

Sponsoring Organizations

April 24, 2020

American College of Cardiology

American College of
Obstetricians and Gynecologists

American College of Radiology

American Institute of
Ultrasound in Medicine

American Society of
Echocardiography

American Society of
Radiologic Technologists

Society of Diagnostic
Medical Sonography

Society for Vascular Surgery

Society for Vascular Ultrasound

Statement Focused on DMS Programs Graduating Spring/Summer 2020 Class

The Joint Review Committee on Education in Diagnostic Medical Sonography (JRC-DMS) issued its first statement to all Diagnostic Medical Sonography (DMS) Programs on March 18, 2020, addressing the COVID-19 Pandemic and how adjustments can be made to their curriculum during this unprecedented event. The JRC-DMS has been constantly monitoring the situation and addressing concerns from DMS Program Directors on a daily basis. We fully support your efforts in providing quality education to its students and we are sensitive to the challenges and obstacles you face during this pandemic. We applaud all those who have developed innovative ways in addressing didactic and clinical components in their programs.

From the onset, we have advised all DMS Programs to document all changes made to their curriculum during the pandemic as part of their contingency plan. It is not a requirement to submit contingency plans to the JRC-DMS for review and approval.

As this pandemic continues to affect everyone's social interactions, finances, and lives, it is important for both the JRC-DMS and Institutions to remain focused on the best interest of the student's education and public/patient safety, and to comply and achieve the CAAHEP Standards goal to prepare entry level sonographers.

The JRC-DMS has received an increased number of emails from concerned DMS Program Directors about their 2020 graduating class. The JRC-DMS recognizes that all DMS students' clinical rotations have been canceled during the COVID-19 Pandemic. This has resulted in most students not being able to have all of their required clinical competencies evaluated and signed off (acknowledged) to meet graduation requirements. This has caused undue hardship for students who anxiously await to graduate from a CAAHEP accredited DMS Program and begin a prosperous and rewarding career.

To ensure quality patient care and the ability for graduates to be successful in their employment as an entry-level sonographer, the JRC-DMS will allow DMS Programs to graduate their students based upon the following strict guidelines:

- Guidelines only apply to DMS Students whose scheduled graduation date is from April 24, 2020 to October 31, 2020.
- DMS Programs must evaluate all graduating students' clinical records ensuring that students have met program requirements aligned with CAAHEP Standards and that students have participated scanning in the clinical setting in all required examinations in each of the Program's accredited concentrations. Evaluation should include the level of student participation with the expectation the student was able to initiate the examination and complete with minimal assistance from the clinical instructor.

- A mutual agreement must be drawn up between the DMS Program and each graduating student, signed by both parties, attesting that the student can demonstrate proficiency in the required areas as stated in the CAAHEP Standards for DMS education, **and** the student has met the minimum program goals of becoming a competent entry-level sonographer in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective learning domains. Clinical records must be attached with the signed mutual agreements.
- **Simulation cannot be substituted as a clinical competency**; however, is recognized to be a very useful activity for documentation of knowledge and technique in addition to the participation in the clinical setting.
- Clinical competency can be documented via clinical logs, formal clinical competencies, or other documented criteria.
- Documentation must be included to outline criteria used for the determination of competency.
- Any implementation of change must be in alignment with the institution's accrediting body.
- Supporting documentation and mutual agreements between the DMS Program and graduating students must be kept on file with the Program for review by JRC-DMS site visitors at their next scheduled site visit.

The JRC-DMS will continue to monitor the COVID-19 Pandemic situation and will issue additional statements as warranted.

The JRC-DMS understands that these are trying times for all and empathizes the concerns of DMS Students and Personnel. While this is not an ideal solution, it would provide some comfort to students by paving a path to graduation. It would also allow programs the ability to accept their incoming students without the fear of holding up their previous cohort from graduating.

If you have any questions or require further information, please feel free to contact the JRC-DMS office. We encourage you to share this with DMS Personnel, Graduating Students and Administration.

Sincerely,

Gerry Magat, MS, Executive Director
 Christopher Kramer, BA, RDCS, FASE, JRC-DMS Board of Directors Chair