

Greetings! We hope you enjoy our first newsletter.

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

## Call to Action:

### Know of someone who is passionate about midwifery education and interested in serving on a dynamic Board?

The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) seeks volunteers for its Board of Review (BOR), Site Visitor Panel (SVP) and Advisory Committee. For full job descriptions and qualifications visit, <http://www.midwife.org/ACME-Volunteer-Opportunities>. If you know of someone who might be a fit please reach out to them and encourage them to apply.

## A Message from ACME Board of Commissioners Chair, Peter Johnson

Happy New Year to our ACME Volunteers and the dedicated midwifery educators that we serve. I would like to thank Kathy Camacho Carr who served on the BOC since 2009 as a Commissioner. We are thankful and grateful to her for her role on the Board and her additional time and commitment serving as ACME's liaison to the US MERA. Kathy played a pivotal role in the work and outcomes from these meetings and committees.

2017 is certain to be a busy one for all of us. We are delighted to have just submitted our "petition" to the U.S. Department of Education and look forward to moving onward in pursuit of some key strategic initiatives. Some of those items on our agenda this year include:

- Review of our criteria with particular emphasis on a diversity and inclusion lens;
- Collaboration with ACOG and OBGYN accreditors on an exciting project focused on scaling up inter-professional education (Co-PIs: ACME Vice Chair, Melissa Avery, PhD, CNM, FACNM and John Jennings, MD);
- Global consultations for nations interested in developing or improving midwifery accreditation systems; and
- Continued exploration/development of criteria for the accreditation of a midwifery clinical doctorate



Peter G. Johnson, CNM,  
PhD, FACNM  
Chair, ACME Board of  
Commissioners

We have been very pleased with the robust on-line attendance at recent webinars for ACME volunteers that we have hosted on the topics of distance learning and diversity. Thanks so much to Marilyn Lyons and Patricia Loftman for facilitating these engaging and provocative events and to all who attended. You can find these trainings on the ACME [website](#). With these successful webinars, we can now refocus our time together at the annual meeting in May to celebrate our efforts and openly discuss our challenges. As always, let me end by thanking our dedicated ACME staff, Heather Maurer and Julie Levin for their excellent and tireless leadership and support!



Gretchen G. Mettler,  
CNM, PhD, FACNM  
Chair, ACME Board of  
Review

## ACME Board of Review Chair, Gretchen Mettler's Message

Wishing Everyone a Happy New Year!

I would like to thank Aleida Llanes-Oberstein, who resigned from the Board of Review (BOR) in December for her service. We deeply appreciate her hard work, attention to detail and will miss her contributions. Dr. Ronald Hunt, DDS will be leaving the BOR to join the ACME Board of Commissioners (BOC) as the public member after the February BOR meeting. I want to thank him for his service to the BOR and am happy he is still with ACME in his role as the BOC public member.

The BOR currently has two vacancies, a public member and a CNM board member. We would appreciate anyone reading this to consider working with the BOR, or referring any interested public or CNM candidates to us. For full descriptions and qualifications of these roles visit [ACME's website](#).

The BOR had several substantive change reviews in the fall of 2016.

- Stony Brook University received a grant to subsidize funding for several students to become Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) prepared midwives in addition to the MSN midwifery program and added the DNP program
- Columbia University is closing the MSN program and embarking on a Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) program after approval was granted in October 2016
- Seattle University has added the Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) as the degree granted to graduates of the nurse-midwife program. The change in degree is planned for the immediate future.

If you have a substantive change and have any questions about how to submit the change please reach out to me to discuss.

The next BOR meeting has been scheduled for February 10th by phone conference to discuss pending substantive change requests and accreditation reviews. Information on the outcomes will be shared after the meeting.

### Midwifery programs up for review in 2017:

#### February 2017

- Bethel University (Accreditation)
- University of New Mexico (Accreditation)
- University of Michigan (Substantive Change)

#### July 2017

- Fairfield University (Preaccreditation)
- University of Kansas (Accreditation)

## Site Visits for 2017

- Fairfield University(Preaccreditation)
- University of Kansas(Accreditation)
- Stony Brook University
- Texas Tech University HealthSciences Center
- Bay State Medical Center

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### From the Executive Director

Happy New Year! 2016 marked my third year in my role as ACME's Executive Director. I want to thank all of the ACME volunteers and our program directors for their commitment to midwifery education. I am honored to work with such a great group of people and I love my job.

ACME has completed and submitted the written petition for continued recognition as a programmatic accreditor to the U.S. Department of Education. We will be preparing for our meeting with the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) panel in the fall of 2017, where we answer any questions or concerns about our compliance to the Department's standards, our peers, and the panel.

