# ACEN™ 2017 Accreditation Manual

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# Glossary

## GLOSSARY

**Academic Progression Models** – Models for the delivery of nursing education programs that facilitate progression from one (1) level of nursing education and/or practice to a higher level of nursing education and/or practice. May include articulation agreements or partnerships among colleges/universities, including, but not limited to, concurrent or dual enrollment programs. Certificates or degrees offered by an ACEN-accredited program must be awarded to students who complete the ACEN-accredited program of study, regardless of whether they complete the additional requirements specified in a concurrent or dual enrollment agreement.

**Academically Qualified –** *See Qualified, Academically*

**Accreditation –** *See Credentialing*

**Administrative Capacity** – The actual capabilities and resources available to the governing organization and nursing education unit that directly support the mission and purpose of the governing organization and the mission and purpose of a nursing education unit in the achievement of a nursing program's end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN)** – Licensure classification for nurses who have advanced education, knowledge, and skills in one (1) of four (4) practice roles: clinical nurse specialist; nurse practitioner; certified registered nurse anesthetist; or certified nurse midwife.

**Annual Report** – Information an ACEN-accredited program is required to submit to the ACEN on an annual basis. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #24 Assessment of the Adequacy of Standards and Criteria, ACEN process, and Practices*.

**Alternative Methods of Delivery** – Methods of delivering nursing courses in a nursing program and/or a nursing program option that differ from traditional in-person/in-a-classroom instructional methods where the faculty and the students are in the same location at the same time. See: Methods of Delivery.

**Approval –** *See Credentialing*

**Area Needing Development (AND)** – Peer evaluators determined based on their professional judgment that evidence demonstrates a nursing program is in compliance with an Accreditation Standard; however, evidence also demonstrates that an opportunity for improvement is available to enhance the quality of the nursing program.

**Asynchronous Learning** – Learning and instruction that do not occur in the same place or at the same time.

**Branch Campus** – A location of a governing organization that is geographically separate from and independent of the main campus of the governing organization. A location is independent of the main campus if the location:
- is permanent in nature;
- offers courses in educational nursing programs leading to a degree, certificate, or other recognized educational credential;
- has its own faculty and administrative or supervisory organization; and

- has its own budgetary and hiring authority.

**Candidacy** – The beginning process for a nursing program seeking accreditation with the ACEN.

**Candidate Status** – Candidate status is granted after a review of the potential of a nursing program to achieve ACEN accreditation. Candidacy does not constitute pre-accreditation as defined by the U.S. Department of Education. See the ACEN Accreditation Manual – Section I General Information for additional information regarding the Candidacy process.

**Certification –** *See Credentialing*

**Chief Executive Officer (CEO)** – The official who has the primary responsibility of carrying out the mission and purpose of the governing organization. In some circumstances, there may be an overall governing organization CEO and a local or campus CEO (e.g., a chancellor of the overall governing organization and a president of a campus).

**Clinical/Practicum Learning Experiences** – Direct, hands-on, planned learning activities with patients across the lifespan, interaction with the interprofessional team, and interaction with the patient's family and friends that are sufficient and appropriate to achieve the end-of-program student learning outcomes, program outcomes, and/or role-specific professional competencies, and are overseen by qualified faculty who provide feedback to students in support of their learning. Clinical/practicum learning experiences are required for all nursing students enrolled in any undergraduate or graduate program, including all students enrolled in post-licensure undergraduate programs, graduate programs, all program options in any undergraduate and graduate programs, and/or certificate program options.

**Closing Report** – A written plan developed by a governing organization/nursing education unit that provides for the equitable treatment of students should a governing organization/nursing education unit, or a nursing program location that provides 50% or more of a nursing program, cease to operate before all students have completed their nursing program of study. The Closing Report may include, if required by the governing organization's accrediting agency, a teach-out agreement between governing organizations/nursing education units. This applies to the closure of a governing organization, an off-campus instructional site, a branch campus, or a nursing program. The Closing Report requires ACEN approval in advance of implementation. See *ACEN Policy #16 Program Closing* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Communities of Interest** – A group of people, identified by the nursing education unit, who influence nursing program processes, decision-making of a nursing education unit, the end-of-program student learning outcomes, and the program outcomes of a nursing program. Examples include, but are not limited to, students, graduates, healthcare employer representatives, governing organization representatives, state regulatory agency representatives, and members of the public.

**Competent** – having the necessary and sufficient ability, knowledge, skill, and experience to do something successfully and/or achieve a purpose.

**Compliance** – Peer evaluators determined based on their professional judgment that evidence demonstrates a nursing program is in compliance with an Accreditation Standard.

