

Foundations of Competency-Based Education: From the Essentials to Curriculum Design Day 1

November 18, 2026

12:00-4:00 PM ET

Zoom

- SCHEDULE -

Prework:

- Read [The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education](#)
- Review the *Essentials*' [Frequently Asked Questions](#)
- Review the [Expectations for Participating in the Zoom Workshop](#)
- Read and think about AACN's [Essentials Competency Assessment Framework](#)

Learning Outcomes:

- Articulate the rationale for implementing the AACN *Essentials* and transitioning to competency-based education (CBE).
- Describe the foundational principles of CBE and their application to preparing practice-ready nurses.
- Navigate the *Essentials*, including Domains, competencies, sub-competencies, and progression indicators, and identify AACN resources that support implementation.
- Apply the principles of backward design to begin aligning competencies and performance expectations, assessment strategies, and learning experiences with the *Essentials*.
- Explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool to support the backward design and curriculum development process.

Nursing Continuing Professional Development:

- The American Association of Colleges of Nursing is accredited as a provider of nursing continuing professional development by the American Nurses Credentialing Center's Commission on Accreditation.
- Participants may earn up to 3.75 CEUs for Nursing Continuing Professional Development.
- There are no relevant financial relationships for any of the planners and presenters for this activity.
- Sponsors have not been involved with the planning of content for sessions awarding contact hours.
- For sessions awarding contact hours, participants must attend in entirety and complete an evaluation after the conference. A continuing nursing education/nursing continuing professional development certificate will be provided.
- There are no known conflicts of interest concerning planners and presenters.

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Day One

11:55-12:00 p.m.

Log-in & Tech Check

12:00-12:15 p.m.

Welcome and Overview: Setting the Stage for Competency-Based Education

This opening session will orient participants to the workshop and frame the day around building a foundational understanding of competency-based education, the AACN *Essentials*, and their application to curriculum design.

Speaker: Susan Corbridge, PhD, APRN, Chief Academic & Innovation Officer, American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN)

12:15-1:15 p.m.

What is CBE, and Why Are We Moving Toward It?

This session will introduce the foundational principles of competency-based education (CBE) and explore the rationale for the transition to CBE in nursing education. Participants will examine the benefits and opportunities of CBE, including its role in preparing practice-ready nurses, and consider how a competency-based approach differs from traditional approaches to nursing education.

Speaker: Jacquelyn McMillian-Bohler, PhD, APRN, Director, Institute for Educational Excellence, School of Nursing, Duke University

1:15-2:00 p.m.

Navigating the *Essentials*: Understanding the Framework and Finding the Resources You Need

This session will provide participants with a foundational understanding of the AACN *Essentials*, including the 10 Domains, competencies, sub-competencies, and progression indicators. Participants will explore how the components of the *Essentials* work together and review key updates reflected in the 2026 edition. Through a guided, hands-on activity, participants will navigate the *Essentials* and AACN implementation resources to locate relevant competencies, sub-competencies, progression indicators, and tools and consider how these resources can support CBE implementation.

Speakers: Dawn Mueller-Burke, PhD, CRNP, NNP-BC, Assistant Professor/Neonatal Nurse Practitioner, University of Maryland, Baltimore, University of Maryland Medical Center, and Dana Tschannen, PhD, RN, Associate Dean for Undergraduate Studies, School of Nursing, University of Michigan

2:00-2:15 p.m.

Break

2:15–3:45 p.m.

Putting It into Practice: Backward Design for Competency-Based Education

This session will introduce participants to the three steps of backward design for competency-based education: determining competencies and performance expectations, developing assessment strategies, and curating the learning journey. Using the *Essentials* as the foundation, participants will explore how the three steps work together to align expected performance, assessment, and learning experiences. Participants will also explore how artificial intelligence (AI) can support the backward design process. Through a guided activity, participants will use structured AI prompts and a backward design worksheet to begin applying the three steps and consider how AI-generated outputs can be refined using faculty expertise and judgment.

Speaker: Charla Long, JD, President, Competency-Based Education Network (C-BEN)

3:45-4:00 p.m.

Q&A / Resources / Closing