ACME is committed to provide excellence in the accreditation of midwifery education and has identified the following top priorities for 2017. You may find the [ACME Strategic Plan 2015-2018](#) on our website.

Top priorities for 2017 include the following strategic goals.

- Strategic Goal 1: Improve ACME's financial position;
- Strategic Goal 3: Expand diversity and inclusion in all ACME operations;
- Strategic Goal 4: Promote the value of ACME as the accrediting agency for midwifery education;
- Strategic Goal 5: Provide consultation in the development and expansion of midwifery accreditation systems

ACME's 2017 focus includes the complete review of our programmatic criteria. We will have a **call for volunteers** to participate and contribute to the review and working with the Board of Commissioners.

In addition, ACME will be conducting a full day accreditation workshop, *Maximizing Educational Quality through ACME Criteria* on Sunday, May 21 at the ACNM Annual Meeting to be held in Chicago. This is a 'must attend' workshop for those who are preparing for renewal of accreditation, those seeking preaccreditation as well as new program directors who seek a deeper understanding of the ACME criteria, the annual monitoring report, and over all ACME policies and procedures.

To sign up for this workshop visit the ACNM Annual Meeting [webpage](#) and include it with your general registration.

2017 brings a new administration to the country as well as new leadership to the U.S. Department of Education. We anticipate the [Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act](#) this year. I will be carefully monitoring these changes and the impact they will have on accreditation. Please visit the "In the News" section of this newsletter to find recent articles about accreditation. I will keep you informed as information becomes available.

In recent years, the Department has made it known that they are



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placing extra emphasis on student outcomes and assessment. We anticipate this impacting our criteria with greater demands placed on the programs and accrediting agencies for monitoring, assessing, and sharing programs outcomes as well as financial information on program costs and employment rates.

Lastly, join me in congratulating Julie Levin as she has been promoted to Accreditation Coordinator for ACME beginning January 1.



We came across this photo in our files. It has a date of 1904 "Midwifery Students with Pelvis." Do you know where this was taken and any idea of who is pictured in the photo? If so, email Heather Maurer at [hmaurer@acnm.org](mailto:hmaurer@acnm.org). If we figure it out we will update in our Spring newsletter.

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## Recent News & Headlines

### [Education Dept. Clarifies Rule Governing Online Courses](#)

January 19, 2017 by Goldie Blumenstyk, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

The Education Department on Thursday clarified a key piece of a [new distance-education regulation](#), making it clearer that the reciprocity agreement known as SARA, under which more than 1,300 colleges have already been approved to offer online courses across state lines, would satisfy the new regulation. The clarification removes the question mark over the legality of those colleges' programs. In a [blogpost](#) about the department's action, Russell Poulin, director of policy and analysis at the WICHE Cooperative for Educational Technologies, said he and Marshall Hill of the National Council for State Authorization Reciprocity Agreements, were "overjoyed" by the news, which came in the waning hours of the tenure of Ted Mitchell, the under secretary of education in the Obama administration. Although it's unclear if the department's regulation will stand — Republicans in Congress may seek to revoke it in the coming weeks — the clarification also gives a boost to SARA, which has been adopted by the District of Columbia and all states except California, Florida, and Massachusetts.

### [Education Dept. Upholds Revoking of Embattled Accreditor's Recognition](#)

December 12, 2016 by Fernanda Zamudio-Suaréz, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

John B. King Jr., the secretary of education, on Monday [upheld the U.S. Department of Education's decision](#) to revoke the federal recognition of the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools, an agency that had accredited for-profit colleges that suffered recent high-profile collapses. The department revoked the accreditor's recognition in September, after it was accused of lax oversight in its accreditation of two now-defunct for-profit educators, [ITT Educational Services Inc.](#) and [Corinthian Colleges](#). After its recognition was revoked, the accreditor, known as Acics, appealed the decision. In a [written statement](#), the agency said it would sue to regain its recognition. "Acics has acknowledged its shortcomings and worked diligently to correct them so that, together with Acics-accredited institutions, we can continue to work to help students achieve their academic and career goals," said Roger Williams, the accreditor's interim president, in the statement.

