

Project 7934 - Final

Board of Nursing

Changes to nursing education faculty requirements pursuant to 2024 legislation

18VAC90-27-10. Definitions.

In addition to words and terms defined in § 54.1-3000 of the Code of Virginia, the following words and terms when used in this chapter shall have the following meanings unless the context clearly indicates otherwise:

"Accreditation" means having been accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education to include the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing, the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, the Commission for Nursing Education Accreditation, or a national nursing accrediting organization recognized by the board.

"Advisory committee" means a group of persons from a nursing education program and the health care community who meets regularly to advise the nursing education program on the quality of its graduates and the needs of the community.

"Approval" means the process by which the board or a governmental agency in another state or foreign country evaluates and grants official recognition to nursing education programs that meet established standards not inconsistent with Virginia law.

"Associate degree nursing program" means a nursing education program preparing for registered nurse licensure, offered by a Virginia college or other institution and designed to lead to an associate degree in nursing, provided that the institution is authorized to confer such degree by SCHEV.

"Baccalaureate degree nursing program" or "prelicensure graduate degree program" means a nursing education program preparing for registered nurse licensure, offered by a Virginia

college or university and designed to lead to a baccalaureate or a graduate degree with a major in nursing, provided that the institution is authorized to confer such degree by SCHEV.

"Board" means the Board of Nursing.

"Clinical faculty" means nursing faculty that instructs students in the direct client care environment.

"Clinical setting" means any location in which the clinical practice of nursing occurs as specified in an agreement between the cooperating agency and the school of nursing.

"Conditional approval" means a time-limited status that results when an approved nursing education program has failed to maintain requirements as set forth in this chapter.

"Cooperating agency" means an agency or institution that enters into a written agreement to provide clinical or observational experiences for a nursing education program.

"Diploma nursing program" means a nursing education program preparing for registered nurse licensure, offered by a hospital and designed to lead to a diploma in nursing, provided the hospital is licensed in this state.

"Direct client care" means nursing care provided to patients or clients in a clinical setting supervised by qualified faculty or a designated preceptor.

"Full approval" means the status granted to a nursing education program when compliance with regulations pertaining to nursing education programs has been verified.

"Initial approval" means the status granted to a nursing education program that allows the admission of students.

"National certifying organization" means an organization that has as one of its purposes the certification of a specialty in nursing based on an examination attesting to the knowledge of the nurse for practice in the specialty area.

"NCLEX" means the National Council Licensure Examination.

"NCSBN" means the National Council of State Boards of Nursing.

"Nursing education program" means an entity offering a basic course of study preparing persons for licensure as registered nurses or as licensed practical nurses. A basic course of study shall include all courses required for the degree, diploma, or certificate.

"Nursing faculty" means registered nurses who teach the practice of nursing in nursing education programs.

"Practical nursing program" means a nursing education program preparing for practical nurse licensure that leads to a diploma or certificate in practical nursing, provided the school is authorized by the Virginia Department of Education or by an accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.

"Preceptor" means a licensed nurse who is employed in the clinical setting, serves as a resource person and role model, and is present with the nursing student in that setting, providing clinical supervision.

"Program director" means a registered nurse who holds a current, unrestricted license in Virginia or a multistate licensure privilege and who has been designated by the controlling authority to administer the nursing education program.

"Recommendation" means a guide to actions that will assist an institution to improve and develop its nursing education program.

"Requirement" means a mandatory condition that a nursing education program must meet to be approved or maintain approval.

"SCHEV" means the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia.

"Simulation" means an evidence-based teaching methodology utilizing an activity in which students are immersed into a realistic clinical environment or situation and in which students are required to learn and use critical thinking and decision-making skills.

"Site visit" means a focused onsite review of the nursing program by board staff, usually completed within one day for the purpose of evaluating program components such as the physical location (skills lab, classrooms, learning resources) for obtaining initial program approval, in response to a complaint, compliance with NCLEX plan of correction, change of location, or verification of noncompliance with this chapter.

"Survey visit" means a comprehensive onsite review of the nursing program by board staff, usually completed within two days (depending on the number of programs or campuses being reviewed) for the purpose of obtaining and maintaining full program approval. The survey visit includes the program's completion of a self-evaluation report prior to the visit, as well as a board staff review of all program resources, including skills lab, classrooms, learning resources, and clinical facilities, and other components to ensure compliance with this chapter. Meetings with faculty, administration, students, and clinical facility staff will occur.

18VAC90-27-60. Faculty.

A. Qualifications for all faculty.

1. Every member of the nursing faculty, including the program director, shall (i) hold a current license or a multistate licensure privilege to practice nursing in Virginia as a registered nurse without any disciplinary action that currently restricts practice and (ii) have had at least two years of direct client care experience as a registered nurse prior to employment by the program. Persons providing instruction in topics other than nursing shall not be required to hold a license as a registered nurse.

