

## Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) OVERVIEW

### About ACME

The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education has been recognized by the U.S. Department of Education (under 'Health Care') as a programmatic accrediting agency for nurse-midwifery education programs since 1982. In 1994, ACME approved criteria to accredit direct-entry midwifery education programs; the first program was preaccredited in April 1996. ACME currently accredits programs offering nurse-midwifery and midwifery programs. ACME is administratively and financially autonomous from the American College of Nurse-Midwives.

### Mission

The mission of the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is to advance excellence in midwifery education.

### Vision

ACME as the recognized accrediting body for midwifery education, will assure expansion of high quality midwifery education through the accreditation process, knowledge sharing, and consultation. ACME will foster diversity in the organization and the workforce reflecting the communities served. ACME will influence the quality, accessibility and innovation of midwifery education at regional, national, and global levels. ACME will promote a robust midwifery workforce reflecting high quality education and resulting in excellent health outcomes for women and newborns. AMCE will create innovative pathways to midwifery education accreditation.

### Operational structure of the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education

ACME consists of four units:

- **Board of Commissioners (BOC)** is responsible for the administration of ACME's activities, formulation of policy, and the development of the criteria used by the BOR in determining accreditation status.
- **Board of Review (BOR)** is responsible for review and determination of pre/accreditation status for midwifery education programs. BOR members evaluate programs based on Annual Monitoring Reports, Preaccreditation Reports, Self-Evaluation Reports, and Site Visit Reports.
- **Site Visitor Panel (SVP)** arranges, conducts, and evaluates accreditation visits to midwifery education programs.
- **Advisory Committee (AC)** is composed of members representing nursing, medicine, education, public health, and the general public, as well as the immediate past chair of ACME. The committee advises in the development of policy and evaluation of ACME.

## Values

- ACME values competency based midwifery education.
- ACME values accreditation through a process of peer partnership to assure excellence in midwifery education.
- ACME values diversity and inclusiveness.
- ACME values continuous quality improvement in the education of midwifery students.
- ACME values communication and collaboration with the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM), American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB), and other relevant stakeholders.

## The Accreditation Process

- If an accredited institution of higher education wishes to start a midwifery education program or an already-existing program wishes to apply for continuing accreditation, the CEO of the institution contacts the Chair of the BOC and the ACME Executive Director to initiate the process.
- While the program prepares its PAR or SER, dates for a site visit are arranged with the ACME administrative assistant and the coordinator of the site visitor panel. The coordinator recruits two site visitors, one of whom is designated as the senior site visitor.
- During the site visit, usually lasting three days, the site visitors conduct interviews with administrators, faculty and students, review documents and resources, and visit program facilities. The purpose of the site visit is to clarify, verify, or amplify information that the program or institution has presented in its PAR or SER and to summarize that information in a report that the site visitors prepare for the ACME Board of Review. The site visitors make observations, but not decisions regarding accreditation status.
- The ACME BOR, which meets twice per year (typically in February and July), carefully reviews all of the information submitted by a program and the site visitors, and makes decisions about preaccreditation or accreditation status. The maximum length of preaccreditation granted to a program is for five years and the maximum length of continued accreditation is for ten years. The BOR may grant accreditation without recommendations for improvement, with recommendations which are not mandatory, grant accreditation while pending submission of mandatory progress reports, or deny accreditation.
- ACME monitors programs annually by use of Annual Monitoring Reports (AMR). All changes in programs must be reported to ACME in advance for consideration. Further action may be required depending on the nature of the change.

- There are annual and other fees associated with ACME accreditation. [See Appendix I](#) in the *ACME Policies and Procedures Manual*.

### Relevant Documents

A number of documents are used to guide the accreditation process. The most important are the following:

- The [ACME Policies and Procedures Manual](#) specifies procedures to be followed by the midwifery education programs and ACME, lists the possible outcomes of the BOR deliberations, and describes the appeal process that is available.
- The [Criteria for Programmatic Preaccreditation of Midwifery Education Programs with Instructions for Elaboration and Documentation](#) lists the criteria that a **new** program must meet and address in a Preaccreditation Report (PAR) in order to receive preaccredited status from the ACME BOR. After graduation of its first class of students, a preaccredited program is eligible to apply for initial accreditation.
- The [Criteria for Programmatic Accreditation of Midwifery Education Programs with Instructions for Elaboration and Documentation](#) lists the criteria that an **established** program must meet and address in a Self-Evaluation Report (SER) in order to receive accredited status from the ACME BOR.
- The program must describe how its philosophy is congruent with the [Philosophy of the American College of Nurse-Midwives \(ACNM\)](#).
- The [ACNM Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice](#) describes all of the hallmarks and competencies of midwifery practice that must be addressed in the curriculum of the program seeking accreditation.

The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is recognized by the United States Department of Education as a programmatic accrediting agency for certificate, post-baccalaureate, graduate degree and pre-certification programs in nurse-midwifery/midwifery. (U.S. Dept. of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, 1990 K Street, NW Washington, DC 20006; phone #202-502-7750.)

Additionally the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) who advises the Secretary of Education on matters related to accreditation recommended that ACME receive continued recognition for an additional five years. ACME is scheduled for renewal of recognition in 2017.

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