,

After 41 years of providing excellence in education in the field of acupuncture and Chinese herbal medicine, Southwest Acupuncture College will be ending our programs and closing on August 31, of 2023.

We will not be accepting any additional students and will hold no further interviews, tours, or open house events.

Our student clinic will continue to function normally until our final date of closure. For clinic appointments please call (505)438-8880 in Santa Fe or (303)581-9933 in Boulder.

We wish to thank everyone in our community for their support and wish you all health, prosperity, and the very best of fortune in all of your future endeavors.

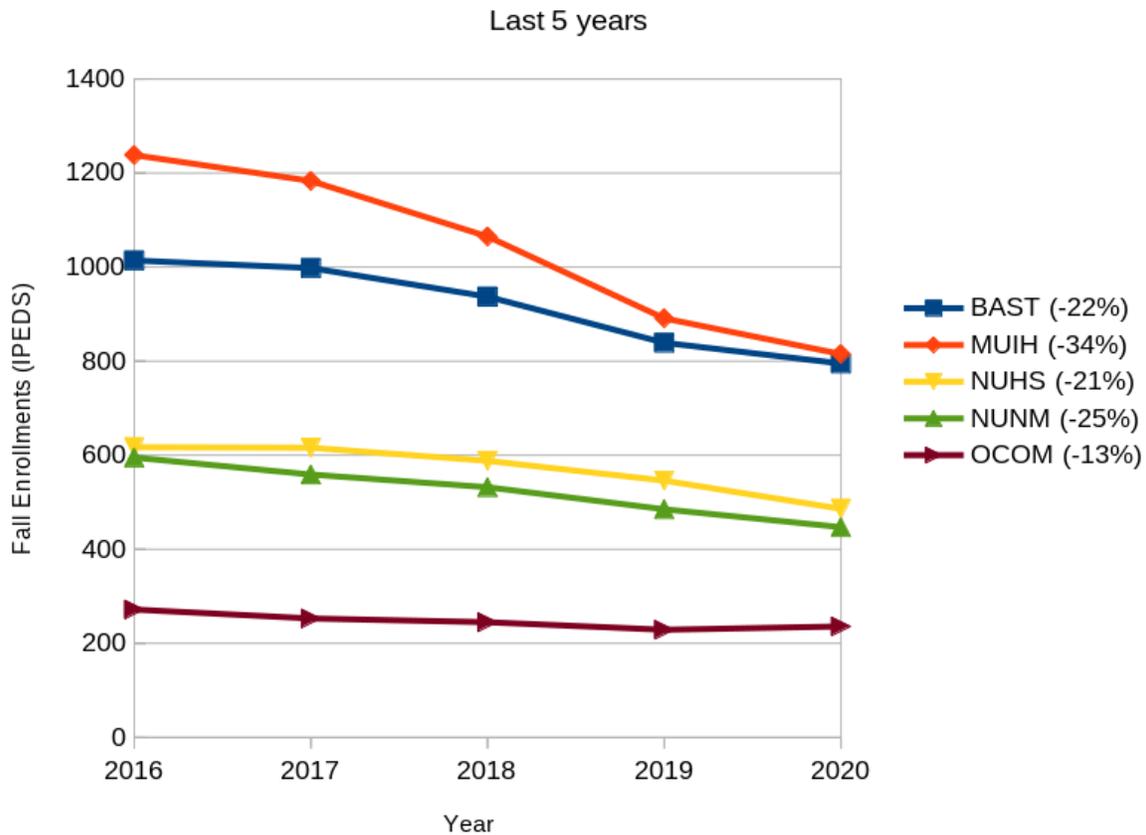
Sincerely,

Southwest Acupuncture College

Comments: The severely declining enrollment at SWAC since 2012, shown on the previous page, appears to have contributed to the decision to close the school's two campuses, after 41 years of operations. This pattern of declining enrollments is not just apparent in Colorado and New Mexico, but all over the country.

3. Other Evidence of Enrollment Challenges in AOM Colleges

Enrollments, Large Multipurpose Schools & OCOM



BAST = Bastyr University (Kenmore, WA)

MUIH = Maryland University of Integrative Health (Laurel, MD)

