**Section 1300.340 Approval of Programs**

a) Program Approval

Institutions desiring to establish a new nursing program that would lead to meeting requirements for licensure, change the level of educational preparation of the program, or establish an extension of an existing program shall:

1) Submit a letter of intent to the Division.

2) Provide a feasibility study to the Division, on forms provided by the Division, that includes, at least, documentation of:

A) Need for the program in the community;

B) Need for graduates of the proposed program;

C) Availability of students;

D) Impact on existing nursing programs in a 50-mile radius of the proposed program;

E) The curriculum vitae of identifiable faculty, including the curriculum vitae of any potential faculty members that will teach in the program;

F) Adequacy of clinical practicum and academic resources;

G) Financial commitment to support the initial and continuing program;

H) Community support of the scope and philosophy of the program;

I) Authorization by the appropriate education agency of the State of Illinois; and

J) A timetable for development of the program and the intended date of the first class beginning.

3) Identify and provide a curriculum vitae of a qualified nurse administrator with a minimum of a master's degree in nursing and with experience as a nurse educator.

4) Submit a curriculum proposal including:

A) Program philosophy and objectives;

B) A plan of organization that is logical and internally consistent;

C) Proposed plans of study, including requisite and elective courses with rationale;

D) Course outlines or syllabi for all nursing courses;

E) Student handbook;

F) Faculty qualifications;

G) Instructional approaches to be employed;

H) Evaluation plans for faculty and students;

I) Facilities and utilization plan; and

J) Budget plan.

5) Coordinate with the Division and/or Nursing Coordinator for a site visit to be conducted prior to program approval.

b) Continued Program Approval

1) Nursing education programs shall submit annual evaluation reports to the Division on forms provided by the Division. These reports shall contain information regarding curriculum, faculty and students and other information deemed appropriate by the Division.

2) Full routine site visits may be conducted by the Division for periodic evaluation. The visits will be utilized to determine compliance with the Act. Unannounced site visits may be conducted when the Division obtains evidence that would indicate the program is not in compliance with the Act or this Part.

3) *Beginning December 31, 2022, obtaining and maintaining programmatic accreditation by a national accrediting body for nursing education recognized by the United States Department of Education and approved by the Department. The Department and Board of Nursing shall be notified within 30 days if the program loses its accreditation.* (Section 60-5(a)(5) of the Act)

A) The Board shall issue a warning letter to any program that lost its national accreditation. This letter shall inform the program of its probationary status and the corrective actions necessary to be in compliance with the Act.

B) The program placed on probationary status must:

i) Immediately notify all enrolled students and applicants that the program has lost its national accreditation and of corrective actions the program will take to regain its accreditation; and

ii) Correct the deficiencies identified by the Board within 12 months unless otherwise directed by the Board, including regaining its national accreditation. Failure to correct the deficiencies within the specified time frame shall result in the Board's withdrawal of the program's approval status.

4) A pass rate of graduates on the National Council Licensing Examination (NCLEX) shall be included in the annual evaluation of nursing education programs.

A) A pass rate of 75% of first-time examinees will be required for a school to remain in good standing.

B) A nursing education program having an annual pass rate of less than 75% of first-time examinees for one year will receive a written warning of noncompliance from the Division.

C) A nursing education program having an annual pass rate of less than 75% of first-time examinees for 2 consecutive years will receive a site visit for evaluation and recommendation by the Division and will be placed on probation for program revision in accordance with 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1110.

D) The nursing education program will have 2 years to demonstrate evidence of implementing strategies to correct deficiencies and bring the pass rate in line with the 75% criteria.