The accreditor's loss of federal recognition, if not overturned by the courts or reversed by the incoming Trump administration, would require the hundreds of colleges Acics accredits to [seek another accrediting body or lose access](#) to federal student-aid dollars. They may

continue to face new restrictions from the department. Someone likely to close. Department link about ACICS: <http://www.ed.gov/ACICS>

### **Why Trump's Billionaire Nominee Has Awakened Such Fierce Opposition**

January 27, 2018 by *Eric Kelderman, The Chronicle of Higher Education*

Betsy DeVos has emerged as perhaps President Trump's most-contentious cabinet pick. Secretaries of education have typically breezed through the confirmation process with little, if any, opposition from the U.S. Senate and only passing interest from the public. That's not at all how things have transpired for Betsy DeVos. Ms. DeVos, who is [President Trump's choice](#) to lead the U.S. Department of Education, has instead gained national notoriety, with a [wider range of groups](#) urging the Senate to reject her nomination. Teachers' unions, public-school officials, civil-rights groups, and advocates for stronger enforcement of gender-equity laws have waged campaigns against her. The opposition has emerged through an unusually fierce blend of activism on social media and in more traditional venues. *Politico*, for example, noted that [tens of thousands of callers](#) had flooded Senate phone lines with calls urging lawmakers to vote against Ms. DeVos. And a [letter of objection](#) from an alumna at Ms. DeVos's alma mater, Calvin College, has attracted hundreds of signatures from other graduates of the institution. Support for Ms. DeVos, a billionaire philanthropist, has come from a narrower, though not entirely partisan, range of interests that support school choice or are critical of public schools. Most Republican lawmakers are backing Ms. DeVos as a Washington outsider who will limit the federal role in education policy. Elected officials, advocacy groups, religious schools and politically conservative organizations have sent more than 100 letters of support to Sen. Lamar Alexander, chairman of the committee considering the nominee. Despite the caricatures and heated rhetoric, however, two months after her nomination there is still little known about what Ms. DeVos will do as education secretary. And in that void of information, opponents have found room for their worst fears about privatization, reduced accountability, and an abandonment of the civil-rights enforcement that became a hallmark of the Obama administration. Aside from her advocacy for school choice, Ms. DeVos has no real record of crafting policy. Her written statement to senators considering her nomination provided only broad assertions about her aims and nothing about how she plans to achieve them. That is largely consistent with the president's own limited proposals on education and signals that beyond the school-choice issue, the administration will put little emphasis on a broader education agenda, especially for higher education. Even some supporters note that Ms. DeVos and her plans for expanding school choice could be hampered by the negative attention, which intensified after her at-times [shaky confirmation hearing](#) this month. She is "far and away" the most controversial nominee ever for the position, said Frederick M. Hess, an education scholar at the American Enterprise Institute, who has described Ms. DeVos as a "solid pick" despite the furor over her selection. The backlash is fueled not only by concerns about Ms. DeVos, but also by deep partisan divisions and the president's own unpopularity, he said. Those factors could combine to undermine the [school-choice movement](#) that Ms. DeVos has long championed, Mr. Hess said. It's hard to imagine people separating the president from the efforts of his administration, he said. "Trump casts a pretty big

shadow." "Aggressively Opposed" Leading the fight against Ms. DeVos from the beginning have been teachers' unions, which vigorously oppose the use of vouchers to pay for private-school tuition. The National Education Association, one of the nation's two major teacher unions, even promoted a day for public-school teachers to wear red as a sign of protest against the department's would-be secretary. "The education establishment has never been so aggressively opposed to a nominee," said Jeanne Allen, chief executive of the Center for Education Reform, which also advocates for school choice and has backed Ms. DeVos's selection. Former secretaries, such as Rod Paige and Margaret Spellings, have advocated for that policy, she said, "but it is the centerpiece of the Trump administration." "The last time you've seen this level of opposition to school choice was when Bill Bennett — education secretary under President Reagan — talked about it," said Ms. Allen. "They made him out to be the devil," she added. John Thelin, a professor of educational-policy studies at the University of Kentucky, said Mr. Bennett was considered somewhat controversial. But he had "impeccable academic credentials," including a doctoral degree in political philosophy from the University of Texas at Austin and a law degree from Harvard. "Few, if any complained that he was uninformed or inexperienced," Mr. Thelin said. Ms. DeVos, on the other hand, has a bachelor's degree in political science and no professional experience working at a school or college. Her background in education consists largely of her donations to groups that support school choice, such as the American Federation for Children, a project of a foundation started by Ms. DeVos and her husband. She has also been a prominent

Republican donor at all levels of government in her home state of Michigan and across the nation. Ms. DeVos has no known experience in higher-education policy. Some people consider Ms. DeVos's lack of experience to be a positive attribute, said Mr. Thelin, because she is seen as "uninfluenced and unsullied" by the education establishment. But her lack of a concrete policy background has also given her opponents an opening to fill with fears of a worst-case scenario. Groups supporting gay rights have raised concerns about donations from Ms. DeVos or her family members to organizations that have opposed their efforts. Ms. DeVos has sought to assuage those concerns by [signaling her support](#), for instance, for same-sex marriage. But the nominee's uneven performance at her confirmation hearing also amplified some critics' concerns that she [does not understand](#) basic education policy. For the full article visit [The Chronicle of Higher Education](#).

