NUCCA
NATIONAL UPPER CERVICAL CHIROPRACTIC ASSOCIATION

Fall 2026 NUCCA Conference Class Descriptions
November 12-14, 2026 | Minneapolis, MN

***** Please note that Wednesday's course is only available to NUCCA board certified doctors *****

Wednesday, November 11

Advanced Clinical Integration: Biomechanical Assessment, Diagnostic Imaging & Adjusting
This comprehensive course integrates sophisticated adjusting techniques with advanced diagnostic imaging interpretation for experienced practitioners. Participants will master correlating radiographic findings with biomechanical dysfunction, enabling precise clinical decision-making for complex cases through hands-on technique refinement and advanced imaging analysis.

***** Please note that Wednesday's course is only available to NUCCA board certified doctors *****

INTRO – Level I

Thursday, November 12

Celebration of 60 Years of NUCCA (all levels)
Instructors: Dr. Glenn Cripe, Board Certified, Dr. Barbara Read, Board Certified, Dr. Jason Granger, Board Certified & Dr Catherine Zabelin
Celebrate six decades of NUCCA by exploring the organization's history, landmark achievements, and the individuals who shaped its evolution. Gain a deeper appreciation for the principles that continue to guide precision upper cervical care today.

NUCCA Protocol
Instructors: Dr. Glenn Cripe, Board Certified & Dr. Levi Wainwright, Board Certified
This class is an overview of NUCCA treatment protocols and basic terminology. Topics include a brief history of NUCCA, the unique complexities of the upper cervical region, terminology related to NUCCA x-ray analysis and biomechanics, and assessment protocols utilized by NUCCA.

Leg Check
Instructors: Dr. Michael Foran, Board Certified & Dr. Jason Langslet, Board Certified
Review the protocol and hands-on experience for the supine leg check portion of the examination.

S Line
Instructor: Dr. Marcella Ziska, Board Certified
This class will be an introduction of the purpose of the S-Line, how to draw it, and how to then properly take a Nasium radiograph. It will briefly review how to tell what S-Line a Nasium view was taken at.

XRay Positioning
Instructors: Dr. Michael Zabelin, Board Certified & Dr. Michael Russamano
A level one class beginning with a power point presentation on the requirements and procedures in correct patient placement for the NUCCA views. The remainder of the class will be practical, with live demonstration and attending DCs and students setting classmates for the views.

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Friday, November 13

Structural Analysis Part I
Instructors: Dr. Barbara Read, Board Certified & Dr. Daiki Ishiyama, Board Certified
Overview x-ray analysis, height vector, rotation vector, and torque. Criteria for good films and examples of unacceptable films. Specific analysis on the lateral x-ray and the points on the vertex x-ray.

Intro to Adjusting I
Instructor: Dr. Marcella Ziska, Board Certified
The 8 phases and 27 individual steps of the NUCCA adjustment. Explain each phase and step so doctors understand what is accomplishing with each step. Practice drills with individual feedback on performance.

Intro to Biomechanics
Instructor: Dr. Hannah Orem, Board Certified
This class serves as an introduction to the biomechanics of the NUCCA protocol. Its focus is on the concept of the condylar-axial relationship and how this important factor influences frontal plane movement at the craniocervical junction.

Vector Calculation
Instructor: Dr. Hannah Orem, Board Certified
This class will cover the biomechanical rational for how to obtain the height and rotation adjustment vector from the x-ray analysis but only as starting point, the class will also explain how to use the vertical axis and other basic understandings of biomechanics to raise or lower the vector depending on the resistances involved in the case.

Optical Considerations for the NUCCA Practioner (all levels)
Instructor: Dr. Zelinsky, Zelinsky, O.D., F.N.O.R.A., F.C.O.V.D.
This presentation will explore the relationship between visual processing, retinal stimulation, vestibular integration, proprioceptive systems, and upper cervical biomechanics. Attendees will gain insight into collaborative care models between neuro-optometry and upper cervical chiropractic care, including discussion of a patient case involving an upper cervical practitioner.

