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## **Guidelines: Preparation of the Focused Site Visit Report 2017 Standards and Criteria**

### **Purpose:**

The Focused Site Visit Report provides information related to the program's compliance with a selected number of ACEN Standards and Criteria. The Standards and Criteria to be reviewed are based on the reason for the focused visit, such as the addition of a new teaching location or implementation of distance education.

The Focused Site Visit Report differs from the Site Visit Report. While the Site Visit Report includes an optional introduction, the Focused Site Visit Report must include an introduction, which outlines the purpose for the Focused Visit. The purpose of the Focused Site Visit Report is to document the team's observations and findings during the Focused Visit, which occurs approximately six (6) months ***after the program implements*** the substantive change. After review of the program's documents and interviews with program representatives, the team makes an accreditation recommendation based on selected Criteria reviewed during the Focused Visit.

### **Assignment Process:**

The decision to require a focused visit is made by the ACEN Board of Commissioners Subcommittee on Substantive Changes following review of the Substantive Change Prospectus or other matters as described in Policy #19 Focused Visit.

### **Review Process:**

The Focused Visit Report, submitted by the program, will be reviewed by one (1) or more peer evaluators prior to the Focused Visit and is used as the foundation for review of the program's compliance. Following the visit, the peer evaluator(s) will write a Focused Site Visit Report summarizing the findings. The program's Focused Visit Report as well as the Focused Site Visit Report are reviewed by the Evaluation Review Panel (ERP) that will make its own independent recommendation. Based on the Focused Site Visit Report recommendation as well as a recommendation from the ERP, the decision regarding the accreditation status of the nursing program will be made by the Board of Commissioners at a regularly scheduled meeting. The Board of Commissioners may take the following actions:

- 1) Affirm the program's accreditation status and re-affirm the date of the next scheduled visit; no further information is requested.
- 2) Change the date of the program's next scheduled visit to a date earlier than previously scheduled. This is not an appealable action.
- 3) Change the program's accreditation status to one (1) of the following statuses:
  - a. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Conditions when the program is found to be in non-compliance with one (1) or two (2) Accreditation Standards; a Follow-Up Report is required; site visit may or may not be required. This is not an appealable action.
  - b. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Warning when the program is found to be in non-compliance with three (3) or more Accreditation Standards; a Follow-Up Report is required; and a Follow-Up Visit is required. This is not an appealable action.
  - c. Affirm the program's accreditation, and change the program's accreditation status to Good Cause when a program is found to be in non-compliance with any Accreditation Standards, is at the conclusion of its maximum monitoring period, and the program can make its case for good cause; a

Follow-Up Report is required; and a Follow-Up Visit is required. This is not an appealable action. See ACEN Policy #4 Types of Commission Actions on Applications for Accreditation.

- 4) Deny continuing accreditation and remove the program from the listing of accredited programs. This is an appealable action. See ACEN Policy #10 Appeal Process and Submission and Review of New Financial Information Subsequent to Adverse Action.

## Preparing the Focused Site Visit Report:

### Organization of the Focused Site Visit Report:

The report is to be presented in five (5) sections: the introduction, site visit information, classroom and clinical observations, evaluation of the Standards and Criteria, and recommendation. Please refer to the following table for a list of required Standards and Criteria to be addressed in the Focused Site Visit Report. If the reason for the focused visit to your nursing program is not included in this table, a member of the ACEN professional staff will contact you with a list of Standards and Criteria to address in the Report.

Table I

Increase in Enrollment	Change in Ownership of the Governing Organization	Change in State Regulatory Agency for Nursing Status/ Decline in Program Outcomes
Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.5, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.4 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: 5.2	Standard 1: 1.1, 1.2, 1.8, 1.9, 1.10, Standard 2: 2.5, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.2, 3.4, 3.6 (if applicable) Standard 5: 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.4	Standard 1: 1.7, 1.8 Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.5 Standard 3: 3.1, 3.2, 3.4 Standard 4: 4.1, 4.2, 4.3, 4.6, 4.7, 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: 5.3 Standard 6: 6.1, 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4
Implementation of Distance Education	New Curriculum/ New Program Option	New Off-Campus Instructional Site or Branch Campus
Standard 1: 1.11 Standard 2: 2.10 Standard 3: 3.4, 3.8, 3.9 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10, 4.11 Standard 5: 5.4	Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 2.6, 2.10 Standard 4: All Criteria Standard 5: 5.3 For APRN Options – See Note 3 below	Standard 1: 1.2, 1.7, 1.8 Standard 2: 2.1, 2.2, 2.7 Standard 3: 3.4, 3.8 Standard 4: 4.9, 4.10 Standard 5: All Criteria

**Note 1:** The Standards and Criteria listed above will be reviewed. The ACEN may determine that a Focused Visit warrants the review of additional Standards and Criteria. The program and peer evaluator(s) will be notified if the review of additional Standards and Criteria is warranted.

**Note 2:** The Standards and Criteria listed above (including any additions as determined by the ACEN) will be reviewed by the peer evaluator(s). The peer evaluator(s) will not intentionally review other Standards and Criteria. However, if evidence of non-compliance with any additional Standards and/or Criteria is identified onsite, the peer evaluator(s) must include these findings in the Focused Site Visit Report.

**Note 3:** In addition to the Criteria listed in Table I for a *New Curriculum and/or New Program Option*, Focused Site Visit Reports for new APRN options should include the following Criteria to ensure compliance with the current NTF Guidelines. The link to the *Crosswalk of Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs (2016) and ACEN Standards and Criteria (2017)* is below along with the Criteria that should be included in the Focused Site Visit Report for new APRN options.