### **[Jerry Falwell Jr. Says He Will Lead Federal Task Force on Higher-Ed Policy](#)**

January 31, 2018 by Goldie Blumenstyk, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*

[Jerry L. Falwell Jr.](#), president of Liberty University, has been asked by President Trump to head up a new task force that will identify changes that should be made to the U.S. Department of Education's policies and procedures, Mr. Falwell told *The Chronicle* on Tuesday. The exact scope, size, and mission of the task force has yet to be formally announced. But in an interview, Mr. Falwell said he sees it as a response to what he called "overreaching regulation" and micromanagement by the department in areas like accreditation and policies that affect colleges' student-recruiting behavior, like the new ["borrower defense to repayment" regulations](#).

### **[States Intervene in Accreditor's Suit Against Feds](#)**

January

24, 2018 by Paul Fain, *Inside Higher Ed*

Attorneys general from five states and Washington, D.C., on Tuesday filed a [motion to intervene](#) in the lawsuit the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools is pursuing against the U.S. Department of Education, which [last month](#) finalized its decision to terminate the national accreditor. The council oversees roughly 245 colleges, most of them for-profit. The department decided to de-recognize ACICS over concerns about tax oversight of the collapsed Corinthian Colleges, ITT Technical Institute and other colleges. ACICS sued to block the department's move. The filing by the six attorneys general, including those representing Illinois, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts and New York, said the department cannot be expected to adequately represent the states' interests in the legal fight. "ACICS's accreditation failures are both systemic and extreme. If ACICS is successful in its efforts to vacate the secretary's well-founded decision to terminate ACICS's recognition as a federally recognized accreditor, the state movants' interests in protecting their students, ensuring the effectiveness of state regulations and preserving finite state resources will be harmed," they wrote in the filing.

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## For ACME Program Directors

### **Leaving Your Program? Going on Sabbatical?**

Please remember to inform the ACME Administrative Office of any changes to your contact information. If you are leaving as program director, your school's Dean is required to write a formal letter of this change and provide the CV of the new program director for our records. In addition, inform the ACME Administrative Office if there will be any extended absences and the point of contact during your absence. Email Heather Maurer with your updates:



**2017  
Deadlines &  
Due Dates**

**February**

### **2017- Annual Invoices**

ACME has already sent an email survey requesting information to accurately create your annual invoice. The 2017 Fee Schedule can be found [here](#). Surveys are due February 13th.

### Share your Program's Photos and Recent News:

If your program is featured in a news article or publication we want to hear about it. We are also interested in featuring photos of your students and midwifery program. Please contact ACME Executive Director, Heather Maurer at [hmaurer@acnm.org](mailto:hmaurer@acnm.org) for more details.

### Recently in the News:

#### Bethel University

In fall 2017, [Bethel's M.S. in Nurse-Midwifery](#) will launch a bridge program allowing registered nurses (RNs) who have earned a bachelor's degree in any concentration to apply. Previously, the program only admitted students who had earned their bachelor's in nursing, so aspiring nurse-midwives without a B.S.N. had to complete [Bethel's RN to B.S. in Nursing](#) to be eligible to apply for the nurse-midwifery master's program. For the full article: <https://www.bethel.edu/news/articles/2017/january/nurse-midwifery-bridge>

All invoices will be sent via email and by the U.S. Postal Service to Program Directors in March. Payment is due 45 days from the date of the invoice. Please provide your institution ample time to have the appropriate institution paperwork (W-2 forms) prepared and completed to avoid any late fees. Payments that are not received by the due date on the invoice will be assessed a late fee.

Please note; as of January 2017 ACME will be charging a processing fee of 2.95% of the total fees due for all payments made by credit card.

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### March 2017 - Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs)

On March 13, 2017, ACME will be sending via Survey Monkey an email requesting you complete the Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) for the **reporting period of January 1 - December 31, 2016**.

**AMRs will be due Friday, April 14, 2017.**

### May 21, 2017-ACME Accreditation Workshop, Chicago

ACME will be conducting a full day accreditation workshop, Maximizing Educational Quality through ACME Criteria on Sunday, May 21 at the ACNM Annual Meeting to be held in Chicago. This is a 'must attend' workshop for those who are preparing for renewal of accreditation, those seeking preaccreditation as well as new program directors who seek a deeper understanding of the ACME criteria, the annual monitoring report, and over all ACME policies and procedures. To sign up for this workshop visit the ACNM Annual Meeting [webpage](#) and include it with your general registration.

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