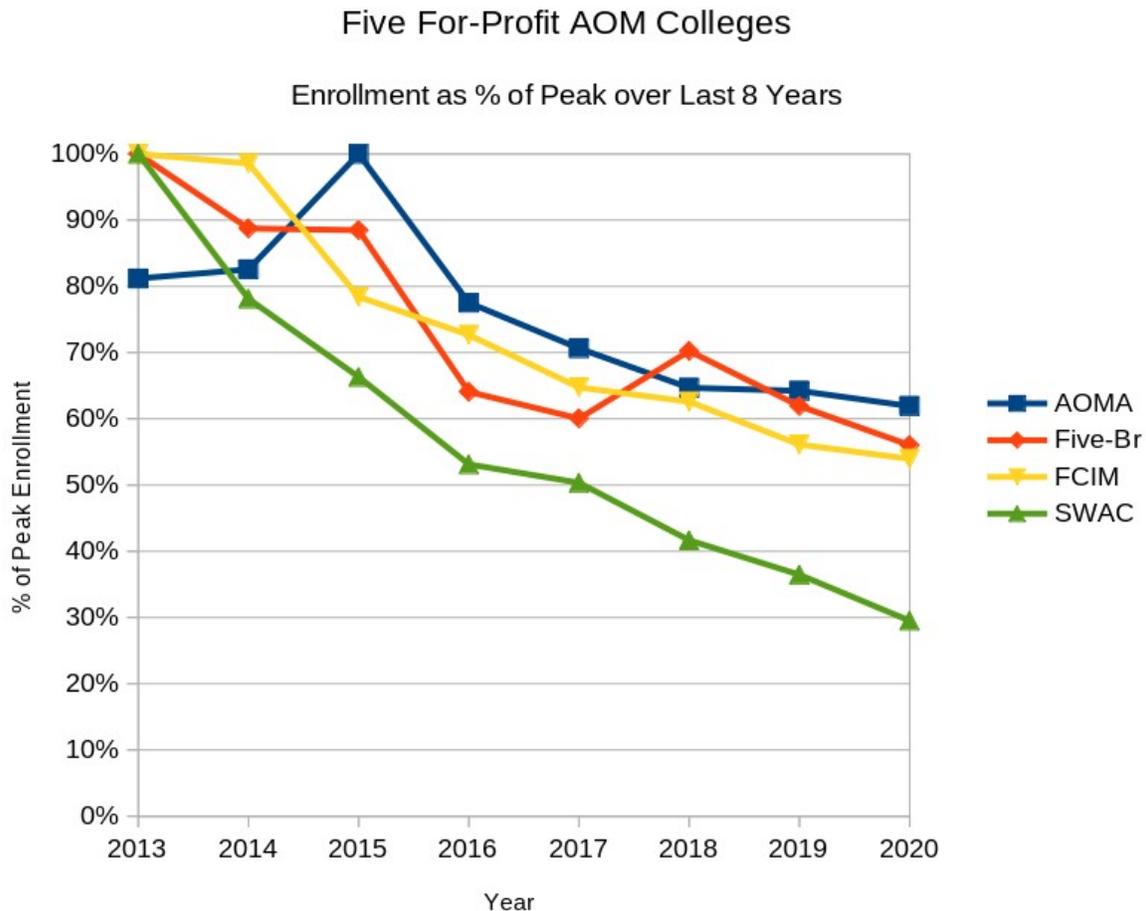
NUHS = National University of Health Sciences (Lombard, IL)

NUNM = National University of Natural Medicine (Portland, OR)

OCOM = Oregon College of Oriental Medicine (Portland, OR)

Comments: Numerous larger multipurpose institutions offer AOM programs as well as other programs such as chiropractic and naturopathic medicine. Four such institutions are shown above, plus a larger single-purpose school, OCOM. All five institutions show similar declining patterns of enrollments during the period shown, ranging from 34% decline (MUIH) to 13% decline (OCOM).

4. Enrollment Trends in For-Profit Colleges



AOMA = AOMA Graduate School of Integrative Medicine (Austin, TX)

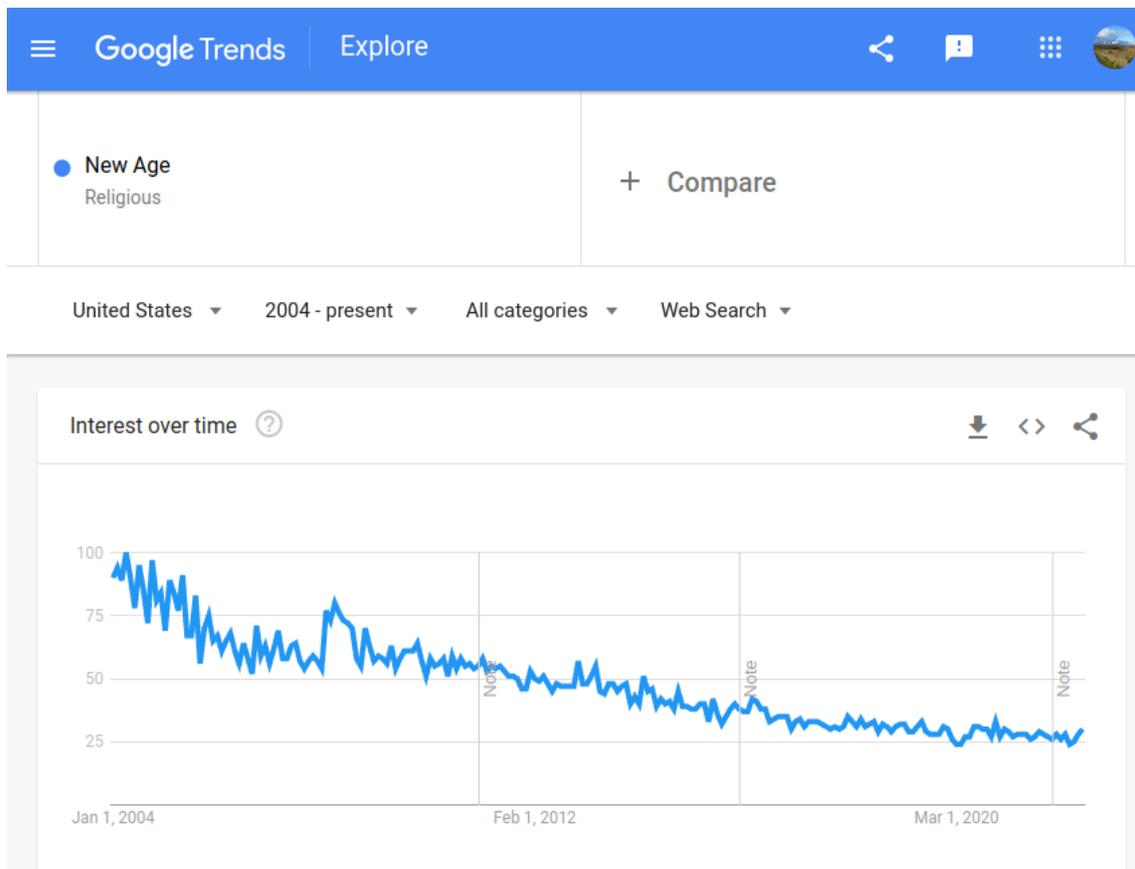
Five-Br = Five Branches University (San Jose & Santa Cruz, CA)