**Complaints and Grievances** – A formal, written allegation against a nursing program, typically expressed as a written, signed statement. Complaints and/or grievances are defined by the nursing education unit and/or the governing organization. A nursing education unit's record of student complaints and/or grievances must include all filed since initial accreditation or continuing accreditation, whichever was the last accreditation site visit.

>    **Note:** Programs seeking initial accreditation should maintain records of student complaints and/or grievances from the time Candidate status is achieved.

**Continuing Accreditation** – The cyclical peer review process for an accredited nursing program to maintain accreditation with the ACEN.

**Contractual Agreement** – Typically, one (1) in which a nursing program enters an agreement for receipt of courses or portions of courses (e.g., general education courses) delivered by another college/university or service provider to educate the program's students.

**Consortia Relationship** – Typically one (1) in which two (2) or more governing organizations/nursing education units share the responsibility of developing and delivering nursing courses or a nursing program, in whole or part. This does not include clinical agreements for student learning experiences required by a nursing program. See *ACEN Policy #3 Eligibility for Accreditation* and *Policy #30 Agreement for Education-Related Component* from an External Source for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Contemporary Nursing Practice** – Professional nursing knowledge, skills, and behaviors that are based on current research and professional standards of the present time.

**Core Values** – Those beliefs or ideals that form the foundation for the work of a governing organization and/or nursing education unit.

**Credentialing**

>    **Accreditation** – The voluntary, self-regulatory process by which non-governmental associations recognize educational institutions or programs that have been found to meet or exceed standards and criteria for educational quality. Accreditation also assists in the further improvement of the institutions or programs as related to resources invested, processes followed, and results achieved.

>    **Approval** – The term generally referred to by most state regulatory agencies for nursing to describe authorization of nursing education programs meeting minimal standards as defined in the state nurse practice act and/or rules and regulations.

>    **Certification** – The process by which an organization, association, voluntary agency, or state regulatory agency grants recognition that an individual possesses predetermined knowledge and/or skills specified for practice in an area of specialization.

>    **Licensure** – The process by which a governmental agency gives affirmation to the public that the individuals engaged in an occupation or profession have minimal education, qualifications, and competence necessary to practice in a safe manner.

**Criteria** – Statements that identify the elements that need to be examined in evaluation of a Standard.

**Currently Enrolled** – In reference to a nurse administrator or nursing faculty member, continuously enrolled as a graduate student in good standing and successfully completing a minimum of 6–9 semester credits per calendar year until the graduate degree is earned.

**Curriculum Integrity** – Demonstration of the soundness of a nursing program of study that develops from the mission/philosophy in an organized manner across a sequence of courses. The mission/philosophy and selected professional standards, guidelines, and competencies result in the faculty identifying end-of-program student learning outcomes that are specific and measurable.

**Curriculum Rigor** – Demonstration that there is progression of knowledge, skills, and behaviors throughout a curriculum and that the curriculum is appropriately challenging for the level of contemporary nursing practice for which the program is preparing graduates.

**Default Rate** – The percentage of student borrowers at each governing organization who fail to remain current with repayment of their federal financial aid student loans during the reporting period specified by the United States Department of Education.

**Delivery Formats** – Methods used to transfer knowledge, skills, and behavior from an instructor to a student. See: Methods of Delivery.

**Distance Education** – See Methods of Delivery.

> **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #15 Distance Education* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed if a program uses any form of distance education.

**Distance Technology** – Instructional methods that may include but are not limited to one-way or two-way transmissions, audio, video, the Internet, and/or computer technologies.

**Diversity Concepts** – Knowledge about persons, communities, regions, countries, cultures, and ethnicities other than one's own.

**DNP Specialist Certificate** – A selected series of courses that are a subset of courses within a clinical doctorate program specific to one (1) area of practice (e.g., certificates in nursing administration, certificates in nursing education, certificate as a family nurse practitioner) which are taken after an individual is already credentialed with a doctorate degree in nursing in a different specialty.

**Due Process** – A disciplined, analytical decision-making procedure in which relevant standards are applied by a properly constituted and authorized body, using a method that is based on published rules of procedure and is free of improper influence.

**Evidence-Based** – Actions, processes, or methodologies that are grounded in and flow from the translation of credible, substantive, and current research.

**Exclusive Faculty** – *See Faculty*

**Expected Level of Achievement** (ELA) – A measurable index identified by the faculty that reflects a desired outcome. An ELA should be high enough as to be genuine and encourage continuous improvement, but not so high as to be idealistic and, thus, unachievable.

