



CCNE: ACCREDITATION 101

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Presenter

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Expected Outcomes

- to be able to identify the purpose and scope of CCNE programmatic accreditation
- to become familiar with the CCNE values
- to become familiar with the CCNE standards and procedures for accreditation
- to become knowledgeable about the process for initiating or continuing CCNE accreditation, including key steps, timelines, program monitoring, and the decision-making process

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CCNE Accreditation: Scope and Purpose

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SCOPE OF CCNE ACCREDITATION

CCNE is the autonomous accrediting arm of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN).

CCNE:

- is governed by its own Board of Commissioners
- is financially independent
- controls its own bylaws
- establishes and approves accreditation standards, policies, and procedures

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SCOPE OF CCNE ACCREDITATION

CCNE is a programmatic accreditor of nursing education programs in the U.S. and its territories.

CCNE accredits:

- Baccalaureate
- Master's
- Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP)
- Post-graduate Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) certificate

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PURPOSE OF CCNE ACCREDITATION

Accreditation by CCNE is intended:

- ❑ To hold nursing programs accountable.
- ❑ To evaluate the success of a nursing program in achieving its mission, goals, and outcomes.
- ❑ To assess the extent to which a nursing program meets accreditation standards.
- ❑ To inform the public of the purposes and values of accreditation and to identify nursing programs that meet accreditation standards.
- ❑ To foster continuing improvement in nursing programs.

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CCNE: A Values Based Initiative

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CCNE VALUES

CCNE accreditation activities are premised on a statement of principles or values. These are that CCNE will:

- ❑ Foster *trust*
- ❑ Stimulate and support *continuous quality improvement*
- ❑ *Inclusive of diverse institutional and individual issues and opinions* of the community of interest
- ❑ *Review and oversight* by peers in the community of interest
- ❑ Maintain *integrity* through a consistent, fair and honest accreditation process
- ❑ Value and foster *innovation* in educational and accreditation processes

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CCNE VALUES (continued)

- ❑ Facilitate and engage in *self-assessment*
- ❑ Foster an educational climate that supports *life-long learning*
- ❑ Maintain a high level of *accountability*
- ❑ Maintain *cost-effective and cost-accountable* processes
- ❑ Encourage development of *effective professionals and socially responsible citizens*
- ❑ Ensure *autonomy and procedural fairness* in deliberations and decision-making processes

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CCNE by the Numbers

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CCNE BY THE NUMBERS

CCNE currently accredits 1,389 nursing education programs at 705 institutions.

Education Programs

- ❑ 677 baccalaureate degree nursing programs
- ❑ 433 master's degree nursing programs
- ❑ 206 DNP programs
- ❑ 73 post-graduate APRN certificate programs

Nurse Residency Programs

- ❑ 18 Post-baccalaureate nurse residency programs

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CCNE BY THE NUMBERS

New Applicants:

- ❑ 77 baccalaureate
- ❑ 20 master's
- ❑ 8 DNP
- ❑ 13 post-graduate APRN certificate programs

New Programs:

- ❑ 4 baccalaureate
- ❑ 29 master's
- ❑ 68 DNP
- ❑ 200 post-graduate APRN certificate programs, where the institution already has one or more other programs accredited by CCNE

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CCNE BY THE NUMBERS

Over the next 12 months, CCNE will conduct 183 on-site evaluations:

- ❑ 88 evaluations in Spring 2016
- ❑ 95 evaluations in Fall 2016

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Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs 2013

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STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

The Standards were last updated in 2013 and went into effect January 1, 2014. There are four standards:

- ❑ Standard I- Program Quality: Mission and Governance
- ❑ Standard II- Program Quality: Institutional Commitment and Resources
- ❑ Standard III- Program Quality: Curriculum and Teaching-Learning Practices
- ❑ Standard IV- Program Effectiveness: Assessment and Achievement of Program Outcomes

Each Standard has 6-8 Key Elements (totaling 28).

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STANDARDS FOR ACCREDITATION

- ❑ Standards are found to be either “met” or “not met.”
- ❑ Key Elements are found to have or not have a compliance concern “yes” or “no.”
- ❑ The same standards and key elements apply to all degree and/or post-graduate APRN certificate programs under review; regardless of mode of educational delivery.
- ❑ The standards and key elements build upon one another and there are relationships among the key elements.