E) If, 2 years after implementing the strategies to correct deficiencies in the program, the annual pass rate is less than 75%, the program will be reevaluated. The program will be allowed to continue to operate on a probationary status or will be disapproved and removed from the list of Illinois approved nursing programs in accordance with 68 Ill. Adm. Code 1110.

c) Major Curricular Revision

Nursing education programs desiring to make a major curricular revision, i.e., addition or deletion of content, a substantive change in philosophy or conceptual framework, or length of program, shall:

1) Submit a letter of intent to the Division; and

2) Submit a copy of the proposed changes and new material to the Division, at least one term prior to implementation, for Board recommendation and Division approval in accordance with the standards set forth in subsection (f).

d) Minor Curricular Revisions

Nursing education programs desiring to make curricular revisions involving reorganization of current course content but not constituting a major curriculum revision shall submit the proposed changes to the Division in their annual report.

e) Organization and Administration

1) An institution responsible for conducting a nursing education program shall be authorized by the appropriate agency of the State of Illinois (e.g., Illinois Board of Higher Education, State Board of Education, Illinois Community College Board);

2) The relationship of the nursing education program to other units within the sponsoring institution shall be clearly delineated with organizational charts on file with the Division;

3) Nursing education programs shall have clearly defined lines of authority, responsibility and communication;

4) Student input into determination of academic policies and procedures, curriculum planning and evaluation of faculty effectiveness shall be assured as evidenced by information such as student membership on policy and evaluation committees, policy statements and evaluation procedures;

5) Nursing education program policies and procedures shall be in written form, congruent with those of the sponsoring institution, and reviewed by members of the program on a regular schedule;

6) The philosophy, purpose and objectives of the nursing education program shall be stated in writing and shall be consistent with the sponsoring institution and current social, nursing and educational trends and the Act.

f) Curriculum and Instruction

1) The curriculum shall be based upon the stated program purpose, philosophy and objectives;

2) Levels of progression in relation to the stated program outcomes shall be established;

3) Coordinated clinical and theoretical learning experiences shall be consistent with the program outcomes;

4) Curricular content shall reflect contemporary nursing practice encompassing major health needs of all age groups;

5) The entire curriculum shall be based on sound nursing, education and instructional principles;

6) The curriculum may include a Nursing Student Internship/Cooperative Education Course that meets the following minimum requirements:

A) The course must be available with the nursing major and identified on the transcript.

B) Faculty must meet approved nursing education program qualifications and hold faculty status with the educational unit.

C) Clinical content must be coordinated with theoretical content.

D) Clinical experience must be under direct supervision of qualified faculty as set forth in subsection (g) or with a registered nurse preceptor. The nurse preceptor shall be approved by the program and shall work under the direction of a nurse faculty member.

E) Students shall not be permitted to practice beyond educational preparation or without faculty supervision.

F) The course shall be based on program purpose, philosophy, objectives and framework.

G) Course evaluation shall be consistent with the plan for program evaluation.

H) Articles of affiliation shall clearly delineate student, educational institution and health care agency roles and responsibilities;

7) The curriculum shall be evaluated by faculty with student input, according to a stated plan;

8) The program shall be approved by the appropriate educational agency;

9) Curriculum for professional nursing programs shall:

A) Include, at a minimum, concepts in anatomy, physiology, chemistry, physics, microbiology, sociology, psychology, communications, growth and development, interpersonal relationships, group dynamics, cultural diversity, pharmacology and the administration of medication, nutrition and diet therapy, patho-physiology, ethics, nursing history, trends and theories, professional and legal aspects of nursing, leadership and management in nursing, and teaching-learning theory;

B) Not preclude a flexible curriculum that would provide appropriate integration of the nursing subject matters;

C) Provide theoretical and clinical instruction in all areas of nursing practice in the promotion, prevention, restoration and maintenance of health in individuals and groups across the life span and in a variety of clinical settings;

D) Incorporate the nursing process as an integral part of the curriculum;

E) Prepare the student to assume beginning level professional nursing positions;

F) Be at least 2 academic years in length.

g) Nursing Administrator and Faculty

1) The institution responsible for conducting the nursing program and the nurse administrator of the nursing education program shall be responsible for ensuring that the individual faculty members are academically and professionally qualified.

2) Nursing education programs shall be administered by the nurse administrator of the nursing education program.

3) The nurse administrator and faculty of a nursing education program shall be currently licensed as registered professional nurses in Illinois.

4) The nurse administrator of a nursing education program shall have at least:

A) 2 years' experience in clinical nursing practice;

B) 2 years' experience as a nursing educator; and

C) A master's degree or higher with a major in nursing.