**Experientially Qualified** – *See Qualified, Experientially*

**Faculty, Non-Nursing** – Non-nurses who teach and evaluate nursing students, are academically qualified, and are **assigned to teach a nursing course,** such as a dietician, pharmacologist, or physiologist. Non-nurse faculty are not faculty members who teach general education courses. Non-nurse faculty are not guest speakers/invited presenters who teach selected topics in a nursing course.

**Faculty, Nursing** – Nurses who teach and evaluate nursing students, are academically qualified, and have experience in the content areas in which they teach. See definition of Nurse Administrator and Nursing Program Coordinator.

> **Full-time Faculty** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate nursing students, have a full-time employment status at the governing organization, and whose current primary workload responsibilities are teaching and/or evaluating students in a nursing program. See definition of Nurse Administrator and Nursing Program Coordinator.

> **Part-time Faculty** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate nursing students, have an appointment that is less than a full-time status at the governing organization, and whose current primary workload responsibilities are teaching and/or evaluating students in a nursing program. See definition of Nurse Administrator and Nursing Program Coordinator.

> **Exclusive Faculty** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate nursing students in only one (1) nursing program within a single nursing education unit, whether having a full-time or part-time employment status at the governing organization.

> **Shared Faculty** – Persons who teach and/or evaluate students in more than one (1) program within a governing organization or governing organization system, whether having a full-time or part-time employment status within the governing organization or governing organization system.

**Faculty Development** – Activities that facilitate faculty maintenance or enhancement of expertise. Examples include, but are not limited to, certification, continuing education, formal advanced education, clinical practice, research, publications, and other scholarly activities.

**Faculty Workload** – Percentages of time that reflect the manner in which the governing organization and/or nursing education unit characterizes, structures, and documents the nature of faculty members' teaching and non-teaching responsibilities. Workload duties include, but are not limited to, teaching, advisement, administration, committee activity, service, practice, research, and other scholarly activities.

**Full-time Faculty** – *See Faculty*

**Gatekeeper** – A person or agency that is responsible for monitoring a governing organization's compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, Title IV.

**Geographic Region** – In reference to the Substantive Change process, an area serving the same/similar population of students and communities as the original/main location of a nursing program, an off-campus instructional site, or a branch campus. See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Geographically Separate** – An off-campus instructional site or branch campus that is located physically apart from the main campus of the governing organization.

**Good Cause** – Sufficient grounds to extend the accreditation at the conclusion of a nursing program's maximum monitoring period, which results in Continuing Accreditation for Good Cause. A nursing program's accreditation can be extended for good cause if a nursing program satisfies all of the principles for Good Cause. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #4 Types of Commission Actions for Initial and Continuing Accreditation* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Governing Organization** – The institution with overall responsibility and authority for a nursing education unit and a nursing program (e.g., university, college, hospital/medical center, career center).

**Governing Organization System** – Multiple governing organizations operating jointly under the same company.

**Graduate Degree** – A master's degree or doctoral degree.

**Inactivation of a Nursing Program:** A period of time during which no new students are admitted into a nursing program; therefore, there will be no graduates from the nursing program for an intervening period of time.

A nursing education unit may inactivate a nursing program for a limited period of time per the schedule below:

| Type of Program | Length of Time Program May be Inactive |
|---|---|
| Practical | Up to one (1) calendar year after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Diploma | Up to two (2) calendar years after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Associate | Up to one (1) calendar year after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Baccalaureate | Up to two (2) calendar years after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Master's | Up to one (1) calendar year after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Doctorate of Nursing Practice | Up to one (1) calendar year after the last graduate completes the nursing program. |
| Post-Master's Certificate | Due to program length, inactivation is not applicable; nursing program must be in continuous operation or closed. |
| DNP Specialist Certificate | Due to program length, inactivation is not applicable; nursing program must be in continuous operation or closed. |

If a nursing education unit does not reactivate a nursing program within the period of time specified in the table above, then the nursing program is considered closed and removed from the list of accredited programs. To restart the nursing program, the nursing education unit must reapply for initial accreditation with ACEN.

**Inactivation of an Off-Campus Instructional Site** – A period of time during which a nursing education unit does not offer 1) a nursing program and the nursing courses for the nursing program or 2) a nursing program option and the nursing courses for the nursing program option at an approved off-campus instructional site for five (5) academic years. See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Information Literacy** – The ability to identify what information is needed for a specific purpose and to access, evaluate, and use all forms of information in achieving that purpose.

**Initial Accreditation** – The first peer review process for a candidate nursing program seeking accreditation with the ACEN.

**Instructional Technology** – The method(s) and delivery system(s) used by faculty to convey course content to students.

**Interprofessional** – Sharing of information among two (2) or more healthcare professionals from different disciplines who are working together as a team with a common purpose and mutual respect to improve patient outcomes.