2. Every member of a nursing faculty supervising the clinical practice of students, including simulation in lieu of direct client care, shall meet the licensure requirements of the jurisdiction in which that practice occurs and shall provide evidence of education or experience in the specialty area in which they supervise student clinical experience for quality and safety. Prior to supervision of students, the faculty providing supervision shall have completed a clinical orientation to the site in which supervision is being provided. Faculty members who supervise clinical practice by simulation shall also demonstrate simulation knowledge and skills in that methodology and shall engage in ongoing professional development in the use of simulation.

3. The program director and each member of the nursing faculty shall maintain documentation of professional competence through such activities as nursing practice, continuing education programs, conferences, workshops, seminars, academic courses, research projects, and professional writing. Documentation of annual professional development shall be maintained in employee files for the director and each faculty member until the next survey visit and shall be available for board review.

4. For baccalaureate degree and prelicensure graduate degree programs:

a. The program director shall hold a doctoral degree with a graduate degree in nursing.

b. Every member of the didactic nursing faculty shall hold a graduate degree; the majority of the faculty shall have a graduate degree in nursing. Faculty members with a graduate degree with a major other than in nursing shall have a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing.

c. Clinical nursing faculty shall hold:

(1) A graduate degree in nursing;

(2) A baccalaureate degree in nursing and be enrolled in a graduate degree program; or

(3) A baccalaureate degree in nursing and hold alternative credentials.

Clinical nursing faculty with a graduate degree other than in nursing must hold a baccalaureate degree in nursing.

5. For associate degree and diploma programs:

a. The program director shall hold a graduate degree with a major in nursing.

b. ~~The majority of the members of the nursing faculty shall hold a graduate degree, preferably with a major in nursing.~~ Didactic members of the nursing faculty shall hold:

(1) A graduate degree, preferably with a major in nursing; or

(2) A baccalaureate degree and be actively enrolled in a graduate program.

c. ~~All members of the nursing faculty shall hold a baccalaureate or graduate degree with a major in nursing.~~ Every member of the clinical nursing faculty shall hold:

(1) A baccalaureate degree in nursing; or

(2) An associate degree in nursing and be actively enrolled in a baccalaureate program in nursing.

6. For practical nursing programs:

a. The program director shall hold a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing.

b. ~~The majority of the members of the nursing faculty shall hold a baccalaureate degree, preferably with a major in nursing.~~ All nursing faculty shall hold:

(1) A baccalaureate degree, preferably with a major in nursing; or

(2) An associate degree and be actively enrolled in a baccalaureate degree program.

B. Number of faculty.

1. The number of faculty shall be sufficient to prepare the students to achieve the objectives of the educational program and to ensure safety for clients to whom students provide care.
2. When students are giving direct care to clients, the ratio of students to faculty shall not exceed 10 students to one faculty member, and the faculty shall be on site solely to supervise students.
3. When preceptors are utilized for specified learning experiences in clinical settings, the faculty member may supervise up to 15 students.

C. Functions. The principal functions of the faculty shall be to:

1. Develop, implement, and evaluate the philosophy and objectives of the nursing education program;
2. Design, implement, teach, evaluate, and revise the curriculum. Faculty shall provide evidence of education and experience necessary to indicate that they are competent to teach a given course;
3. Develop and evaluate student admission, progression, retention, and graduation policies within the framework of the controlling institution;
4. Participate in academic advisement and counseling of students in accordance with requirements of the Financial Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20 USC § 1232g);
5. Provide opportunities for and evidence of student and graduate evaluation of curriculum and teaching and program effectiveness; and
6. Document actions taken in faculty and committee meetings using a systematic plan of evaluation for total program review.

18VAC90-27-170. ~~Requests for exception to requirements for faculty. (Repealed.)~~

~~After full approval has been granted, a program may request board approval for exceptions to requirements of 18VAC90-27-60 for faculty as follows:~~

~~1. Initial request for exception.~~

~~a. The program director shall submit a request for initial exception in writing to the board for consideration prior to the academic year during which the nursing faculty member is scheduled to teach or whenever an unexpected vacancy has occurred.~~

~~b. A description of teaching assignment, a curriculum vitae, and a statement of intent from the prospective faculty member to pursue the required degree shall accompany each request.~~

~~c. The executive director of the board shall be authorized to make the initial decision on requests for exceptions. Any appeal of that decision shall be in accordance with the provisions of the Administrative Process Act (§ 2.2-4000 et seq. of the Code of Virginia).~~

~~2. Request for continuing exception.~~

~~a. Continuing exception will be based on the progress of the nursing faculty member toward meeting the degree required by this chapter during each year for which the exception is requested.~~

~~b. The program director shall submit the request for continuing exception in writing prior to the next academic year during which the nursing faculty member is scheduled to teach.~~

~~c. A list of courses required for the degree being pursued and college transcripts showing successful completion of a minimum of two of the courses during the past academic year shall accompany each request.~~

~~d. Any request for continuing exception shall be considered by the informal factfinding committee, which shall make a recommendation to the board.~~