



Understanding the 2024 *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs*

Standard I Webinar
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STANDARD I. PROGRAM QUALITY: MISSION AND GOVERNANCE

The mission, goals, and expected program outcomes are congruent with those of the parent institution, reflect professional nursing standards and guidelines, and consider the needs and expectations of the community of interest. Policies of the parent institution and nursing program clearly support the program's mission, goals, and expected outcomes. The faculty and students of the program are involved in the governance of the program and in the ongoing efforts to improve program quality.

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO STANDARD I

- ❑ Changes regarding professional nursing standards and guidelines, e.g., removal of references to the “old” AACN *Essentials* and incorporation of three components from AACN’s 2021 *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (Key Element I-B):
 - the 10 “Domains for Nursing”
 - the 8 “Concepts for Nursing Practice”
 - the 45 “Competencies”

- ❑ Removal of references to the 2016 *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* and updated footnote reference to reflect the revised 2022 *Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education* [National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF)], and a note about its endorsement by 18 organizations in the Glossary definition for “Professional Nursing Standards and Guidelines.”

SUBSTANTIVE CHANGES TO STANDARD I

- ❑ A program selects additional standards and guidelines (*or components thereof*) that are current and relevant to program offerings. A program preparing students for certification incorporates professional standards and guidelines appropriate to the role/area of education. (Key Element I-B)
- ❑ Added language regarding policies and publications related to clinical requirements and placements (Key Elements I-F and I-H).

KEY ELEMENT I-A

The mission, goals, and expected program outcomes are:

- congruent with those of the parent institution; and
- reviewed periodically and revised as appropriate.

Elaboration: The program's mission, goals, and expected program outcomes are written and accessible to current and prospective students, faculty, and other constituents. Program outcomes include student outcomes, faculty outcomes, and other outcomes identified by the program. The mission may relate to all nursing programs offered by the nursing unit, or specific programs may have separate missions. Program outcomes are clearly differentiated by level when multiple degree/certificate programs exist. Expected program outcomes may be expressed as competencies, objectives, benchmarks, or other terminology congruent with institutional and program norms.

There is a defined process for periodic review and revision of program mission, goals, and expected program outcomes that has been implemented, as appropriate.

KEY ELEMENT I-B

The mission, goals, and expected program outcomes are consistent with relevant professional nursing standards and guidelines for the preparation of nursing professionals.

Elaboration: The program identifies the professional nursing standards and guidelines it uses. CCNE requires the following components of The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education (Essentials) (AACN, 2021):

- the 10 “Domains for Nursing” (Essentials, pp. 10-11);
- the 8 “Concepts for Nursing Practice” (Essentials, pp. 11-14); and
- the 45 “Competencies” (numbered 1.1 through 10.3 and organized by Domain, Essentials, pp. 27-54).

A program selects additional standards and guidelines (or components thereof) that are current and relevant to program offerings. A program preparing students for certification incorporates professional standards and guidelines appropriate to the role/area of education.

A program with APRN tracks prepares students for one of the four APRN roles and in at least one population focus, in accordance with the Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education (July 2008).

KEY ELEMENT I-C

The mission, goals, and expected program outcomes reflect the needs and expectations of the community of interest.

Elaboration: The community of interest is defined by the nursing unit. The needs and expectations of the community of interest are considered in the periodic review of the mission, goals, and expected program outcomes.

KEY ELEMENT I-D

The nursing unit's expectations for faculty are written and communicated to the faculty and are congruent with institutional expectations.

Elaboration: Expectations for faculty are congruent with those of the parent institution. The nursing unit's expectations for faculty, whether in teaching, scholarship, service, practice, or other areas, may vary for different groups of faculty (full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenured, non-tenured, or other).

KEY ELEMENT I-D

Keep in Mind

Faculty outcomes defined by the program might and can vary for different types of faculty (full-time, part-time, adjunct, tenured, non-tenured, etc.).

Faculty outcomes identified in Key Element I-D for each type of faculty (as appropriate) should have aggregate data reported and analyzed in Key Elements IV-G and IV-H in Standard IV.

KEY ELEMENT I-E

Faculty and students participate in program governance.

Elaboration: Roles of the faculty and students in the governance of the program, including those involved in distance education, are clearly defined and promote participation. Nursing faculty are involved in the development, review, and revision of academic program policies.

KEY ELEMENT I-E

Keep in Mind

Faculty and students are to be included in program governance regardless of the mode of educational delivery or type of program, including online programs or programs that enroll primarily adult students.