**Job Placement Rate** – Percentage of graduates, typically within one (1) year of graduation, who are employed in a position for which a nursing program prepared them. The expected level of achievement (ELA) for job placement rate is determined by the faculty based on program demographics, such as the characteristics of the nursing education unit and the region where the nursing education unit is located. Program demographic considerations include, but are not limited to program type, local hiring practices, historical job placement rate, the governing organization's job placement rate for students in other health science programs, state job placement rate for similar programs, group of peer programs, or ACEN data, etc.

**Laboratory Personnel** – Person(s) without teaching or evaluation responsibilities who work in a skills/simulation laboratory with specified expertise that supports and/or facilitates student learning experiences.

Laboratory personnel who support/facilitate student learning experiences in a skills/simulation laboratory must hold educational and experiential qualifications as required by the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency, and must be qualified for assigned responsibilities. In the absence of requirements set by the state and/or the governing organization's accrediting agency, the governing organization must set appropriate educational and experiential qualifications for assigned responsibilities in the skills/simulation laboratory.

For example:
1. If the governing organization, the state, and/or the governing organization's accrediting agency require laboratory personnel who support/facilitate student learning experiences in a skills/simulation laboratory to hold a graduate degree in nursing, then the laboratory personnel who support/facilitate student learning experiences in a skills/simulation laboratory must hold a graduate degree in nursing, unless there is an approved and documented waiver from the requiring agency.

2. If the governing organization, the state, and/or the governing organization's accrediting agency **do not have requirements** for laboratory personnel that support/facilitate student learning experiences in a skills/simulation laboratory, then the governing

organization must set appropriate educational and experiential qualifications for assigned responsibilities in the skills/simulation laboratory. The governing organization may set qualification requirements that do not include a graduate degree in nursing.

**Letter of Notification** – A letter from the nurse administrator of a nursing program, or his/her designee, to the ACEN Chief Executive Officer summarizing a Substantive Change and pertinent information thereto appertaining. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Licensure –** *See Credentialing*

**Location** – Sites where a nursing program is delivered, in whole or part, including the main location, off-campus instructional site(s), and branch campus(es). **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed when adding or closing an additional location. *See Branch Campus/Off-Campus Instructional Site.*

**Methods of Delivery** – The methods used by faculty to deliver instruction of a nursing course.

>  **Distance Education** – An educational method of delivery in which instruction occurs when a student and instructor are not in the same place. Instruction may be synchronous or asynchronous. Distance education may employ audio, video, and/or computer technologies and include technology that is used to support regular and substantive interactions between the instructor and students.

>  **Hybrid Education** – An educational method of delivery in which instruction occurs using both distance and traditional education methods of delivery.

>  **Traditional Education** – An educational method of delivery in which instruction occurs when a student and instructor are in the same place at the same time (e.g., face-to-face). This method of delivery may be web-enhanced/supported.

>  **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Substantive Change* for additional information about the procedures that must be followed when a program changes its method of delivery from the method of delivery currently approved by the ACEN.

**Mentored** – A formal or informal process through which a more experienced individual advises, guides, and/or coaches another individual who is less experienced or is transitioning to a new position or employment setting.

**Mission/Philosophy** – The governing organization and/or nursing education unit statement that designates fundamental beliefs and characteristics and provides guidance and direction for a nursing program(s) and services offered.

**Non-compliance** – Peer evaluators determined based on their professional judgment that evidence demonstrates a nursing program is not in compliance with an Accreditation Standard.

**Nurse Administrator** – The nurse with responsibility and authority for the administrative and instructional activities of a nursing education unit and nursing program(s) within the governing organization (e.g., dean, chairperson, director, etc.). The ACEN does not consider the nurse administrator a faculty member, regardless of the teaching responsibilities or classification by the governing organization.

**Nursing Program Coordinator** – A person(s) assigned a range of administrative/coordinating responsibilities to assist the nurse administrator in the fulfillment of the goals of the nursing education unit and achieving a nursing program's end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. If a person's workload of assigned administrative/coordinating responsibilities are 51% or greater, the ACEN does not consider this person a faculty member, regardless of teaching responsibilities and classification by the governing organization. **Note:** Governing organizations use a variety of terms to describe individuals who act in an administrative/coordinating capacity. Such titles include, but are not limited to clinical coordinator, skills laboratory coordinator, simulation coordinator, associate nursing director, etc.

**Single Nursing Education Unit** – A unit within a governing organization that offers one (1) or more nursing programs; all nursing programs within a nursing education unit must be administered by a single nurse administrator with the responsibility and authority for all nursing programs. If a governing organization elects to have a different nurse administrator for one (1) or more nursing programs, then each nursing program with a different nurse administrator is a separate nursing education unit. The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a nursing education unit is a single nursing education unit.

