



CANDIDACY: GUIDE FOR PRESENTATION Candidacy Status

A nursing program granted Candidacy status is one that has demonstrated its potential to achieve ACEN accreditation. This is determined through a review process of critical elements of the nursing program, including faculty, curriculum, resources, and outcomes. This review is conducted by members of the professional staff of ACEN based on a written Candidacy Presentation prepared by the nursing program administrator and faculty members. The program should submit the Candidacy Presentation utilizing the 2017 ACEN Standards and Criteria, which are available on the ACEN website.

The written Candidacy Presentation should be developed by the program faculty and the nurse administrator and submitted electronically by emailing the document to Dr. Nell Ard at nard@acenursing.org as a single PDF file for the Candidacy Presentation and a second PDF file for the current course catalog. Alternately, the Candidacy files may be sent on a single flash drive and mailed to the ACEN office. If the electronic Candidacy Presentation is submitted via email, then receipt of the submission will be confirmed. Therefore, if a confirmation is not received, the files were too large to get through firewalls. The electronic files will then need to be sent on a flash drive.

PROGRAMS SEEKING CANDIDACY AND PROGRAMS GRANTED CANDIDACY

Each governing organization/nursing program making a Candidacy Presentation to the ACEN or granted Candidacy by the ACEN agrees to certain requirements concerning financial obligation, choice of law, jurisdiction, and venue; this information is in accordance with Policy #28 in the *ACEN Accreditation Manual*.

PROGRAMS SEEKING CANDIDACY	PROGRAMS GRANTED CANDIDACY
As a condition of the ACEN reviewing the Candidacy Presentation, each governing organization/nursing program agrees that:	As a condition of ACEN granting Candidacy, each governing organization/nursing program agrees that:
CHOICE OF LAW, JURISDICTION, AND VENUE	CHOICE OF LAW, JURISDICTION, AND VENUE
The governing organization/nursing program acknowledges that all agreements created by the ACEN regarding the review of the Candidacy Presentation shall be deemed to have been entered into in Fulton County, Georgia, and shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia. Further, each governing organization/nursing program agrees that jurisdiction and venue for any action which might arise from any agreement between the governing organization/nursing program and the ACEN, regardless of which party shall initiate the action, shall be exclusively in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia or the state courts of Fulton County, Georgia,	The governing organization/nursing program acknowledges that all agreements created by the ACEN granting Candidacy shall be deemed to have been entered into in Fulton County, Georgia, and shall be interpreted in accordance with the laws of the State of Georgia. Further, each governing organization/nursing program agrees that jurisdiction and venue for any action which might arise from any agreement between the governing organization/nursing program and ACEN, regardless of which party shall initiate the action, shall be exclusively in the United States District Court for the Northern District of Georgia or the state courts of Fulton County, Georgia, whichever of these courts shall have

<p>whichever of these courts shall have proper subject matter jurisdiction.</p>	<p>proper subject matter jurisdiction.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">FEES</p> <p>It is the obligation of every governing organization/nursing program making a Candidacy Presentation to pay fees and expenses when due. Failure to pay fees and expenses when due shall be deemed a voluntary withdrawal from the Candidacy Presentation process. A schedule of current fees and expenses is available at http://www.acenursing.org/resources-for-nursing-programs/.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">FEES</p> <p>It is the obligation of every governing organization/nursing program granted Candidacy to pay fees and expenses when due. Failure to pay fees and expenses when due shall be deemed a voluntary withdrawal from the Candidacy process. A schedule of current fees and expenses is available at http://www.acenursing.org/resources-for-nursing-programs/.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">COSTS OF COMPLIANCE WITH THIRD-PARTY DISCOVERY REQUESTS</p> <p>The costs of compliance with third-party discovery requests made of the ACEN with regard to a governing organization/nursing program making a Candidacy Presentation can be high and cannot be reasonably anticipated for budgeting purposes. To defray these costs in part, where reimbursement for the expense of producing the documents is not provided by the party serving the subpoena or document request, the ACEN may charge the governing organization/nursing program making a Candidacy Presentation with the costs of production, including the costs of copying and delivering the documents and attorney’s fees incurred in compliance with the subpoena or request.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">COSTS OF COMPLIANCE WITH THIRD-PARTY DISCOVERY REQUESTS</p> <p>The costs of compliance with third-party discovery requests made of ACEN with regard to a governing organization/nursing program granted Candidacy can be high and cannot be reasonably anticipated for budgeting purposes. To defray these costs in part, where reimbursement for the expense of producing the documents is not provided by the party serving the subpoena or document request, ACEN may charge the governing organization/nursing program granted candidacy with the costs of production, including the costs of copying and delivering the documents and attorney’s fees incurred in compliance with the subpoena or request.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS FOLLOWING LITIGATION</p> <p>Any governing organization/nursing program making a Candidacy Presentation that takes legal action against the ACEN regarding a Candidacy Presentation decision and withdraws its case or loses its case is responsible for assuming all costs incurred by the ACEN while defending its decision, including attorney’s fees. These costs must be paid in full within 45 calendar days following the governing organization’s/nursing program’s receipt of the ACEN invoice, unless other arrangements are approved by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">INSTITUTIONAL FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS FOLLOWING LITIGATION</p> <p>Any governing organization/nursing program granted Candidacy that takes legal action against ACEN regarding a candidacy and/or accreditation decision and withdraws its case or loses its case is responsible for assuming all costs incurred by ACEN while defending its decision, including attorney’s fees. These costs must be paid in full within forty-five (45) calendar days following the governing organization’s/nursing program’s receipt of the ACEN invoice, unless other arrangements are approved by the Executive Committee acting on behalf of the Board of Commissioners.</p>

