



POSITION STATEMENT

MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

The American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) is the professional organization that sets national educational and practice standards for Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs) and Certified Midwives (CMs). Standards for education and certification in midwifery* are identical for CNMs and CMs. The difference between the two credentials reflects the background of the individual prior to entering professional midwifery¹. Both enter the profession with degrees in a variety of fields and complete course work in the sciences and social sciences. Additionally, CNMs enter midwifery as Registered Nurses (RNs).

Entry-level competencies that must be mastered in all education programs are standardized in the ACNM document *Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice*². This document was developed by ACNM and is revised every 5 years. Curricular standards for programs have been set by the ACNM since 1962^{3,4,5}.

All midwifery education programs are located in or affiliated with an institution of higher learning that is accredited by an agency recognized by the US Department of Education⁶. Beginning in 2010, a graduate degree will be required for entry into midwifery practice⁷. All education programs accredited by the Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME), (formerly the ACNM Division of Accreditation) either grant a master's degree or higher or are affiliated with a school that offers a master's completion option.

The Accreditation Commission for Midwifery Education (ACME) is an autonomous accrediting agency, and has been recognized continuously by the US Department of Education since 1982. It accredits both midwifery education programs and institutions. Standardized criteria developed by ACME⁶ are used to assess the quality and content of midwifery education. A complete list of currently accredited programs and institutions can be found at <http://www.midwife.org/map.cfm>.

The American Midwifery Certification Board (AMCB) is an autonomous certifying organization accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA). The functions of the AMCB include initial certification of CNMs/CMs for entry to clinical practice, recertification and discipline. Candidates must have graduated from a DOA accredited program in order to be eligible to sit for the national certification exam administered by the AMCB. Individuals who successfully complete AMCB certification requirements are granted a certificate as a certified nurse-midwife (CNM) or certified midwife (CM).⁸

¹*The Knowledge, Skills And Behaviors Prerequisite To Midwifery Coursework* (Nov. 2005)
<http://midwife.org/careers.cfm?id=904>

²*Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice (May 31, 2002)*
<http://www.midwife.org/display.cfm?id=484>

³Avery, M. D. The history and evolution of the Core Competencies for basic midwifery practice. *J Midwifery Women's Health* 2005 Mar-Apr; 50(2):102-107.

⁴Education Committee, ACNM. Core competencies in nurse-midwifery: expected outcomes of nurse-midwifery education. *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery* 1979; 24(1):32-36.

⁵Roberts, Joyce and Sedler, Kay D. The Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice: critical ACNM document revised. *Journal of Nurse-Midwifery* 1997; 42(5):371-372.

⁶*Criteria for Programmatic Accreditation of Education Programs in Nurse-Midwifery and Midwifery with Guidelines for Elaboration and Documentation of Programmatic Accreditation Criteria (October 2003)*
http://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/career/Criteria_for_Programmatic_Accreditation.pdf

⁷*Mandatory Degree Requirements for Entry into Midwifery Practice Position Statement (March 2006)*
http://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/position/Mandatory_Degree_Requirements_3.06.pdf

⁸AMCB website
www.amcbmidwife.org

* Midwifery as used throughout this document refers to the education and practice of certified nurse-midwives (CNMs) and certified midwives (CMs) who have been certified by the American College of Nurse-Midwives (ACNM) or the American Midwifery Certification Board, Inc. (AMCB), formerly the American College of Nurse-Midwives Certification Council, Inc. (ACC).

Replaces: *Nursing as a Base of Midwifery Education (1990)*; *Midwifery and the Title Midwife (1991)*; *Nurse-Midwifery Education (1992)*.

Source: ACNM Board of Directors

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