**Single Nursing Program –** Determination of whether a nursing program is a single nursing program offered at different sites or actually multiple nursing programs depends on several factors. The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a nursing program is a single nursing program and whether a location at which a nursing program is offered must hold separate accreditation. Factors used by the ACEN to determine program status are described below.

> Method of Delivery:
> When 51% or more of the nursing program is offered in a traditional method of delivery, the nursing program and all locations where the nursing program is offered must be in the same state and under the jurisdiction of the same state regulatory agency for nursing.
>
> When 51% or more of the nursing program is offered through a distance education method of delivery, it is possible for the nursing program and all locations where the nursing program is offered to be in the same state or in different states, and under the same or different state regulatory agency. If two (2) or more state regulatory agencies are involved, the nursing program must meet all the requirements set by each state regulatory agency for the nursing program.

A nursing program is a single nursing program when all of the following criteria are met:
- The nursing program is within a single governing organization that is accredited through an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the ACEN.
- The nursing program is located only on a governing organization's main campus and/or off-campus instructional site(s).
- A single degree, certificate, or diploma is awarded from the same governing organization to students who successfully complete the nursing program.
- A single NCSBN program code for the nursing program offered by the single governing organization.
- There is one (1) nursing program of study for each nursing program option offered by the single governing organization.

- There is one (1) set of end-of program student learning outcomes and program outcomes utilized for the nursing program offered by the single governing organization.
- There is a systematic plan of evaluation in place that addresses the end-of program student learning outcomes and program outcomes for the nursing program offered by the single governing organization.
- There is one (1) nurse administrator for the nursing program.
  - The nurse administrator must have continuous, active, daily, and personal responsibility and authority at all locations for the nursing program.
  - The nurse administrator must continually have adequate time and resources on a daily basis at all locations to administer the nursing program.
  - The nurse administrator must oversee the daily governing organization, nursing education unit, and nursing program matters such as, but not limited to, personnel matters, student matters, curricular matters, and resources matters.
- All nursing program and nursing education unit personnel at all locations must report to the nurse administrator.
- There is one (1) group of faculty members for the nursing program who continually function as a faculty of the whole on a daily basis within a set of established faculty policies through their organization and decision-making processes and continually have input into the curriculum development, delivery, and evaluation.
- There is a single set of policies governing all nursing students enrolled in the nursing program that is established by a single governing organization and a single nursing education unit.

The ACEN retains the right to determine whether a nursing program is a single nursing program and whether a location at which a nursing program is offered must hold separate accreditation.

**Nursing Program Length** – Total number of credit/quarter/clock hours required to complete the defined nursing program of study allocated over a specific number of academic terms (semester/trimester/quarter); the nursing program of study is inclusive of all prerequisite courses, general education courses, and nursing courses required.

> **Note:** For undergraduate nursing programs, if first aid certification, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification, being a certified nursing assistant (CNA), or being a medical assistant (MA) is/are required prerequisite(s) for admission, these requirements/courses do not count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours for the defined nursing program of study, whether these requirements/courses are credit or non-credit. All other credit courses that are required prerequisites and/or requirements for admission (e.g., general biology, medical terminology) do count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours.

> When first aid, CPR, and CNA certification are part of the defined nursing program of study or taken as elective courses that are part of the defined nursing program of study, these courses count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours.

**Nursing Program Option** – Program of study designed for a subset of students within a nursing program. Nursing program options include, but are not limited to, pre-licensure options, post-licensure completion options, bridge options, traditional options, accelerated options, evening/weekend options, full- and part-time options, specialized concentrations/tracks, etc. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed when adding or closing a nursing program option.

**Nursing Program Type** – The clinical doctorate, DNP specialist certificate, master's, post-master's certificate, baccalaureate, associate, diploma, and practical curriculum offered by a governing organization that leads to the awarding of a degree, diploma, or certificate.

**Off-Campus Instructional Site** – Any location that is physically apart from the main campus of the governing organization where a nursing program is offered, in whole or part. See definition of Branch Campus, which is not an off-campus instructional site. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed when adding or closing an off-campus instructional site.