THE CANDIDACY PRESENTATION

The Candidacy Presentation is presented in two (2) sections: introduction and narrative presentation of the selected Standards and Criteria.

- I. Introduction – which is be provided in a bullet format:
 - a. Name and address of the governing organization
 - b. Name and credentials of the governing organization Chief Executive Officer
 - c. Name and credentials of the campus Chief Executive Officer (if applicable)
 - d. Name of the institutional accrediting body (date of last review and action taken – with supporting evidence)
 - e. Name of state agency(ies) authorizing governing organization to provide postsecondary education program in the state – with supporting evidence of approval
 - f. Name of state agency(ies) authorizing governing organization to grant the credential (degree, diploma and certificate) to the nursing program seeking accreditation – with supporting evidence of approval
 - g. Name and address of the nursing education unit
 - h. Name and credentials of the nurse administrator
 - i. Name of the state regulator agency for nursing (date of last review and action taken – supporting documentation (if appropriate)
 - j. The number of full- and part-time faculty at each location – exclusive and shared
 - k. Total number of full- and part-time students currently enrolled in each program and/or option at each location if applicable.
 - l. Length of program in credits/hours (e.g. non-nursing credits, nursing credits, and overall credits) as well as academic terms for **all** program options.

The Candidacy presentation must include:

1. A college/university/governing organization catalog (NOTE: The catalog needs to be submitted as a single PDF file inclusive of all pages. The catalog should be a separate document from the presentation.)
2. If the nursing program has multiple locations, the introduction to the Candidacy Presentation must provide a brief narrative regarding how the program functions as a single nursing program with the oversight of the identified nurse administrator and how faculty members work together as a single faculty. [See the ACEN Glossary definition of a single nursing program/single nursing education unit]
3. A narrative and evidence making the program's case for compliance that addresses specific sections of Accreditation Standards 2, 4, 5, and 6 as detailed below; programs should not address the entire Standard, only those portions indicated. Each of the required Criterion should be addressed separately and the faculty should use level headings to assist with transition between Criteria.

What to include in the narrative sections:

Standard 2 Faculty and Staff

The narrative and evidence making the program's case for compliance should address the following Criteria for Standard 2:

1. 2.1 (all programs)
2. 2.2 (all programs)
3. 2.3 (clinical doctorate and master's only)

4. 2.5 (all programs)

Essential elements to include within the presentation:

1. A completed 2017 Faculty Profile Table appended to the presentation (form available on the ACEN website) including a Qualification and Professional Development Form for each full- and part-time faculty member; include a listing of all full- and part-time faculty (all programs)
 - a. The cover page(s) of the faculty profile table must provide information regarding the requirements of the governing organization, the accrediting body of the governing organization, and any state regulatory agencies related to faculty credentials and experience or other requirements.
 - b. Date of initial appointment
 - c. Academic and experiential qualifications, including all degrees and experience in education and clinical arenas
 - d. Enrollment in graduate programs with the type of graduate program (e.g. PhD in nursing; PhD in Higher Education) and anticipated dates of completion provided
 - e. Areas of expertise/experience
 - f. Course(s) taught by each faculty member including whether the assignment is for the didactic, laboratory, and/or clinical components of the course(s)
 - g. Areas of non-teaching responsibilities (workload)
 - h. The Qualification and Professional Development Form for each full- and part-time faculty member should provide information regarding relevant work experience/clinical practice; current licensure/certification; relevant continuing education for the last three (3) years; and relevant scholarly work for the last three (3) years
2. The faculty-to-student ratios for the program overall as well as in theory, skills/simulation laboratories, online, and clinical learning environments (all programs)
3. Information concerning full- and part-time nursing faculty workloads and how these compare to other faculty within the governing organization; information should also be provided with regards to overloads.

Standard 4 Curriculum

The narrative and evidence making the program's case for compliance should address the following Criteria for Standard 4:

1. 4.1 (all programs)
2. 4.2 (all programs)
3. 4.4 (clinical doctorate programs and master's programs only)
4. 4.8 (all programs)
5. 4.9 (all programs)
6. 4.11 (all programs)

Essential elements to include within the presentation:

1. A discussion of the use of established professional standards, guidelines, and/or competencies
2. A list of the end-of-program student learning outcomes identified by the faculty [Graduate programs must also identify the role-specific professional competencies identified for each program option as

well as how these are related to the end-of-program student learning outcomes]

3. A discussion of how the end-of-program student learning outcomes are used to organize and guide the delivery of the curriculum and evaluate student progress in the theory, practice laboratory, and clinical components of the program.
4. An abbreviated syllabus (maximum 2 pages) for each nursing course to include:
 - a. Course name and number
 - b. Credit hours/contact hours related to didactic, skills/laboratory, and clinical
 - c. Course specific prerequisites/co-requisites
 - d. Course description
 - e. Course objectives/outcomes
 - f. Methods of evaluation, including information regarding how each contributes to the overall course grade
 - g. A topical outline for course content
5. A brief discussion of the major concepts/constructs of the nursing program's philosophy/mission with a clear depiction of the concepts/constructs as they progress throughout the curriculum (a table or chart may be used) [Note: Discussion concerning the philosophy/mission of the program will be provided in the narrative for Criterion 1.I in the Self-Study Report. In the candidacy presentation, the faculty should briefly describe how the curriculum incorporates the major concepts/constructs from the philosophy/mission of the program.]
6. The program of study delineating the course credit-to-contact-hour ratios for theory, skills laboratory, and clinical learning experiences. Length of program should be reflected in credit and contact hours as well as number of academic terms inclusive of all prerequisite and supporting courses. A degree plan by academic terms should be included for supporting documentation for each program option. The length of the academic term in weeks should also be defined. See ACEN Glossary for definition of program length.
7. A presentation of the clinical practice learning environments with a discussion of the appropriateness of learning opportunities, including precepted experiences, demonstrating that students are able to achieve all identified learning outcomes. A list of the practice learning sites should be provided in a table or in the appendices of the presentation. Information should also be provided regarding the evaluation of the sites by students and faculty.
8. All programs should provide a brief narrative for Criterion 4.I.I. If the program does not utilize any form of distance education in nursing courses according to the ACEN definition, then this needs to be stated (e.g., "The nursing program does not utilize distance education.") If some courses are offered by distance education, (e.g., interactive videoconferencing, hybrid, or online format), then the course(s) utilizing an alternative delivery format should be clearly identified, and information should be provided regarding the pedagogy utilized within the course(s) as well as information regarding the percentage of the course and overall program that is offered via distance education format. If the program utilizes a learning management system (LMS), then how the LMS is used should also be briefly explained (e.g. A learning management system is utilized to provide course materials and for communication; however, no online activities are required within the LMS.).