FCIM = Florida College of Integrative Medicine (Orlando, FL)

SWAC = Southwest Acupuncture College (Boulder, CO)

Comments: This chart shows enrollment patterns over the past 8 years for four for-profit AOM colleges around the US. The peak enrollment during the period for each college is scaled as “100%” and other years’ numbers are calculated as a % of that peak enrollment. For three of the colleges, the peak year was 2013, while the other college (AOMA) peaked in 2015. Since that time, all four colleges have shown strong declining enrollments, with three of the group declining to approximately 60% of their peak enrollment by 2020. The remaining college (SWAC) declined more steeply, to only 30% of its peak enrollment.

5. Google Search Trends - "New Age"



Comments: Since 2004, Google has collected data on the searches that its users undertake. This chart reflects searches on the specific term "New Age". It suggests a long term (18 year) declining trend, and implies decreasing interest in the subject.

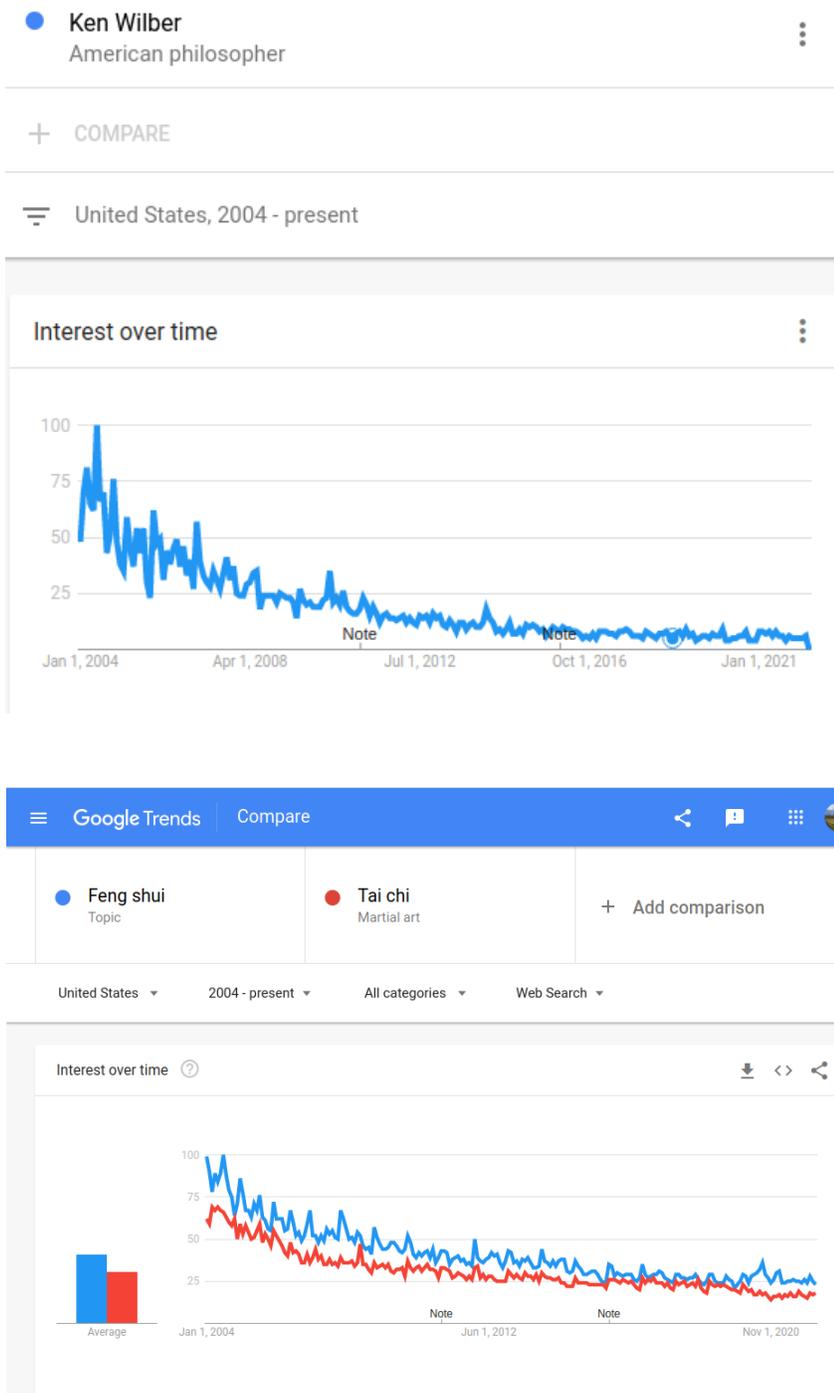
Antecedents [\[edit\]](#)