**Outcome** – A statement that reflects the achievement of an identified goal.

> **Course Student Learning Outcomes/Course Objectives** – Statements of learner-oriented expectations written in measurable terms that express the knowledge, skills, or behaviors that the students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the course. Course student learning outcomes/course objectives must be consistent with standards of contemporary nursing practice.
>
> Course student learning outcomes/course objectives:
> - must be aligned and linked to the end-of-program student learning outcomes;
> - should have a single, measurable action;
> - support students' achievement of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes;
> - typically progress from "simple to complex" as students advance through the nursing program of study; and
> - organize, guide, and direct course curricular matters such as, but not limited to, the inclusion of content, learning activities, selection of practice learning experiences, evaluation methodologies, selection of practice learning environments, etc.
>
> **Program Outcomes** – Measurable indicators that reflect the extent to which the purposes of the nursing program are achieved and by which nursing program effectiveness is documented.
>
> The ACEN specifies and requires the assessment of the following nursing program outcomes:
> - Undergraduate programs:
>   - licensure examination pass rate;
>   - program completion rate; and
>   - job placement rate.
> - Graduate programs:
>   - licensure examination pass rate and/or certification examination pass rate;
>   - program completion rate; and
>   - job placement rate.
> - Graduate programs with APRN options are also expected to adhere to any outcomes monitoring, such as graduate and employer satisfaction, required by the current National Task Force Guidelines for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner programs and other specialty organizations, as applicable.
> - The assessment of additional program outcomes is the choice of the governing organization and nursing education unit. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #29 Advertising and Recruitment of Students Reporting* for publishing student achievement data and ACEN

Guidelines for Publishing Student Achievement Outcome Data for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**End-of-Program Student Learning Outcomes** – Statements of learner-oriented, practice-ready expectations written in measurable terms that express the knowledge, skills, or behaviors that the students should be able to demonstrate upon completion of the nursing program, regardless of the nursing program option. End-of-program student learning outcomes must be consistent with standards of contemporary nursing practice and must be different for each program type (e.g., the end-of-program student learning outcomes for an associate degree and a baccalaureate degree offered by the same governing organization should be unique to each program).

End-of-program student learning outcomes
- are driven by established professional standards, guidelines, and competencies
- provide the framework for all curricular matters
- *represent the point of transition from being a student to being an entry-level practitioner for the chosen level of nursing education*

**Outcomes Assessment Method**

**Direct** – objective measures in which student performance and/or the products of student work during the program are evaluated by faculty to determine achievement of end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. Examples include but are not limited to examinations (e.g., standardized or faculty-developed), portfolio evaluations, clinical evaluations, rubrics, and assignments.

**Indirect** – subjective measures that indicate the perspectives (e.g., opinions or thoughts) about student's achievement, learning experiences, skills, and knowledge regarding end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. Examples include but are not limited to surveys, self-assessments, focus groups, interviews, and student peer review.

**Partnership** – An agreement (formal relationship) between a nursing education unit/governing organization and an outside agent/agency to accomplish specific objectives and goals over a period of time. This does not include clinical agreements for student learning experiences required by the nursing program.

**Part-time Faculty** – *See Faculty*

**Pass Rates, Examinations**

**Certification Examination Pass Rates** – Annual performance on the certification examination for **all** first-time test-takers during the same 12-month period.

**Licensure Examination Pass Rates** – Annual performance on the licensure examination for **all** first-time test-takers during the same 12-month period.

**Patient/Client** – A general term used to describe the recipient(s) of nursing care, including a/an: individual, family, group, or population.

**Post-Master's Certificate (PMC)** – A selected series of courses that are a subset of courses within a master's program specific to one (1) area of practice (e.g., certificates in nursing

administration, certificates in nursing education, certificate as a family nurse practitioner) that are taken after an individual is already credentialed with a master's degree in nursing in a different specialty. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #3 Eligibility for Accreditation* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**Practice Learning Environments** – Settings that facilitate students' application of knowledge, skills, and behaviors in the care of patients/clients and support the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. Settings include, but are not limited to, on-campus skills laboratories, acute-care and specialty hospitals, long-term care facilities, ambulatory care centers, physician offices, community and home health care, and on-campus laboratory with low-fidelity, moderate-fidelity, and high-fidelity simulation.

**Practice Learning Experiences** – Opportunities for students to provide nursing care in a variety of settings/practice learning environments that support the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Preceptor** – An academically and experientially qualified person who has received formal training to function as a resource and role model for nursing students. When specified, preceptors must meet the stated requirements for the level of nursing education offered. Examples include, but are not limited to, requirements set by a state regulatory agency for nursing or requirements set by the governing organization/nursing education unit.

**Prerequisite Course** – A course that is required prior to enrolling in another course.

> **Note:** For undergraduate nursing programs, if first aid certification, cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) certification, being a certified nursing assistant (CNA), or being a medical assistant (MA) is/are required prerequisite(s) for admission, these requirements/courses do not count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours for the defined nursing program of study, whether these requirements/courses are credit or non-credit. All other credit courses that are required prerequisite(s) and/or requirements for admission (e.g., general biology, medical terminology) <u>do</u> count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours.

