



Committee on Accreditation of Recreational Therapy Education

COVID-19 STATEMENT

The Committee of Accreditation of Recreational Therapy Education (CARTE) continues to monitor the circumstances surrounding COVID-19 and its impact on Recreational Therapy education. The CARTE board will continuously review its accreditation processes and, when possible, provide flexibility within the confines of the rules and regulations of which they must adhere. This assures that CARTE can maintain their recognition as a Committee on Accreditation (CoA) and preserve the quality of RT education programs, thereby protecting students and the public.

CARTE Standards: Programs are expected to remain in compliance with the CARTE standards as part of their continued accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation of Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP). However, the 2017 CARTE standards allow flexibility in how programs continuously meet the standards, and it is recognized that programs will need to make some adjustments to regular coursework and fieldwork experiences during this time. Minimum compliance with the CARTE standards should be maintained at all times.

Didactic Coursework: Programs should make their own decisions on the best way to ensure continued education for their students. As programs transition to distance education modalities, it is recognized that specific instructional units and assignments will require modifications. These modifications should be done with the CARTE standards in mind to ensure continued compliance.

Clinical Experiences: Programs are also expected to remain in compliance with CARTE standards regarding clinical experiences, and should review both the COVID-19 statement and the Alternative Internship Guidelines issued by the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC) at <https://www.nctrc.org/>. This will ensure all students graduating from CAAHEP/CARTE accredited programs continue to meet the requirements for international credentialing in the Recreational Therapy profession.

Documentation of Program Changes: Programs should maintain documentation of all modifications made to the program as a result of COVID-19. This may include modifications to delivery of didactic content, as well as changes or modifications to clinical or internship experiences. Programs should also maintain appropriate documentation for each affected student, including modifications made to the academic plan.

Annual Reporting: Typical annual reporting procedures continue. Individual programs should contact the CARTE board if they anticipate any challenges in meeting regular deadlines. The annual report form has been modified slightly to include reporting on temporary modifications made during the COVID-19 crisis with an emphasis on changes that have impacted the program's ability to continually meet CARTE standards.

Site Visits: CARTE site visits are occurring for both initial accreditation and continuing accreditation. Programs anticipating upcoming visits should proceed with the self-study processes according to typical schedules. The CARTE board will work with individual programs to determine the format for the site visit, which may be conducted either remote, in person, or in a hybrid format.

General Guidelines: Programs are encouraged to move forward using temporary, common sense approaches without CARTE approval on individual program modifications. However, the CARTE board is available to discuss each program's specific needs or concerns as they arise. Please direct communications and questions to the CARTE Chair, Rhonda Nelson, via e-mail at Rhonda.nelson@hsc.utah.edu