Access the Standards on the CCNE website at:
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/Standards-Amended-2013.pdf>

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Procedures for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs 2014

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CCNE PROCEDURES

In the CCNE Procedures, find information about:

- CCNE Board and Committees
- Initial Accreditation
- Scheduling the On-Site Evaluation
- The Accreditation Review Process
- The Accreditation Decision-Making Process
- Categories of Accreditation

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CCNE PROCEDURES

- Accreditation Terms
- Communication of Actions
- Disclosure of Accreditation
- Monitoring Program Performance
 - Annual Reports
 - Continuous Improvement Progress Reports
 - Compliance Reports
 - Special Reports
 - Substantive Change Notifications, etc.

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The CCNE Accreditation Process

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APPLYING FOR CCNE ACCREDITATION

New Applicants

- A program begins the accreditation review process by requesting new applicant status.
- New applicants for accreditation are eligible for a maximum accreditation term of 5-years.
- New applicant status signifies an affiliation with CCNE; it is not a status of accreditation.

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APPLYING FOR CCNE ACCREDITATION

The written application must include:

- A letter of request signed by the chief executive officer, the chief academic officer, and the chief nurse administrator of the nursing unit.
- Evidence that the parent institution is accredited by an institutional accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
- Evidence that the institution has received approval or authorization from the recognized institutional accrediting agency and state higher education authority, if applicable.

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APPLYING FOR CCNE ACCREDITATION

- Evidence that the nursing program is approved or otherwise authorized by all applicable state boards of nursing.
- Payment of the fee for new applicants as indicated in CCNE's fee schedule.
- A completed CCNE Program Information Form.
- A catalog, bulletin, or other publication (print or electronic) for the institution and the program.

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APPLYING FOR CCNE ACCREDITATION

- ❑ Documentation that briefly summarizes the ability of the program to meet the established accreditation standards. The summary should be 5 pages or less.

Access the new applicant process at:
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/new-applicant-process/baccalaureate-graduate>

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APPLYING FOR CCNE ACCREDITATION

New Programs

- ❑ A new program is the addition of a program at a different degree and/or certificate level than the already accredited program.
- ❑ Programs that hold accreditation by CCNE and seek accreditation of a new program are required to submit a letter of intent to request an accreditation review.

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TIMELINE FOR APPLYING FOR ACCREDITATION

New Applicants

- ❑ A program requesting new applicant status must submit a written application.
- ❑ New applicant requests are accepted on a rolling basis.
- ❑ Once accepted as a new applicant, the program must proceed toward accreditation and host an on-site evaluation within 2 years of the date of acceptance as a new applicant.

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SCHEDULING AN ON-SITE EVALUATION

New Applicants and New Programs

- ❑ On-site evaluations are generally required to be scheduled a minimum of 12 months in advance of the accreditation term.
- ❑ CCNE conducts on-site evaluations during the spring and fall.
- ❑ The on-site evaluation is typically 2 ½ days.
- ❑ Date availability is on a first come first served basis.
- ❑ CCNE does not limit the number of on-site evaluations per accreditation term.

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SCHEDULING AN ON-SITE EVALUATION

New Applicants and New Programs

- ❑ A degree program must have students enrolled for the equivalent of one academic year (e.g., two semesters) prior to hosting an on-site evaluation.
- ❑ Post-graduate APRN certificate programs must host an on-site evaluation with a degree program and are eligible for the maximum term of accreditation of the other degree program(s) under review.
- ❑ The entire degree and/or post-graduate APRN certificate program must be presented for accreditation.

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THE ON-SITE EVALUATION TEAM

- ❑ Composed of 3-5 trained volunteer evaluators based on the number of programs under review.
- ❑ Each team minimally has a team leader, one academic representative and one practice representative.
- ❑ CCNE staff assign members to the team based on a variety of factors, including geographic region, institution type, programs under review, areas of expertise, mode of educational delivery, etc.
- ❑ Once the team has been formed, the institution has the opportunity to review the team for conflicts of interest.

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THE ON-SITE EVALUATION TEAM

- ❑ Reviews the written self-study document.
- ❑ Meets with the program's community of interest, including students and alumni, and program and institutional leaders.
- ❑ Reviews documents provided in the resource room.
- ❑ Makes a determination about each standard and each key element for each degree and/or certificate program under review but **does not** make a recommendation regarding accreditation.
- ❑ Develops a written report of its findings.

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COORDINATING THE ON-SITE EVALUATION

- ❑ The on-site evaluation is coordinated through the CCNE Online Community (www.ccnecommunity.org).
- ❑ **All** communications regarding the on-site evaluation occur via the CCNE Online Community.
- ❑ **All** documents related to the on-site evaluation are uploaded into and accessed via the CCNE Online Community.
- ❑ The CCNE Online Community allows the program to manage its profile, thus ensuring that information about the program(s) under review is accurate.
- ❑ The CCNE Online Community provides the program access to important resources, announcements, reminders, program deadlines, etc.