> When first aid, CPR certification, and CNA certification are part of the defined nursing program of study or taken as elective courses that are part of the defined nursing program of study, these courses count toward the total number of credit/quarter/clock hours.

**Professional Standards/Guidelines for Nursing Practice** – A set of guidelines approved by a nationally recognized nursing organization for use in the development and evaluation of a nursing curriculum. The most recent version/edition of the standards/guidelines must be used. The standards/guidelines include, but are not limited to:
- Consensus Model for APRN Regulation (APRN Consensus Work Group & the National Council of State Boards of Nursing APRN Advisory Group)
- Core Competencies for Interprofessional Collaborative Practice© (Interprofessional Education Collaborative)
- Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education)
- Essentials of Baccalaureate, Master's, and Doctoral Education (American Association of Colleges of Nursing)
- Health Professions Education: A Bridge to Quality© (Institute of Medicine)

- Interprofessional Education Collaborative (IPEC) Core Competencies
- NLN Competencies for Graduates of Nursing Education Programs© (National League for Nursing)
- Nurse Practice Standards for the Licensed Practical/Vocational Nurse (National Federation of Licensed Practical Nurses)
- Nursing: Scope and Standards of Practice© (American Nurses Association)
- Standards of Practice and Educational Competencies of Graduates of Practical/Vocational Nursing Programs (National Association for Practical Nurse Education and Services)
- Statement on Clinical Nurse Specialist Practice and Education© (National Association of Clinical Nurse Specialists)
- Quality and Safety Education for Nurses (QSEN) Competencies

**Program Completion Rate** – Percentage of students who graduate within a defined period of time. The definition used by the ACEN for a nursing program completion rate is the number of students who complete the program in no more than 150% of the stated nursing program length, beginning with enrollment on the first day of the first nursing course, which can vary based upon a nursing program option. The expected level of achievement (ELA) for program completion rate is determined by the faculty based on student demographics, such as the population served by the governing organization and nursing education unit. Student demographics may include, but are not limited to, individual characteristics, such as age, sex, education, and income level, as well as considerations for admission status and peer program performance.

**Program Outcomes** – *See Outcomes*

**Public** – Any individual or group with an interest in but no direct responsibility for the development or delivery of a nursing program (e.g., patients/clients, non-nursing students, non-nursing faculty, healthcare providers, and citizens).

**Published Documents** – All written forms of communication distributed by a nursing program and/or governing organization, including paper and electronic sources intended to inform the public.

**Qualified, Academically** – Documented current or recent direct engagement in a significant manner in the teaching of nursing and/or research in nursing. Faculty members must hold all educational qualifications required by the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency. The nurse administrator must hold all qualifications required by the governing organization and state.

**Qualified, Experientially** – Documented current or recent direct engagement in a significant manner in clinical nursing experiences for those whose role includes teaching and/or administration. Faculty members must hold all experiential qualifications required by the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency. The nurse administrator must hold all qualifications required by the governing organization and state.

**Qualified, to Teach** – The maintenance of current knowledge and expertise in the teaching modality (e.g., face-to-face or alternative methods of delivery) and the assigned classroom, laboratory, and/or clinical teaching responsibilities. Maintaining currency may include, but is not limited to, focused continuing education, clinical practice (paid or unpaid), and applicable professional development.

**Reactivation of a Nursing Program** – After a period of inactivity, the process of admitting new students into a nursing program. If a nursing education unit does not reactivate a nursing program within the period of time specified by the ACEN, the nursing program is considered closed and is removed from the list of accredited nursing programs. For a deactivated nursing program to be reactivated, the nursing education unit must reapply for accreditation with the ACEN. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed to reactivate a nursing program.

**Reactivation of an Off-Campus Instructional Site** – After a period of inactivity, the process of offering 1) a nursing program and the nursing courses for the nursing program or 2) a nursing program option and the nursing courses for the nursing program option at an approved off-campus instructional site. If a nursing education unit does not reactivate the off-campus instructional site within five (5) academic years of no students being enrolled and no nursing courses being offered at the off-campus instructional site, then the nursing program must follow the substantive change process to reinstate the off-campus instructional site. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #14 Reporting Substantive Changes* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed to reactivate an off-campus instructional site.

