



9312 Old Georgetown Road
Bethesda, Maryland 20814
P 301.581.9200 | F 301.571.4903
www.cpme.org

COUNCIL ON PODIATRIC MEDICAL EDUCATION

VIRTUAL SITE VISIT GUIDE for On-Site Evaluations

If CPME staff, in consultation with the Council chair, determines that a virtual site visit (either completely or partially virtual) must be conducted in lieu of an on-site visit due to natural disasters, pandemics, or other circumstances of that magnitude, then the dean is responsible to ensure that the evaluation team has adequate opportunity to engage in all of the meetings listed below (and as stated in CPME 130, *Procedures for Accrediting Colleges of Podiatric Medicine*). Partially virtual site visits, where one or more team members may conduct the visit virtually, may be utilized in instances where the full team is unable to travel to the school due to natural disasters or other catastrophic events. The virtual on-site evaluations will follow the same requirements, policy and procedures as the on-site evaluation with modifications to accommodate the online platforms. The dean should prepare, ahead of time, all technological necessities to ensure that the evaluation team meets with the individuals as cited below and in CPME 130 and for all documentation reviews. Additionally, the dean is to prepare contingency plans in case of unforeseeable technological difficulties including power loss or other acts of nature. CPME will provide the virtual platform and will share the access codes for the meetings.

A schedule that identifies individuals to be interviewed by the evaluation team must be prepared by the college and forwarded to the Council office at least four weeks prior to the virtual on-site visit (see CPME 125, *Accreditation Guide*). Council staff will then forward the agenda to the evaluation team. The following guidelines are to be used in preparing the agenda.

- The total time spent for the virtual visit should be the same as for an in-person on-site visit.
- Once the agenda is accepted by the team chair, a Zoom link will be created for the on-site evaluation. It is the dean's responsibility to share the Zoom link and password with all participants.
- CPME will use the Zoom platform for the virtual visit, including a password-protected Zoom link. If the college is unable to utilize the platform offered by CPME due to institutional requirements, the alternate platform must be approved in advance by CPME.
- The dean must be available to the team throughout the entire evaluation. The dean must provide the chair the best method for immediate communication throughout the day (email or text) and should be ready to join the on-site team via Zoom at any time per the request of the team chair.
- The on-site evaluation should begin as early in the day as possible to enable thorough review of the college and allow flexibility in scheduling required components of the evaluation.

In order that the evaluation team may assess the extent to which the college meets the CPME standards and requirements, the agenda for the on-site evaluation requires that key participants in the college be

interviewed (these individuals are identified below). The Council may elect to cancel the visit if:

- the agenda does not include interviews as indicated below or
- key individuals identified in the agenda are not available for interview on the day of the visit.

If for any reason the evaluation team is not provided with the opportunity to hold these meetings, or if the individuals requested are not in attendance sufficient to adequately assess the college, the Council may determine that the report of the on-site evaluation is not sufficient to grant continuing accreditation of the college and may schedule another site visit at cost to the college. Inability to communicate with the individuals due to technological barriers will be viewed negatively by the evaluation team and ultimately by the Council.

If the on-site visit is to be conducted completely virtually, a follow-up in-person on-site visit will take place within 24 months following the virtual site visit and when it is safe to do so. If the on-site visit will be conducted partially virtually, no follow-up in-person site visit will be necessary as team members were present on campus to assess the school during the partially virtual site visit.

The follow-up in-person visit and may be performed by staff or a trained site visitor and need not repeat the full review. A focused on-site visit to confirm the presence of facilities viewed during the virtual site visit and the opportunity to randomly select students to interview as part of the normal site visit process would fulfill the need of a full on-site visit following the virtual site visit.

Note that completely virtual site visits are limited to colleges that are otherwise in good standing or to colleges that are engaged in renewal of accreditation. Colleges seeking an initial award of accreditation may be conducted partially virtually (but not completely virtually).

The following guidelines are provided in determining order and lengths of interviews (all items in bold on the sample schedule are required; the time listed for interviews is approximate). See CPME 125, *Accreditation Guide* for additional detail:

The proposed schedule of conferences, interviews, and executive sessions for the on-site evaluation should be developed by the team leader and staff, in cooperation with the chief academic officer. The function is best accomplished at the time of the preliminary visit or during the conference call but may be subject to subsequent modification to accommodate availability of key faculty, trustees, and administrative staff. The schedule should be planned to include the following essential elements.

- Orientation and team planning session.
- Introductory overview with chief executive officer.
- Interview with chief academic officer.
- Interviews with all department heads and a representative cross-section of senior and junior faculty.
- Discussion with student affairs officer and staff responsible for admissions, recruitment, registrar functions, counseling, housing, and financial assistance.
- Meeting with chair and members of board of trustees.

- Session with chief financial officer.
- Open session(s) to which faculty, staff, students, and the institution's community of constituents have been invited to attend.
- Concluding session with chief executive officer and other college designated officials to provide summation of preliminary findings and observations of the evaluation team, with discussion. This session is to be conducted by the team leader.

Per CPME 130, in addition to the documentation identified in CPME 120, *Standards and Requirements for Accrediting Colleges of Podiatric Medicine* the following materials should be made available for the use by the evaluation team. In general, the materials should include any items referenced in the self-study document that were not included in the appendices, and any other information that provides evidence of compliance with the accreditation standards and their requirements.

- Progress reports submitted to, and evaluation team reports received from, CPME and the applicable regional accrediting agency and/or state agency since the last comprehensive evaluation visit
- Correspondence about accreditation received from CPME and the applicable regional accrediting agency and/or state agency since the last comprehensive evaluation visit
- Summary data regarding faculty teaching loads
- Summary data regarding the number and size of classes
- Collective bargaining agreement, if applicable
- Institutional advertising directed toward prospective students
- One complete copy of the self-study report
- Peer evaluations (if applicable)
- Student assessments of faculty/courses/experiences
- Volume of clinical patients at each site utilized for educational purposes and patient surveys completed
- Other materials as necessary to be determined by the team leader

Policy adopted by CPME October 17, 2020; Updated January 18, 2022