Standard 5 Resources

The narrative and evidence making the program's case for compliance should address the following

Criteria for Standard 5:

1. 5.1 (all programs)
2. 5.2 (all programs)
3. 5.3 (all programs)

Essential elements to include in the presentation:

1. A discussion of the adequacy of fiscal support for the program. Information should be provided regarding the source(s) of funding for the governing organization and nursing program(s). Information should also be provided regarding how the fiscal funding of the nursing program(s) is commensurate with the resources of the governing organization as well as a program/department similar in size within the governing organization. Three (3) years of information regarding the fiscal funding as well as budgetary information for the governing organization and nursing program should be provided when available.
2. A discussion of the adequacy, availability, currency, and relevance of the following at **all** locations the nursing program is offered:
 - a. Physical facilities, including faculty and staff offices/workspaces, classrooms, and computer laboratories
 - b. Practice laboratory/simulation materials and equipment, including the times that the skills/simulation laboratory is accessible to students outside of scheduled class times.
 - c. Technology and technical support for students and faculty including personnel, equipment, and software; times that technology and technical support are accessible to faculty, staff, and students
 - d. Learning resources, including those in the library; information about the faculty input into the selection and deselection of learning resources; times that the learning resources are accessible to students. If the program has multiple locations, then information must also be provided regarding how learning resources are comparable between the locations.

Standard 6 Outcomes

The narrative and evidence making the program's case for compliance should address the following Criterion for Standard 6:

1. 6.1 (all programs) - narrative and systematic evaluation plan
2. 6.2, 6.3, and 6.4 - systematic evaluation plan with data related to each as available

Essential elements to include in the presentation:

In the narrative:

1. A discussion of the development and implementation of the program's systematic plan of evaluation by the faculty.
2. A discussion of how the systematic plan of evaluation addresses each of the end-of-program student learning outcomes and the program outcomes. [Graduate programs should include role-specific professional competencies and APRN options should also include how graduate and employer satisfaction will be collected to demonstrate compliance with the NTF Guidelines.]
3. Examples of data collection, analyses, trending, and use for the assessment of each of the end-of-program student learning outcomes. If these processes have not begun, then information regarding the plans for implementation of the systematic plan of evaluation must be described.
4. A discussion of specific examples of program changes made by the faculty using evaluation findings if

data have already been collected.

Appended to the presentation:

1. The systematic plan of evaluation (SPE) that includes all the end-of-program student learning outcomes, licensure and/or certification examination pass rate, program completion rate, and job placement rate should also be submitted. Please note, effective January 1, 2017, the SPE no longer includes Standards 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.

At a minimum, programs are required to begin collecting data on their end-of-program student learning outcomes, licensure and/or certification examination pass rate, program completion rate, and job placement rate from the time Candidacy is achieved. Therefore, the SPE must include (1) each end-of-program student learning outcome/ELA; (2) each program outcome/ELA; (3) appropriate direct assessment method(s) for each end-of-program student learning outcome and each program outcome; and (4) timeframe for assessing each end-of-program student learning outcome each program outcome. The SPE must also include (1) the actual assessment data for each end-of-program student learning outcome and each program outcome, as available; (2) the analysis of assessment data, as available; and (3) documentation demonstrating the use of assessment data in program decision-making for each end-of-program student learning outcome and each program outcome, as available.

2. As available, program outcomes data (licensure and/or certification examination pass rate, program completion rate, and job placement rate) should be included in the SPE for the last three (3) years. For new programs without graduates, information regarding the date for the first graduating cohort should be specified and information regarding how the data will be collected for each program outcome must be provided.

Format for the Candidacy Presentation:

1. The report should be typed using a 1½ or double-spacing and 1-inch margins.
2. All pages, including the appendices, are to be numbered consecutively and ordered according to a table of contents.
3. The Candidacy Presentation should have a title page and Table of Contents. The overall Candidacy presentation should be no more than 200 pages for a single program or 300 pages for multiple programs, excluding the faculty profile table and systematic evaluation plan. [Note: The overall Self-Study Report has these same page limitations; therefore, the faculty are encouraged to not submit the maximum pages for a Candidacy presentation.]
4. Confidential records (e.g., faculty transcripts, student records) should **not** be included.
5. The Candidacy Presentation must be signed by the Chief Executive Officer **or** Campus Chief Executive Officer (as applicable) with the statement: *The Chief Executive Officer hereby confirms the statements made herein are true and correct.*

Review Process:

Candidacy Presentations are reviewed by two (2) professional staff members to establish whether in the Candidacy Presentation the nursing program (a) demonstrated the extent to which the program is currently compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria or demonstrated the extent to which the program has the potential to be compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria within two (2) years, and (b) the extent to which the program has the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria provided in the Candidacy Presentation. Each reviewer will independently recommend one (1) of the following: Approval for Candidacy, Deferral of Candidacy, or Disapproval of Candidacy:

1. Approval for Candidacy – The nursing program (a) demonstrated it is currently compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria or demonstrated the potential to be compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria within two (2) years of notification, and (b) the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed in the Candidacy Presentation. The program is now an ACEN Candidate program and will need to complete the Candidacy process within two (2) years of notification. Completion of the process includes writing the complete Self-Study Report and having an initial accreditation site visit. Approval of Candidacy does not guarantee that the program will achieve initial accreditation. Application deadlines for scheduling an initial accreditation visit are March 1st for a fall accreditation cycle and July 1st for a spring accreditation cycle.
2. Deferral of Candidacy – The nursing program (a) made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate it is currently compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria or made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate the potential to be compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria within two (2) years of notification, and (b) made an inconsistent presentation to demonstrate the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed in the Candidacy Presentation. The program will have the opportunity to resubmit the Candidacy Presentation within one (1) calendar year of notification. Failure to resubmit the Candidacy Presentation within a year of notification will require the program to restart the process including the application fee.
3. Disapproval of Candidacy – The nursing program (a) did not demonstrate it is currently compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria or did not demonstrate the potential to be compliant with selected ACEN Standards and Criteria within two (2) years of notification, and (b) did not demonstrate the potential to achieve ACEN accreditation based upon the selected ACEN Standards and Criteria reviewed in the Candidacy Presentation. The program will be required to restart the Candidacy Process.

NOTE:

In order for the ACEN to properly to discharge its responsibilities to the Department of Education pursuant to 34 CFR Section 602.28, an applicant for candidacy must certify that neither the governing organization nor the nursing program is the subject of:

1. A pending or final action brought by a State agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's legal authority to provide postsecondary education in the State;
2. A decision by a recognized agency to deny accreditation or pre-accreditation;
3. A pending or final action brought by a recognized accrediting agency to suspend, revoke, withdraw, or terminate the institution's accreditation or pre-accreditation; or
4. Probation or an equivalent status imposed by a recognized agency.

The program will be required to certify this information at the time that *Official Authorization for Candidacy Process Form* is signed and again when the program applies for the initial accreditation visit. Information submitted by the program will be kept confidential and will only be utilized by the ACEN in its report to the USDE as required. The information provided by the governing organization/nursing program will not be utilized in determining the program's candidacy or its initial accreditation with the ACEN. The achievement of a Candidate status as well as achieving initial accreditation will be based upon the program's ability to demonstrate compliance with the current ACEN Standards and Criteria.

EXAMPLE: SYSTEMATIC PLAN OF EVALUATION

This is an **example** of a table format to assist faculty in addressing Standard 6 of the ACEN Standards and Criteria. Programs are not required to use this template but can elect to utilize any template format of their choice. The nursing unit's systematic plan for program evaluation and assessment of outcomes must differentiate between all program types offered by the nursing unit where applicable.

End-of-program Student Learning Outcome and Program Outcomes					
PLAN				IMPLEMENTATION	
Component	Assessment Method(s)*	Expected Level of Achievement	Frequency of Assessment	Results of Data Collection and Analysis Including actual level(s) of achievement	Actions for Program Development, Maintenance, or Revision
EPSLO #1:					
EPSLO #2:					
EPSLO #3:					
EPSLO #4:					
EPSLO #5:					
Licensure Pass Rate+ <i>NCLEX**</i> <i>Certifications***</i>		ELA:			
Program Completion Rate+		ELA: ELA Rationale:			
Job Placement Rate+		ELA: ELA Rationale:			
Other Program Outcome(s):					

- * The appropriateness of an assessment method is based on whether its application yields data which when analyzed determine whether the expected level of achievement for the outcome being evaluated has or has not been met. It should be noted a tool is not always necessary to 'collect' data. The nursing program should select assessment method(s) appropriate to the identified component being evaluated.
- ** Most recent annual licensure examination pass rate will be at least 80% for **all** first-time test-takers during the same 12-month period.
- *** For each certification examination, the annual pass rate for all first-time test-takers will be at or above the national mean for the same three-year period; in the absence of a national mean, the pass rate for each certification examination will be at least 80% for all first-time test-takers during the same 12-month period.
- + If the program is offered at multiple locations or has multiple program options, report licensure/certification pass rate and program completion data for each location/option and also in aggregate for the program as a whole. Report job placement data in aggregate for the program as a whole.