KEY ELEMENT I-F

Academic policies of the parent institution and the nursing program are congruent and support achievement of the mission, goals, and expected program outcomes. These policies are:

- fair and equitable;
- published and accessible; and
- reviewed and revised as necessary to foster program improvement.

Elaboration: Academic policies include, but are not limited to, those related to student recruitment, admission, retention, clinical requirements, and progression. Policies are written and communicated to relevant constituencies. Policies are implemented consistently. Differences between the nursing program policies and those of the parent institution are identified and support achievement of the program's mission, goals, and expected outcomes. A defined process exists by which policies are regularly reviewed. Policy review occurs, and revisions are made as needed.

KEY ELEMENT I-G

The program defines and reviews formal complaints according to established policies.

Elaboration: The program defines what constitutes a formal complaint and maintains a record of formal complaints received. The program's definition of formal complaints includes, at a minimum, student complaints. The program's definition of formal complaints and the procedures for filing a complaint are communicated to relevant constituencies.

KEY ELEMENT I-H

Documents and publications are accurate. A process is used to notify constituents about changes in documents and publications.

Elaboration: References to the program's offerings, outcomes, accreditation/approval status, academic calendar, recruitment and admission policies, clinical requirements and placements, grading policies, degree/certificate completion requirements, tuition, and fees are accurate. Information regarding licensure and/or certification examinations for which the program prepares students is accurate. For programs with APRN tracks, transcripts or other official documentation specify the APRN role and population focus of the graduate/completer. 1,2

¹ See *Consensus Model for APRN Regulation: Licensure, Accreditation, Certification and Education* (July 2008).

² See *Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education* (National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education, 2022).

KEY ELEMENT I-H (CONTINUED)

If a program chooses to publicly disclose its CCNE accreditation status, the program uses either of the following statements:

“The (baccalaureate degree program in nursing/master’s degree program in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice program and/or post-graduate APRN certificate program) at (institution) is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>).”

“The (baccalaureate degree program in nursing/master’s degree program in nursing/Doctor of Nursing Practice program and/or post-graduate APRN certificate program) at (institution) is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.”

KEY ELEMENT I-H

Correct Examples of Disclosure Language:

“The baccalaureate degree program in nursing and master's degree program in nursing at Generic State University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, 655 K Street NW, Suite 750, Washington, DC 20001, 202-887-6791.”

“The Doctor of Nursing Practice program and post-graduate APRN certificate programs at Generic State University are accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (<http://www.ccneaccreditation.org>).”

KEY ELEMENT I-H

Incorrect Examples of Disclosure Language:

The baccalaureate degree program in nursing is accredited by the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN).

This is incorrect because CCNE, not AACN, is the accrediting body.

The School of Nursing is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).

This is incorrect because a) CCNE does not accredit the larger school/college of nursing, and b) CCNE's contact information is not included.

KEY ELEMENT I-H

Incorrect Example of Disclosure Language:

The Doctor of Nursing Practice program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), One Dupont Circle NW, Suite 530, Washington, DC 20036, 202-887-6791.

This is incorrect because CCNE's mailing address has changed; the phone number is the same. Programs alternatively may refer to the CCNE website, which also has changed.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION: STANDARD I

1. Mission, goals, and expected program outcomes.
2. Copies of all professional nursing standards and guidelines used by the program.
3. Evidence that the needs of the program's identified community of interest are considered by the program.
4. Appointment, promotion, and, when applicable, tenure policies or other documents defining faculty expectations related to teaching, scholarship, service, practice, or other areas.
5. Major institutional and nursing unit reports and records for the past three years, such as strategic planning documents and annual reports.
6. Reports submitted to, and official correspondence received from, applicable accrediting and regulatory agencies since the last accreditation review of the nursing program.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION: STANDARD I

7. Catalogs, student handbooks, faculty handbooks, personnel manuals, or equivalent documentation referencing (among other things) academic calendars, recruitment and admission policies, clinical requirements, grading policies, and degree/post-graduate APRN certificate program completion requirements.
8. Program advertising and promotional materials.
9. For programs with APRN tracks, evidence that transcripts or other official documentation specify the APRN role and population focus of the graduate/completer.
10. Documents that reflect decision-making (e.g., minutes, memoranda, reports) related to program mission and governance.
11. Organizational charts for the parent institution and the nursing unit.
12. Program policies related to formal complaints.

Questions & Answers





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