



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 an ACME-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://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/career/Knowledge-Skills-Behaviors_revised_Nov._2005.pdf

²*Core Competencies for Basic Midwifery Practice (Updated January 15, 2008)*
http://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/education/Core_Competencies_6_07.pdf

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 Midwifery Education Programs with Instructions for Elaboration and Documentation (June 2010)*
<http://www.midwife.org/acmedocs/ACME.PreAccreditation%20Criteria.final.June.2010.pdf>

⁷*Mandatory Degree Requirements for Entry into Midwifery Practice Position Statement (March 2006)*
http://www.midwife.org/siteFiles/position/Mandatory_Degree_Req_for_Entry_Midwifery_Practice_7_09.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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