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The Decision-Making Process

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

After the on-site evaluation, the team submits a report of its findings to CCNE. The team report is:

- ❑ reviewed and edited by staff
- ❑ uploaded to the CCNE Online Community for review by the nursing program

This process can take up to 8 weeks from the time of the on-site evaluation.

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

The program is provided the opportunity to provide a written response to the team report. The program's response may:

- ❑ offer corrections of errors as they relate to names, positions, data, and other documentable facts; and/or
- ❑ offer comments that agree or disagree with the opinions and conclusions stated in the report; and/or
- ❑ provide any documentation demonstrating additional progress made toward ongoing program improvement.

Or, the program's response may indicate that there are no concerns and that the institution is in agreement with the report.

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

Prior to the CCNE Board of Commissioners reviewing a program for accreditation, all programs are reviewed by the Accreditation Review Committee (ARC).

The ARC meets twice per year (generally early spring and mid-summer)

The ARC is:

- ❑ appointed by the Board Chair
- ❑ composed of experienced CCNE evaluators
- ❑ responsible for making confidential recommendations regarding accreditation to the Board

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

The ARC reviews:

- Self-Study Document
- Team Report
- Program's Response to Team Report

The ARC may reach a different conclusion than that of the team.

If the ARC adds a compliance concern and/or a not met standard, the program will be provided an opportunity to respond, in writing, prior to the Board's decision-making meeting.

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

The Board reviews:

- Each of the aforementioned documents (self-study, team report, program response to the team report)
- Program's Response to any concerns added by the ARC
- ARC's confidential recommendation regarding accreditation

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

The Board can vote to:

- award accreditation (initial or continuing)
- deny accreditation (this only applies to programs that are not yet accredited)
- withdraw accreditation (this only applies to programs that are currently accredited)
- issue a show cause directive (this only applies to programs that are currently accredited)

Programs are notified of the Board's decision, in writing, within 30 days of the last day of the Board's decision-making meeting.

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CCNE DECISION-MAKING

Be Advised:

- Programs that host an on-site evaluation in the fall are reviewed for accreditation by the CCNE Board in the spring.
- Programs that host an on-site evaluation in the spring are reviewed for accreditation by the CCNE Board in the fall.
- Accreditation is retroactive to the first day of the on-site evaluation.

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Accreditation Resources



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RESOURCES

- Procedures for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (2014)*
- Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (2013)*
- Supplemental Resource to the Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs (August 2015)*
- Guidelines for Assessment of Student Achievement*
- Overview of the CCNE Accreditation Process*
- General Advice for Hosting a CCNE On-Site Evaluation*

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RESOURCES

- ❑ *Crosswalk Table Between CCNE 2013 Standards and National Task Force (NTF) 2012 Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* (N/A if no NP offerings)
- ❑ *Crosswalk Table Comparing CCNE's 2009 and 2013 Standards*
- ❑ All professional nursing standards and guidelines required by CCNE

Access resource materials on the CCNE website at:
<http://www.aacn.nche.edu/ccne-accreditation/standards-procedures-resources/baccalaureate-graduate/standards>

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CCNE Updates...

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PRE-APPROVAL OF NEW APRN PROGRAMS/TRACKS

CCNE has developed a pre-approval process for APRN tracks that are under development. Pre-approval

- ❑ meets the requirements set forth in the *APRN Consensus Model*.
- ❑ is available only to new NP and CNS programs.
- ❑ requires submission of an application.
- ❑ is awarded prior to student enrollment.
- ❑ is not a status of accreditation.

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CCNE EVALUATOR TRAINING

Evaluator Training is planned for March 2016.

- ❑ A call for applicants was broadly disseminated (e.g., to chief nurse administrators, current evaluators, state agencies, and national nursing organizations) and posted to the CCNE website.
- ❑ The application deadline was January 8, 2016.
- ❑ Several hundred applications were received from educators and practicing nurses.
- ❑ The vetting process is underway. All applicants will be sent decision letters soon.

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CCNE SELF-STUDY WRITING WORKSHOP

CCNE offers workshops on writing self-studies twice yearly in conjunction with the AACN Fall and Spring meetings.

- ❑ The next workshop is scheduled for March 18, 2016. Programs that are hosting an on-site evaluation in the next 12 months have been invited to attend.

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Questions & Answers

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