# ACEN

Standard 1: 1.7

Standard 2: 2.5, 2.9

Standard 3: 3.1, 3.4, 3.5

Standard 5: 5.1

<http://www.acenursing.net/resources/2017ACEN-2016NONPF.pdf>

## **Content of the Focused Site Visit Report:**

### Introduction:

- Name and address of the governing organization, including physical address and zip code
- Name, credentials, and title of the chief executive officer of the governing organization and local CEO (if applicable); see ACEN Glossary for definition of chief executive officer
- Name of institutional accrediting body, including the date of the last review and the action taken by the accrediting body at that time
- Name and address of the nursing education unit/program
- Name, credentials, title, telephone number, fax number, and e-mail address of the administrator of the nursing education unit/program
- Date of the last review by the state regulatory agency and the action taken by the regulatory agency at that time
- Date of the most recent ACEN accreditation visit and the action taken by the ACEN at that time

### Site Visit Information:

- Site Visit Team Information
- Year in which the nursing program was established
- Total number of full- and part-time faculty teaching in the specified nursing program, including faculty shared across programs; faculty should be delineated as exclusive to the program or shared by multiple programs. See ACEN Glossary for definition of exclusive and shared faculty
- The name and number of the locations at which the nursing program is offered; please include the street address of **all** nursing program locations; include information regarding the percentage of the program offered at each location; delineate the program option(s) offered at each location; see ACEN Glossary for definition of branch campus and off-campus instructional site.
- **All locations must be included in Section II of the Focused Visit Report Template.**
- A list of **all** program options/tracks available (**including teach-out options/curricula**) to students for completion of the specified program; delivery method(s) for each option – online, hybrid, or face-to-face; if online or hybrid, provide percentage of the program offered in the online environment; see ACEN Glossary for definition of distance education.
- Total number of full- and part-time students currently enrolled in the specified nursing program identified by program option/track/location
- Length of the program in semester or quarter credits, clock hours for each program option; number of academic terms (semester/trimester/quarter) and number of weeks in academic term for each program option; delineate the number of credits for non-nursing courses and nursing courses, as well as credits for prior learning, when applicable; see ACEN Glossary for definition of nursing program length. This is equally important for graduate programs.
- Coordinated Visit
- Introduction

### Classroom and Clinical Observations:

- Face-to-face, online, and hybrid classroom; if a program offers online or hybrid course, include an online and/or hybrid course observation in the Focused Site Visit Report

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- Laboratory
- Clinical

## Evaluation of the Standards and Criteria:

Presentation of the identified ACEN Standards and Criteria pertaining to the purpose of the Focused Visit:

- Narrative addressing each identified Criterion, with an emphasis on how the program's compliance following the implemented change or other matter.

*If Criteria 2.1 and 2.2 are to be presented (Table 1), provide the following:*

- A completed Faculty Profile Table that includes all faculty teaching in the specified nursing program(s) including non-nurse faculty); full- and part-time nursing faculty qualifications as required by the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency; see ACEN Glossary for definition of faculty and non-nurse faculty. If an updated Faculty Profile Table is provided onsite, attach a copy of the updated Faculty Profile Table to the Focused Site Visit Report.

*If Criterion 2.7 is to be presented (Table 1), provide the following:*

- A completed Laboratory Personnel Profile Table that includes all laboratory personnel with assigned laboratory responsibilities in the specified nursing program(s); see ACEN Glossary for definition of Laboratory Personnel. If an updated Laboratory Personnel Profile Table is provided onsite, attach a copy of the updated Laboratory Personnel Profile Table to the Focused Site Visit Report.

*If Criteria 4.1-4.7 are to be presented (Table 1), review abbreviated syllabi for all nursing courses and clinical evaluation tool(s) with an explanation of the student evaluation process. The narrative should include a description of each option/track, credit-to-contact hour ratios, clinical hours, and examples verifying the program's compliance with Criteria.*

*If Criterion 4.8 is to be presented, provide the following:*

- The required program length of study as determined by the policies of the governing organization, the state, and the governing organization's accrediting agency should be included.

The program must also provide evidence that the institution/nursing program has policies and procedures for determining the credit hours awarded for nursing courses, the policies and procedures conform to commonly accepted practices in higher education, and they are made available to current and prospective students.

*If Standard 6 is to be presented (Table 1), include the complete systematic evaluation plan (a) with data for each end-of-program student learning outcome and (b) with data for each program outcome for the most recent three (3) years. Provide clear, substantial evidence that the evaluation plan is being used by the faculty to inform their decision-making processes and that the faculty have taken or are taking specific strategies and/or actions based on their analysis of the data, when warranted. Further, peer evaluator(s) will evaluate a nursing program's rationale for the expected levels of achievement (ELA) related to (1) program completion rate(s) and (2) job placement rate(s). The nurse administrator or faculty must be able to explain the reason for the ELA for program completion and job placement. If this information is excluded from the Focused Visit Report, ask the nurse administrator to provide the information.*

## Submitting the Focused Visit Report:

The program will submit copies of its Focused Visit Report and the governing organization's catalog (Word or PDF format) to each member of the Focused Visit team, including any ACEN professional staff member assigned to the team, no later than six (6) weeks before the first day of the scheduled focused visit.

# ACEN

The ACEN professional staff are available to answer questions. It may be helpful to you to also review the 2017 ACEN Standards and Criteria Training Modules to ensure that you have included the necessary supporting documentation for the Standards and Criteria addressed in the Focused Site Visit Report and appropriately addressed compliance with the selected Standards and Criteria.

Document History  
Updated November 2017