**Resources, Fiscal** – The financial support required for securing the personnel, supplies, materials, equipment, and services necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Resources, Learning** – The materials, activities, and technologies that facilitate the development of students' knowledge, skills, and behaviors necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Resources, Physical** – Equipment, classrooms, laboratories, offices, and other common spaces used by the students enrolled in a nursing program and the staff and faculty of the nursing education unit that are necessary to ensure the achievement of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Role-Specific Professional Competencies (Graduate Programs Only)** – Expected, measurable levels of graduate level nursing performance that integrate knowledge, skills, and behaviors in the specialty area. Competencies may include, but are not limited to, specific knowledge areas, clinical judgments, and behaviors based upon the role and/or scope of practice of the master's- or doctoral-prepared nurse.

**Scholarship** – Activities that facilitate the enhancement of a nursing faculty member's expertise and support the achievement of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. These include, but are not limited to, application of knowledge, teaching, service, practice, and research.

**Shared Faculty** – *See Faculty*

**Simulation**

    High-fidelity simulation:  Practice learning experiences that incorporate a full-body computerized patient simulator that mimics the patient's responses to student's actions.

    Mid-fidelity simulation:  Practice learning experiences that incorporate a computerized patient simulator with basic physiologic functions, such as computer-based self-directed learning systems.

    Low-fidelity simulation:  Practice learning experiences that utilize static mannequins or task-trainers for basic nursing skills.

    Virtual simulation:  Practice learning experiences that are computer-generated simulations with virtual (e.g., three-dimensional images) patients and/or care environments for the development of nursing knowledge and skills.

**Skills/Simulation Laboratory –** An on-campus setting designed to look, feel, and/or function as a real-world practice learning environment, offering real-world practice learning experiences, which may include the use of low-fidelity, mid-fidelity, and/or high-fidelity simulation equipment.

**Staff** – Non-faculty personnel who facilitate the attainment of the goals and outcomes of a nursing education unit, including clerical and other support persons.

**Standard** – Agreed-upon expectations to measure quantity, extent, value, and educational quality.

**Sufficient** – enough or adequate for the purpose of achieving the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes.

**Sufficient Full-Time Faculty** - Typically reflected by: 1) the ratio of the total number of full-time faculty (per the ACEN definition of full-time faculty) to the total number of full-time and part-time nursing students enrolled in all the nursing courses required for a nursing program or programs; 2) the required workload for full-time faculty; 3) the number of full-time faculty on required or voluntary overload and amount of required and voluntary overload for each full-time faculty member; and 4) required and voluntary non-teaching responsibilities required or offered by the governing organization and/or nursing education unit. When specified, faculty-to-student ratios must meet the state requirements for the level of nursing education offered. Examples include, but are not limited to, ratios set by a state regulatory agency for nursing or ratios set by the governing organization/nursing education unit.

**Sustainability of Resources** – The capacity of the governing organization to continue financial, human, and physical resources at the current level.

**Synchronous Learning** – Learning and instruction that occur at the same time and in the same place.

**Systematic Plan of Evaluation (SPE)** – A written document emphasizing the ongoing, comprehensive assessment of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and program outcomes. **Note:** See Standard 6 in the ACEN Standards and Criteria for details.

**Teach-Out Agreement** – A written agreement between governing organizations/nursing education units that provides for the equitable treatment of students and a reasonable

opportunity for students to complete their nursing program of study should a governing organization/nursing education unit, or a nursing program location that provides 50% or more of a nursing program offered, cease to operate before all enrolled students have completed their nursing program of study. This applies to the closure of a governing organization, an off-campus instructional site, a branch campus, or a nursing program. A teach-out agreement requires ACEN approval in advance of implementation. **Note:** See *ACEN Policy #16 Program Closing* for additional information and the procedures that must be followed.

**"The state"** – An entity or entities that has/have jurisdiction over a governing organization and/or nursing program. Examples include but are not limited to a state regulatory agency for nursing, a state education department, and/or a state higher education system.

**Title IV Gatekeeper** – A person or agency that is responsible for monitoring a governing organization's compliance with the Higher Education Reauthorization Act, Title IV.

**Web-Enhanced/-Supported Course** – A course where the instruction occurs through traditional face-to-face delivery, and students are expected to attend the in-person class. The learning management system (LMS), or other web-based system, is used to support the course. Course material, such as syllabi and calendars, are generally posted for easy student access. In addition, students may also expected to participate in web-based learning activities, such as discussion boards or learning activities posted online. In addition, an LMS, or other web-based system, is used to support the course through the posting of course materials, such as syllabi or course announcements; however, students are not required to participate in web-based learning activities.

**Welfare of Faculty and Staff** – Policies affecting faculty and staff promulgated by the governing organization and nursing education unit, including, but not limited to, those related to non-discrimination, appointment, rank, grievance, promotion, rights and responsibilities, salaries/benefits, and workload.