According to scholar [Nevill Drury](#), the New Age has a "tangible history",^[46] although Hanegraaff expressed the view that most New Agers were "surprisingly ignorant about the actual historical roots of their beliefs".^[47] Similarly, Hammer thought that "source amnesia" was a "building block of a New Age worldview", with New Agers typically adopting ideas with no awareness of where those ideas originated.^[48]



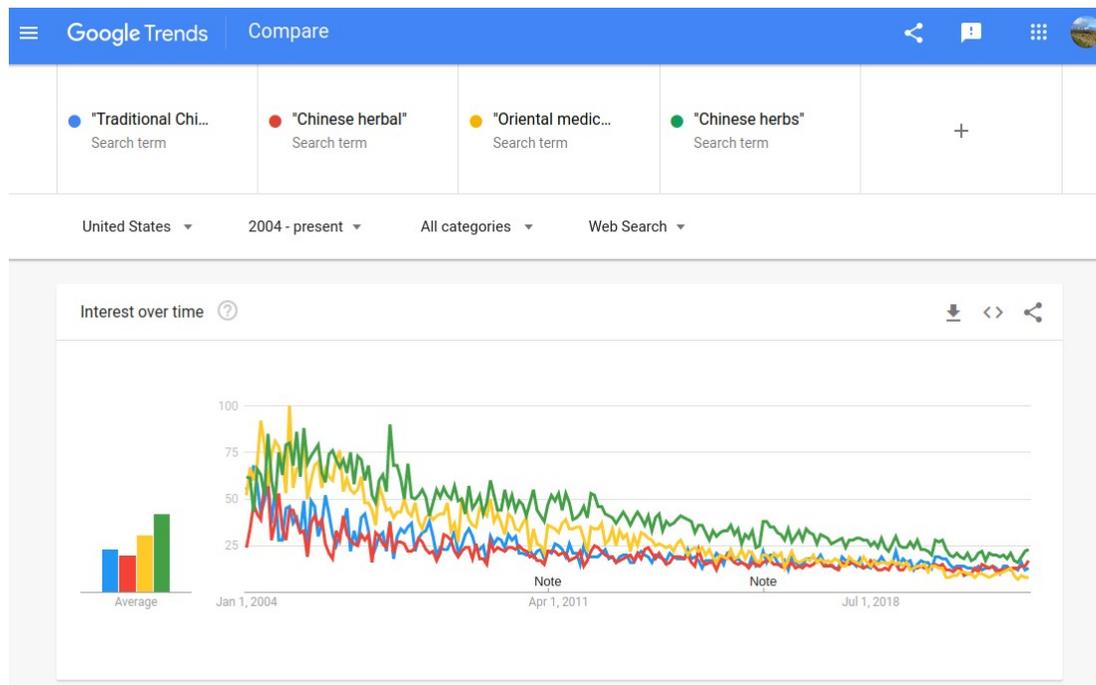
Prominent esoteric thinkers who influenced the New Age include [Helena Blavatsky](#) (left) and [Carl Jung](#) (right).

6. Google Search Trends – Other “New Age” Related Subjects



Comments: Ken Wilber has sometimes been referred to as the “philosopher of the New Age”. Google Trends data suggest that searches on his name have declined sharply since 2004. Similar declining trends are also apparent for the terms “feng shui” and “tai chi”.

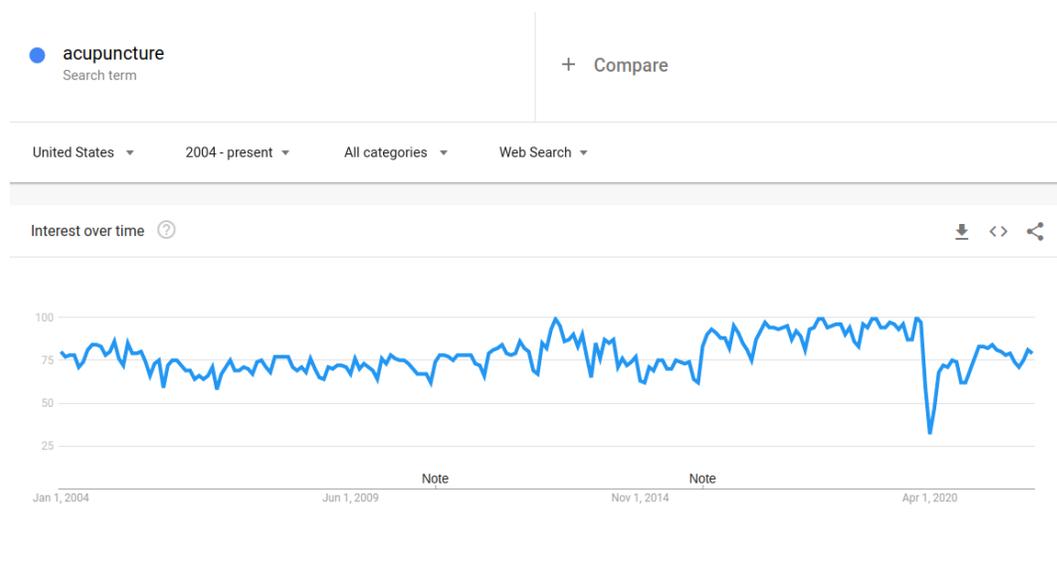
7. Google Search Trends – Acupuncture and Related



Comments: Four Google Search terms are included here:

