

# ACME | ACCREDITATION COMMISSION for MIDWIFERY EDUCATION

To: ACME Midwifery Program Directors  
From: Gretchen Mettler, PhD, CNM, FACNM, Chair ACME Board of Review  
CC: ACME Board of Review  
Date: April 13, 2020  
Subject: Policies regarding curricular changes during the COVID-19 Emergency

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In this time when it is difficult, if not impossible for students to achieve their clinical experiences and the future of resuming clinical experiences is very uncertain, the ACME Board of Review (BOR) recognizes that programs need flexibility to make program adjustments for their students.

Programs are considering a range of options in order to support student progression while meeting course and program outcomes. How programs choose to address progress will also depend on their institution guidelines. Below, are several options currently being considered by programs.

**Will not require a Substantive Change Report: For programs where didactic and clinical components are combined:**

- Assigning a grade of “Incomplete” for courses where clinical progression has been interrupted to be resolved when students are able to return to their clinical sites.
- Allowing students to progress to the next didactic course while holding an “Incomplete” until clinical placement can be resumed.

The program may make the decision to offer an incomplete to students in current clinical courses because the clinical component cannot be completed at this time, and then allow the students to progress to the next clinical course. While the program has students who technically are not meeting the prerequisite, they are allowing progression in the program because the program will ensure the students will finish the incomplete when clinical placements are again available. This process is internal to the academic unit but is not ACME related.

**This will not require a substantive change report to the BOR.** The BOR suggests that the program develop an addendum attached to the student record that identifies the COVID-19 crisis, explains the process, and explains the evaluation used to verify the student made progress. The BOR advises that the Program Director will need to document the curricular variance for the 2020 Annual Monitoring Report.

**Will require a Substantive Change Report: For programs considering the separation of didactic and clinical content:**

**A substantive change** would be when the program is considering the separation of didactic and clinical content in courses that currently integrate both didactic content and clinical experience. In the course of doing such curriculum revision, the BOR assumes any program that would contemplate such a change would need to work

through the usual academic unit processes to create new courses. **Once the program has made the decision to develop new courses, the ACME BOR should be notified of the pending Substantive Change and the program will be required to submit a Substantive Change Report.**

Please direct all questions about accreditation issues to Gretchen Mettler, CNM, PhD, FACNM at [ggm@case.edu](mailto:ggm@case.edu).