Saturday, November 14

Research Overview *(all levels)*
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will be an overview of the current research NUCCA colleagues, and the Upper Cervical Research Foundation (UCRF) are working on.

Structural Analysis Part II
Instructors: Dr. Barbara Read, Board Certified & Dr. Daiki Ishiyama, Board Certified
Overview x-ray analysis, height vector, rotation vector, and torque. Criteria for good films and examples of unacceptable films. Specific analysis on the lateral x-ray and the points on the vertex x-ray.

Headpiece Placement
Instructors: Dr. Kurt Sherwood, Board Certified & Dr. Jason Langslet, Board Certified
Lecture demonstration and participation providing an understanding and practical application in the use of the mastoid headpiece.

Intro to Adjusting II
Instructor: Dr. Michael Russamano, Board Certified
The 8 phases and 27 individual steps of the NUCCA adjustment. Explain each phase and step so doctors understand what is accomplishing with each step. Practice drills with individual feedback on performance.

NUCCA Review Q&A
Instructors: Dr. Glenn Cripe, Board Certified & Dr. Marcella Ziska, Board Certified
This class will allow introductory / students to review the NUCCA technique while having an open forum to seek immediate feedback on protocol, adjusting techniques, and case studies.

INTRO – Level II

Thursday, November 12

Celebration of 60 Years of NUCCA (all levels)
Instructor: Dr. Glenn Cripe, Board Certified, Dr. Barbara Read, Board Certified, Dr. Jason Granger, Board Certified & Dr Catherine Zabelin
Celebrate six decades of NUCCA by exploring the organization's history, landmark achievements, and the individuals who shaped its evolution. Gain a deeper appreciation for the principles that continue to guide precision upper cervical care today.

NUCCA Standards Update (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will review any updates to the standards and protocol of the National Upper Cervical Chiropractic Association (NUCCA).

Navigating Complex X-Ray Setups
Instructor: Dr. Michael Zabelin, Board Certified
Develop practical strategies for obtaining accurate NUCCA radiographs in challenging clinical situations. This course explores patient positioning considerations and problem-solving techniques to achieve diagnostic-quality images while maintaining adherence to NUCCA imaging protocols.

Intermediate Biomechanics
Instructor: Dr. David Packer, Board Certified
Basic Types with the resistances encountered and what to do with LOD and Mastoid Support to overcome those resistances as a review for the first part of the Class followed by Pre-and Post-Case studies. If I get enough Type 1's I will show the variations and how the Biomechanics changes.

Advanced Adjusting: Developing a Consistent Roll-In (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Tymothy Flory, Board Certified
Refine the mechanics of the NUCCA adjustment by focusing on developing a smooth, reproducible roll-in. This course emphasizes body positioning, force generation, and consistency to improve precision and patient outcomes.

Friday, November 13

Contact Point
Instructors: Dr. Hannah Orem, Board Certified & Dr. Marcella Ziska, Board Certified
Master the nuances of achieving an accurate contact point for the NUCCA adjustment. This course explores the anatomical, biomechanical, and practical considerations that influence precise force delivery.

Certification Review (Level II and III)
Instructors: Dr. Daiki Ishiyama, Board Certified & Dr. Craig Lapinski, Board Certified
This class is designed to demonstrate what constitutes a well taken radiograph of the head and cervical vertebra required to perform a NUCCA analysis. Actual x-rays submitted by certification candidates will be used to illustrate both proper positioning as well as common errors.

Adjusting Drills
Instructor: Dr. Jason Granger, Board Certified
This course will be a breakout using the tools we've learned in adjusting classroom courses and provides hands-on technique feedback from credentialed instructors.

Optical Considerations for the NUCCA Practioner (all levels)
Instructor: Dr. Zelinsky, Zelinsky, O.D., F.N.O.R.A., F.C.O.V.D.
This presentation will explore the relationship between visual processing, retinal stimulation, vestibular integration, proprioceptive systems, and upper cervical biomechanics. Attendees will gain insight into collaborative care models between neuro-optometry and upper cervical chiropractic care, including discussion of a patient case involving an upper cervical practitioner.