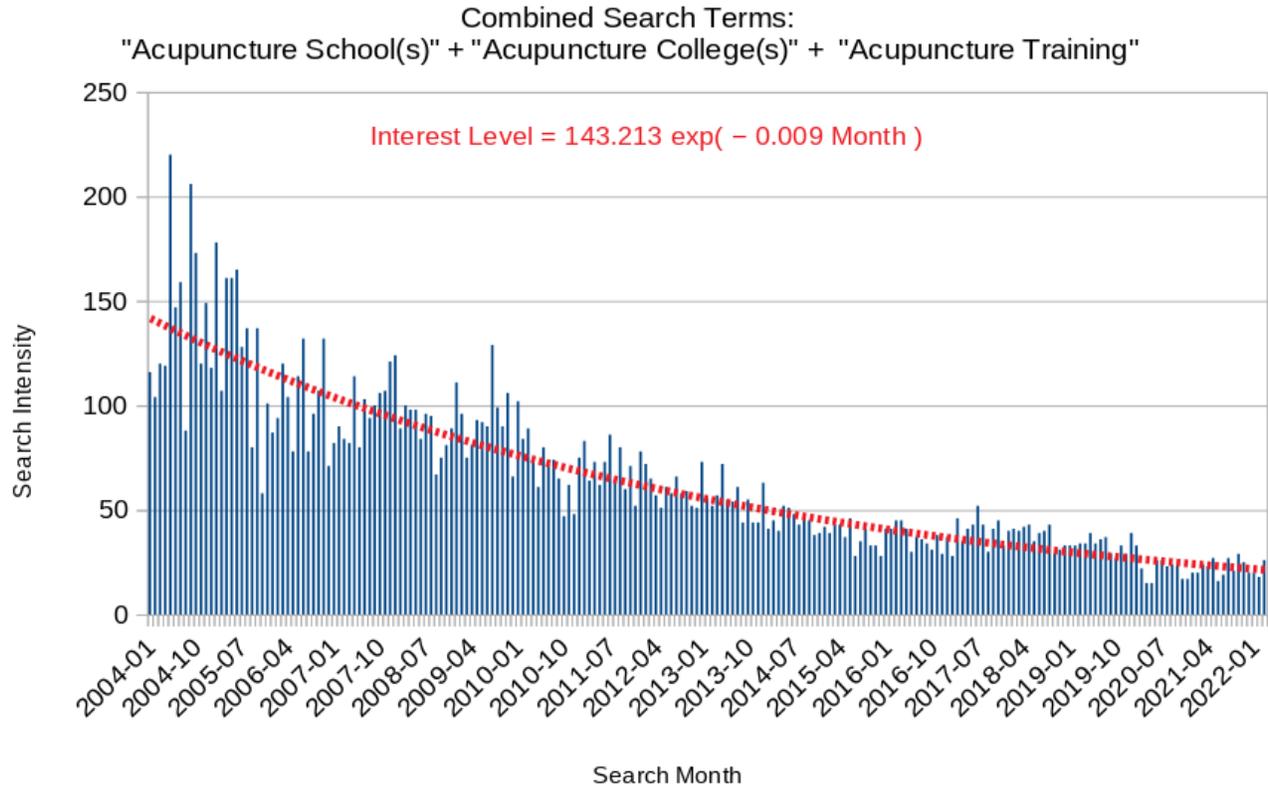
- *"Traditional Chinese Medicine"*
- *"Chinese herbal"*
- *"Oriental medicine"*
- *"Chinese herbs"*

All four terms show declining search interest during the period 2004 – 2022. By contrast, the term "acupuncture" alone (below) shows slightly increasing search interest over time, except for the period at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic.



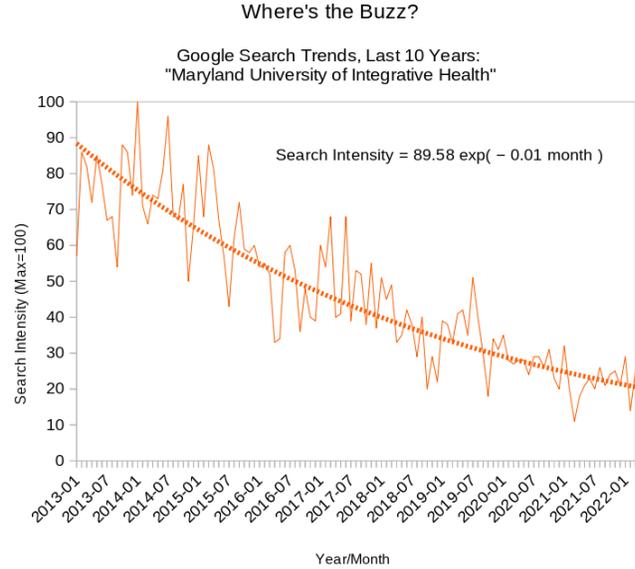
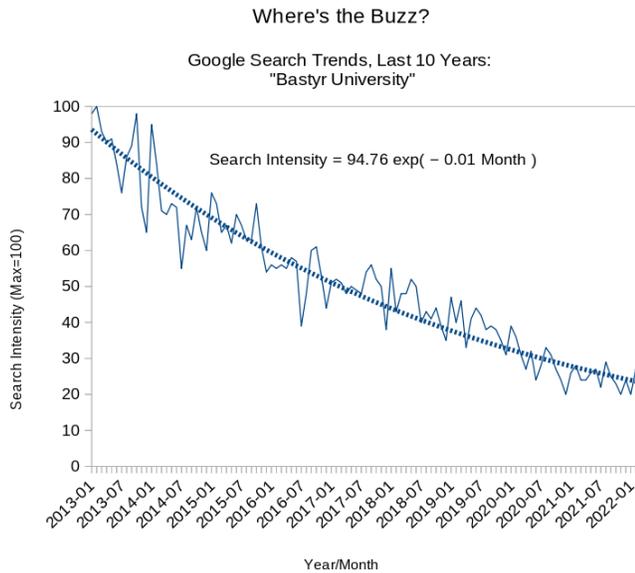
8. Search Interest: Acupuncture Schools and Acupuncture as a Career

