



COMMISSION ON
COLLEGIATE NURSING
EDUCATION

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CCNEACCREDITATION.ORG

MEMORANDUM

October 26, 2023 - **UPDATED November 16, 2023**

To: Chief Executive Officers, CCNE-Affiliated Colleges and Universities
Chief Nurse Administrators, CCNE-Affiliated Nursing Programs
Chief Nursing Officers/Chief Nurse Executives, CCNE-Affiliated Nurse
Residency/Fellowship Programs
Nurse Residency/Fellowship Program Coordinators, CCNE-Affiliated Nurse
Residency/Fellowship Programs
CCNE On-Site Evaluators
Accrediting Agencies
Selected Federal Agencies
National Nursing Organizations
State Boards of Nursing
Statewide Higher Education Agencies
Other Interested Parties

From: Anne Hirsch, PhD, ARNP, FAANP, FAAN, Co-chair, CCNE Standards Committee
Pamela B. Simmons, PhD, APRN (ret.), FNP-BC, CNE, Co-chair, CCNE Standards Committee

Re: Call for Comments on Proposed CCNE *Standards for Accreditation of
Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* - **Deadline extended to
December 8, 2023**

The Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), a nationally recognized accrediting agency for baccalaureate and graduate level programs in nursing, has recently undertaken a comprehensive review of its *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* (2018). To conduct this work, the CCNE Board of Commissioners appointed a [Standards Committee](#) to review the current standards and to solicit feedback from CCNE's communities of interest.

Over the past year, the Standards Committee and Board of Commissioners have reviewed the 2018 *Standards* and feedback provided by chief nurse administrators, faculty, students, practicing nurses, employers of nurses, state agencies, various professional nursing organizations, and other interested parties. CCNE is now releasing the proposed *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate and Graduate Nursing Programs* for public comment.

The most substantive proposed changes are:

- Added language in Standard I regarding policies and publications related to clinical requirements and placements (Standard I, Key Elements I-F and I-H).
- Changes in Standards I and III regarding required professional nursing standards and guidelines, including:
 - Removal of references to the “old” AACN *Essentials*, and incorporation of three components (the 10 “Domains for Nursing,” the 8 “Concepts for Nursing Practice,” and the 45 “Competencies”) from *The Essentials: Core Competencies for Professional Nursing Education* (AACN, 2021).
 - Removal of references to the 2016 *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* [National Task Force on Quality Nurse Practitioner Education (NTF)] and an updated footnote reference to the 2022 *Standards for Quality Nurse Practitioner Education* (NTF) and a note about its endorsement by 18 organizations in the Glossary.
- Creation of two distinct key elements in Standard II related to physical resources and clinical sites; these were previously combined in one key element (Standard II, Key Elements II-B and II-C).

- Clarification of and added flexibility with regard to requirements for academic and experiential preparation of faculty teaching in the nursing program (Standard II, Key Element II-F).
- Expanded option to include nurse educator tracks in Doctor of Nursing Practice (DNP) programs, and clarification that DNP programs that have a direct care focus but are not APRN education programs incorporate graduate-level content addressing the APRN core (Standard III, Key Element III-D).
- Separation of key elements in Standard III related to teaching-learning practices and preparation of students to provide care to diverse individuals and populations (Key Elements III-G and III-H).
- Separation of key elements in Standard III related to clinical practice experiences and planned experiences that foster interprofessional collaborative practice (Key Elements III-I and III-J).
- Added content about expectations for clinical practice experiences and requirements for programs that prepare students for certification (Key Element III-I).
- Clarification that the key element is applicable to programs that prepare individuals for the NCLEX-RN® or other nursing licensure examination (Standard IV, Key Element IV-C).
- Added flexibility allowing a program to exclude test takers who completed the program more than two years before taking the licensure examination (Standard IV, Key Element IV-C).
- Added flexibility allowing a program to exclude test takers who completed the program more than two years before taking the certification examination (Standard IV, Key Element IV-D).
- An increase in CCNE's expected level of achievement for employment rates from 70% to 80% (Standard IV, Key Element IV-E).

As part of its review of the proposed Standards, the CCNE Board affirmed that CCNE will:

- Continue to accredit nursing programs at the baccalaureate, master's, DNP, and post-graduate APRN certificate levels, acknowledging and respecting the autonomy of institutions within its community of interest and the diversity of nursing programs and their respective missions.
- Continue to accredit APRN programs offered at the master's and DNP levels.
- Continue to accredit nursing programs that offer nurse educator tracks.

At this time, CCNE is requesting feedback from its constituents about the proposed Standards for accreditation of baccalaureate and master's degree programs in nursing, DNP programs, and post-graduate APRN certificate programs nationally.

The proposed Standards (both a clean version and a tracked version showing all proposed revisions to CCNE's 2018 *Standards*) can be accessed on the CCNE website at <https://www.aacnnursing.org/ccne-accreditation/2018-standards>.

Comments may be submitted via:

- an online survey at <https://fs9.formsite.com/ccne/jwmwxqaffc/index> (this survey will take approximately 30-40 minutes to complete); and/or
- email at ccnestandards@ccneaccreditation.org.

Comments on the proposed Standards must be received by no later than December 8, 2023.

Comments may be directed at the standards in their entirety and/or at any individual standard or key element. Please be specific in offering your comments, including

specific language you would like to see incorporated, deleted, or amended, along with the rationale.

Final approval of the accreditation standards rests with the CCNE Board of Commissioners. The membership of the Board is accessible at <https://www.aacnnursing.org/CCNE-Accreditation/Who-We-Are/Board-of-Commissioners>.

The CCNE Standards Committee looks forward to receiving and considering your comments as part of the revision process. If you have any questions about the standards revision process, please contact Dr. Daniel Michalski, CCNE Director of Accreditation Services, at 202-887-6791 x253 or dmichalski@ccneaccreditation.org.

Thank you.