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Research Overview *(all levels)*
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will be an overview of the current research NUCCA colleagues, and the Upper Cervical Research Foundation (UCRF) are working on.

Troubleshooting Adjusting Errors
Instructor: Dr. David Packer, Board Certified
Learn to identify and correct common errors that can affect the accuracy and effectiveness of the NUCCA adjustment. Through case examples and practical strategies, participants will develop a systematic approach to improving adjustment consistency.

Structural Asymmetries (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will review the frequently observed structural asymmetries see on the NUCCA radiographs, how they can influence the NUCCA analysis protocols, and how to accommodate the analysis to accurately identify the biomechanical misalignment factors contributing the Atlas Subluxation Complex.

Advanced Headpiece Placement (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Vince Fitzpatrick
Optimize patient positioning through advanced headpiece placement techniques that support adjustment accuracy. Participants will learn to recognize subtle positioning variables that can influence clinical outcomes.

INTERMEDIATE / ADVANCED – LEVEL III

Thursday, November 12

Celebration of 60 Years of NUCCA (all levels)
Instructor: Dr. Glenn Cripe, Board Certified, Dr. Barbara Read, Board Certified, Dr. Jason Granger, Board Certified & Dr Catherine Zabelin
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NUCCA Standards Update (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will review any updates to the standards and protocol of the National Upper Cervical Chiropractic Association (NUCCA).

Out of Pattern Biomechanics
Instructor: Dr. Vince Fitzpatrick, Board Certified
In the Out of Pattern Biomechanics class, we will be exploring the different ways of getting out of pattern cases to reduce. We will look at the influence of headpiece placement and a rationale for changing the vector.

Advanced Adjusting: Developing a Consistent Roll-In (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Tymothy Flory, Board Certified
Master the nuances of achieving an accurate contact point for the NUCCA adjustment. This course explores the anatomical, biomechanical, and practical considerations that influence precise force delivery.

Friday, November 13

Working Through Challenging Cases
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This course covers reviewing many x-rays and having the participants discover common obstacles to excellent image quality. It will also incorporate biomechanical discussions and theory as well as headpiece placement relative to the subluxation and its reduction.

Certification Review (Level II and III)
Instructors: Dr. Daiki Ishiyama, Board Certified & Dr. Craig Lapinski, Board Certified
This class is designed to demonstrate what constitutes a well taken radiograph of the head and cervical vertebra required to perform a NUCCA analysis. Actual x-rays submitted by certification candidates will be used to illustrate both proper positioning as well as common errors.

Advanced Imaging CBCT
Instructors: Dr. Daiki Ishiyama, Board Certified & Dr. Levi Wainwright, Board Certified
Explore the role of cone beam computed tomography (CBCT) in NUCCA analysis and patient assessment. This course examines image acquisition, interpretation, and clinical applications while considering radiation stewardship and case selection.

Optical Considerations for the NUCCA Practioner (all levels)
Instructor: Dr. Zelinsky, Zelinsky, O.D., F.N.O.R.A., F.C.O.V.D.
This presentation will explore the relationship between visual processing, retinal stimulation, vestibular integration, proprioceptive systems, and upper cervical biomechanics. Attendees will gain insight into collaborative care models between neuro-optometry and upper cervical chiropractic care, including discussion of a patient case involving an upper cervical practitioner.

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Historical Perspectives from the Monographs
Instructors: Dr. Jack Stockwell, Board Certified
Revisit the foundational NUCCA monographs to better understand the clinical reasoning, research, and philosophy that established the protocol. Participants will connect historical concepts with their relevance to modern NUCCA practice.

Structural Asymmetries (Level II and III)
Instructor: Dr. Craig Lapenski, Board Certified
This class will review the frequently observed structural asymmetries see on the NUCCA radiographs, how they can influence the NUCCA analysis protocols, and how to accommodate the analysis to accurately identify the biomechanical misalignment factors contributing the Atlas Subluxation Complex.

Advanced Headpiece Placement (Level II and III)
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