Google Search Trends - 2004-2022



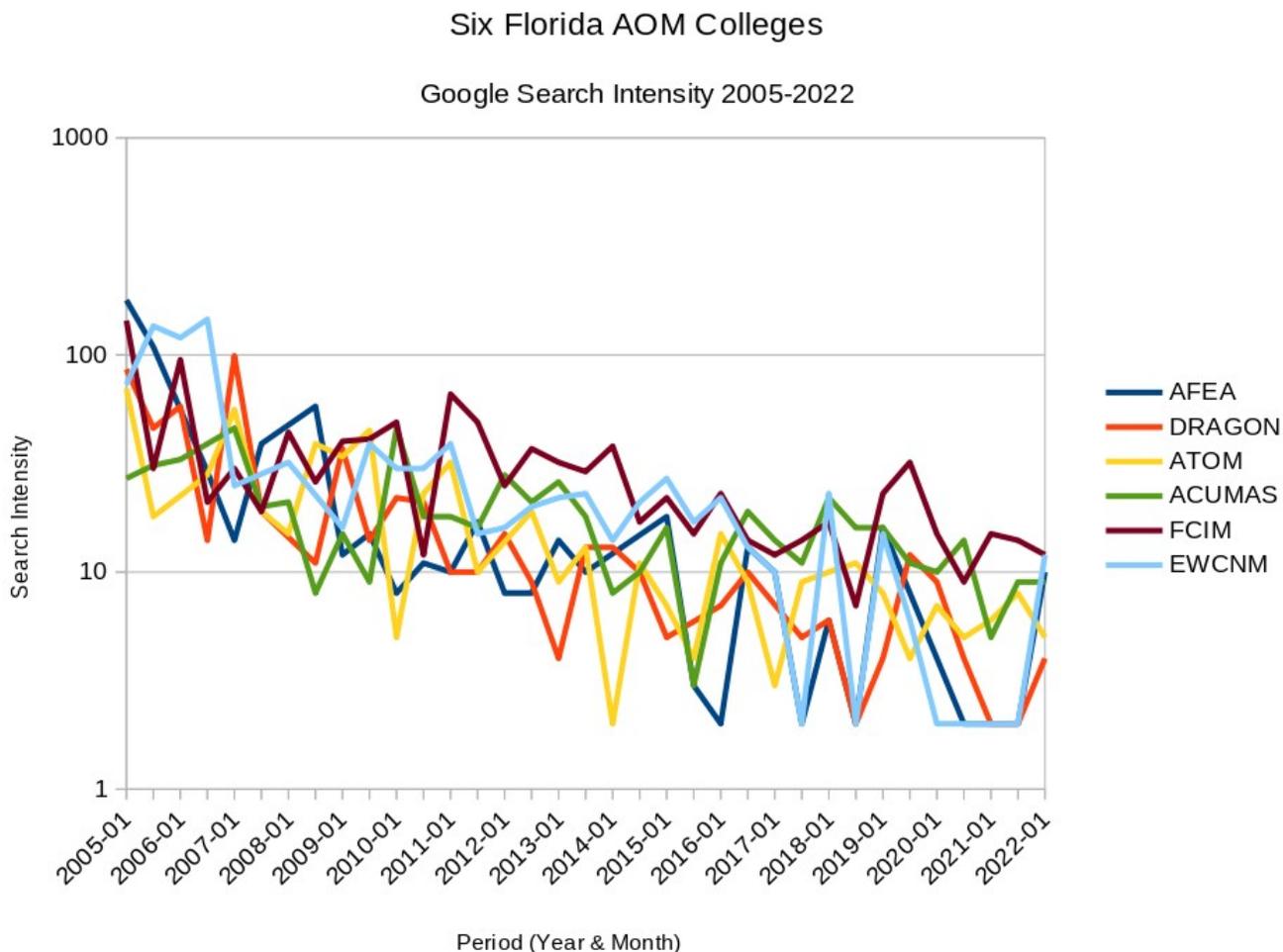
Comments: This chart shows 18 years of Google Trends data on searches related to acupuncture schools or acupuncture training, of the sort that might be utilized by prospective students seeking information online. Overall the trend is clearly declining. Interest level appears, specifically, to be decreasing exponentially. Declines are evident at approximately 1% each month.

9. Search Interest – Two Large Multipurpose Universities



Comments: These two charts show Google Trends search interest in two widely geographically separated multipurpose universities offering AOM programs (Bastyr University and Maryland University of Integrative Health). They show almost identical patterns of declining interest over the last 10 years. Specifically trends in both cases suggest exponential decay patterns, with constant 1% per month declines evident.

