



ABHES BULLETIN

To: ABHES-Accredited Institutions and Programs
From: India Y. Tips, Executive Director
Date: March 13, 2020
Subject: COVID-19 Update

ABHES continues to monitor and assess the circumstances and impacts of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) on our institutions and accreditation operations. Institutions are encouraged to remain in close contact and should be executing their emergency preparedness protocols and continuing education/operation plans. These plans should outline academic continuity processes and procedures. On March 5, 2020, the United States Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education, [released guidance for interruptions of study related to COVID-19](#). The Commission understands that institutions may need to make changes to how training is being offered temporarily, but each institution must demonstrate that quality and sound learning experiences are still being provided.

For ABHES to issue a temporary approval to institutions considering adjusting normal operations, including but not limited to distance education delivery for currently enrolled students and options for assisting students who have had their clinical experiences interrupted, plans should address the following as applicable:

- Strategies to notify and assist current students regarding the modified learning environment to include a description of the delivery method. The plan should describe how the institution will assess each student's capability to successfully participate in the delivery method, which may range from a Zoom-like synchronous format to a modified learning management system.
- Details regarding the programs/courses impacted relative to the ABHES Profile Grid currently on file and the number of students impacted including the effective date of change and anticipated timeframe the school expects to return to normal operations.
- Student and faculty support services including details regarding access to educational resources.
- Management of distance education, clinical experiences, and administrative oversight.
- Recommendations from Program Advisory Committees and clinical stakeholders regarding options for continued learning and backup strategies for clinical experiences that continue to accept students.
- Policies addressing incompletes, leaves of absence, and temporary closures with effective date and timeframe along with estimated date for re-evaluation of these policies.
- Details regarding how missed instructional time will be made up (e.g., increase length of term; increase time/day over the period of the remainder of the term, etc.).

Institutions must continue to follow its local public health authority's recommendations including state regulators, and federal authorities. Institutions must maintain documentation of required campus closures,

temporary waiver of regulations, etc. received from state or other regulatory bodies governing the operation of the institution and/or program(s). ABHES remains open to a range of flexible and creative solutions that support current students enrolled in our accredited institutions and programs.

ABHES will respond to all communications and correspondence submissions; however, given the high volume, we ask for your patience as we carefully review each submission. We are committed to working with you during this challenging time. ABHES is continuing to monitor the available information on COVID-19, which changes daily. Additional updates to be provided as there is more information to share.

For additional guidance and assistance, please contact India Tips, Executive Director at itips@abhes.org or Amy Rowe, Associate Executive Director of Membership Services, at arowe@abhes.org.