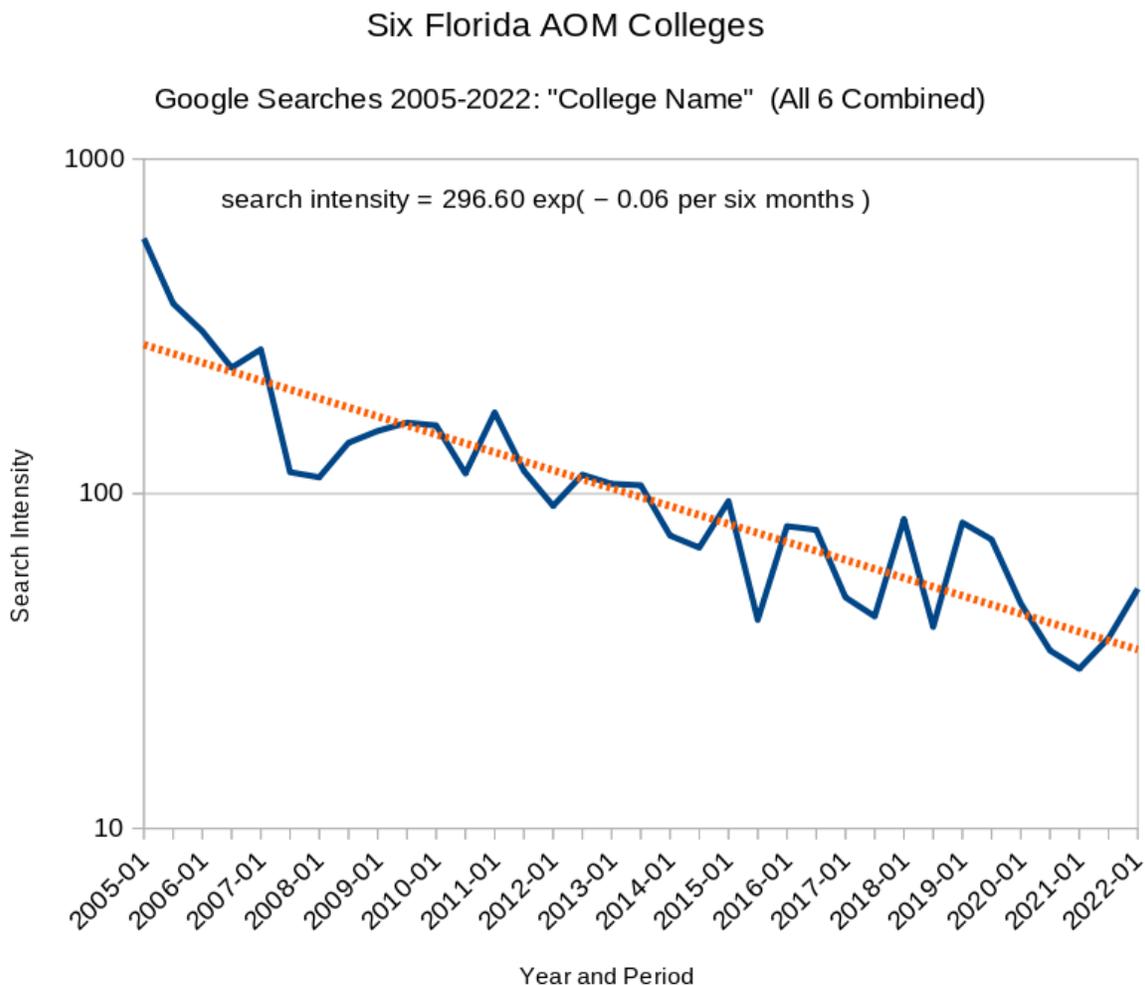
10. Interest in Individual Florida AOM Colleges – last 18 years



AFEA = Academy for Five Element Acupuncture (Gainesville)
Dragon = Dragon Rises College of Oriental Medicine (Gainesville)
ATOM = Atlantic Institute of Oriental Medicine (Fort Lauderdale)
ACUMAS = Acupuncture Massage College (Miami)
FCIM = Florida College of Integrative Medicine (Orlando)
EWCNM = East West College of Natural Medicine (Sarasota)

Comments: Long-term Google Search intensity on the specific names of six AOM colleges in Florida indicate declining interest over long periods of time. While the data is rather “noisy”, the overall patterns of decline are clear, and none of the colleges seems to be immune from the trend.

11. Interest in Any Florida AOM College – last 18 years



Comments: This data shows Google Trends search data, and uses aggregated data for searches on *any* of the names of the 6 current Florida based AOM colleges. This also suggests a long-term exponential decline – in this case, a 6% decline every 6 months – or approximately a 1% decline per month, over the past 18 years.

12. Accredited US Schools and Doctoral Education

Current ACAHM Statistics as of June 2022

Number of accredited colleges	:	51
Separate campuses	:	55
Change since 2007	:	18% decline since 2007 (previously 62 colleges)

Number of Accredited Master's Degree and Herbs Certificate Programs

M.Ac.	:	28
M.Ac.Ch.M.	:	41
Herbs Certificate	:	12

Number of Accredited Doctoral Programs

D.A.O.M. (advanced practice)	:	12
D.Ac.	:	6
D.Ac.Ch.M.	:	16

D.Ac. Programs

- Bastyr University
- Five Branches University
- Maryland University of Integrative Health
- MCPHS University
- Pacific College of Health and Science
- Virginia University of Integrative Medicine

D.Ac.Ch.M. Programs

- Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine College, Berkeley
- American College of Acupuncture and Oriental Medicine
- AOMA Graduate School of Integrative Medicine
- California Institute of Integral Studies
- Daoist Traditions College of Chinese Medical Arts
- Dongguk University Los Angeles
- Five Branches University
- Maryland University of Integrative Health
- MCPHS University
- National University of Natural Medicine
- Northwestern Health Sciences University
- Pacific College of Health and Science
- Seattle Institute of East Asian Medicine
- Southern California University of Health Sciences
- University of Bridgeport
- Virginia University of Integrative Medicine

13. Small Nonprofit AOM Schools – Our Peers!

The following list shows 12 ACAHM-accredited non-profit AOM schools with annual budgets of under \$3,000,000. This group represents the schools that are most similar to us in terms of organization and scale. Three are in Florida, and four are in California.

Florida

- Academy for Five Element Acupuncture, Gainesville FL
- Atlantic Institute of Oriental Medicine, Fort Lauderdale FL
- Dragon Rises College of Oriental Medicine, Gainesville FL

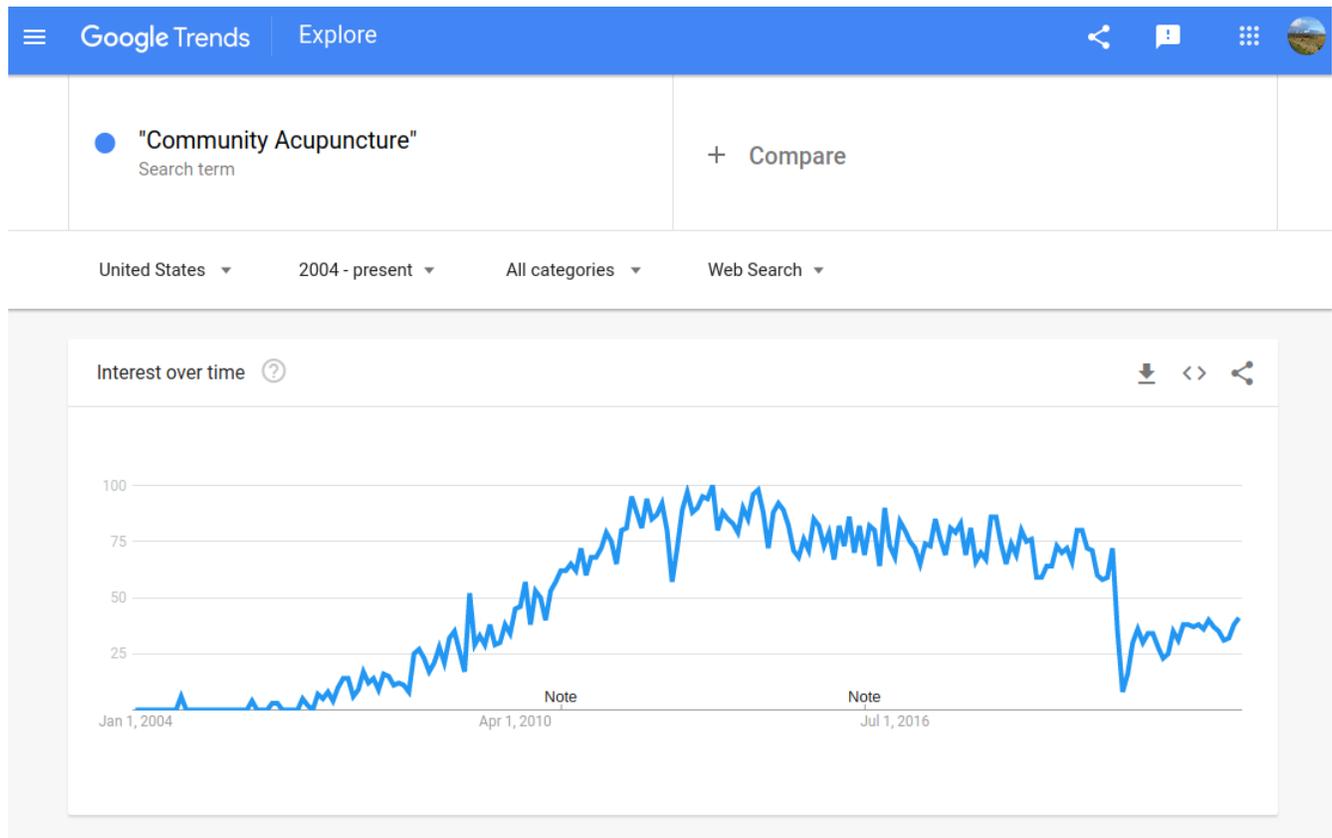
California

- Academy of Chinese Culture and Health Sciences, Oakland CA
- Acupuncture & Integrative Medicine College, Berkeley, Berkeley CA
- Dongguk University, Los Angeles CA
- Yo San University of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Los Angeles CA

Other States

- Institute of Taoist Education and Acupuncture, Louisville CO
- Jung Tao School of Classical Chinese Medicine, Boone NC
- POCA Technical Institute, Portland OR
- Wongu University of Oriental Medicine, Las Vegas NV
- Won Institute of Graduate Studies, Warminster PA

14. Community Acupuncture



Comments: This chart from Google Trends reflects the growth of the “community acupuncture” movement in the US since 2006, originally conceived by Lise Rohleder and Skip Van Meter in Portland, OR. Many cities in the US now have CA-style practices based on the Rohleder model, most of which are non-profit or cooperative in form. The model generally involves large rooms furnished with recliner chairs, with multiple patients being treated simultaneously, typically at very low cost. The model has opened up acupuncture services to many low-income patients. The chart also reveals the extent of the adverse impact of the COVID pandemic on CA services in 2020.