5) Nurse faculty of a professional nursing program shall have:

A) At least 2 years' experience in clinical nursing practice;

B) A master's degree or higher with a major in nursing.

6) The requirements of subsections (g)(4) and (5) shall not affect incumbents as of the original date these requirements were adopted, January 14, 1980.

7) Nurse administrators of nursing education programs shall be responsible for:

A) Administration of the nursing education program;

B) Liaison with other units of the sponsoring institution;

C) Preparation and administration of the budget;

D) Facilitation of faculty development and performance review;

E) Facilitation and coordination of activities related to academic policies, personnel policies, curriculum, resource facilities and services, and program evaluation; and

F) Notification to the Division of program changes.

8) Faculty shall be responsible for:

A) Development, implementation and evaluation of the purpose, philosophy and objectives of the nursing education program;

B) Design, implementation and evaluation of curriculum for the nursing education program;

C) Participation in academic advising of students;

D) Development and evaluation of student policies; and

E) Evaluation of student performance in meeting the objectives of the program.

9) Faculty shall participate in:

A) Selection, promotion and tenure activities;

B) Academic activities of the institution;

C) Professional and health related community activities;

D) Self-development activities for professional and personal growth;

E) Research and other scholarly activities for which qualified; and

F) Activities that maintain educational and clinical expertise in areas of teaching.

10) Clinical experience must be under direct supervision of qualified faculty as set forth in this subsection (g) or with a registered nurse preceptor. The nurse preceptor shall be approved by the parent institution and shall work under the direction of a nurse faculty member.

11) The ratio of students to faculty in the clinical area shall be appropriate to the clinical learning experience:

A) When under direct supervision of the faculty, the ratio shall not exceed 10 to 1.

B) When a registered nurse preceptor is used, the ratio of students to faculty member shall not exceed 12 to 1.

h) Financial Support, Facilities, Records

1) Adequate financial support for the nursing education program, faculty and other necessary personnel, equipment, supplies and services shall be in evidence in the program budget.

2) The faculty of the nursing education program and the staff of cooperating agencies used as sites for additional theory and clinical experience shall work together for quality of patient care.

3) Articles of Affiliation

A) The nursing education program shall have Articles of Affiliation between the nursing education program and each clinical facility that define the rights and responsibilities of each party, including agreements on the role and authority of the governing bodies of both the clinical site and the nursing education program.

B) If portions of the required clinical or theoretical curriculum are offered at different geographical sites or by distance learning, the curriculum must be planned, supervised, administered and evaluated in concert with appropriate faculty committees, department chairmen and administrative officers of the parent school.

4) There shall be adequate facilities for the nursing program for both academic and clinical experiences for students.

5) There shall be access to learning resource facilities, including library and multi-media technology, that are reasonably sufficient for the curriculum and the number of students enrolled in the nursing education programs.

6) Cooperating agencies shall be identified to the Division and shall be suitable to meet the objectives of the program.

7) Addition or deletion of cooperating agencies shall be reported in writing to the Division on the program annual report.

8) The nursing program's policies and procedures shall not violate constitutional rights and shall be written and available to faculty and students.

9) Permanent student records that summarize admissions, credentials, grades and other records of performance shall be maintained by the program.

i) Faculty Waiver

1) Waivers for faculty with a graduate degree in a field other than nursing may be granted by the Division based on the following:

A) The individual has a bachelor's degree in nursing;

B) The individual has at least 2 years of experience in clinical nursing practice;

C) The individual has a degree in a field that directly relates to the course he or she will be teaching;

D) At least 80% of the school's undergraduate nursing faculty holds a master's degree in nursing.

2) Waivers for faculty without a graduate degree will be granted based on the following:

A) The faculty member is within one year of completion of the master's in nursing or the faculty member has completed a master's in another area or is enrolled in a doctoral degree in nursing program and has completed all coursework, except for a dissertation/final project;

B) The faculty member is continuously enrolled in the graduate degree in nursing program;

C) A plan exists for the timely completion of the graduate degree in nursing program; and

D) At least 80% of the school's undergraduate nursing faculty holds a master's degree in nursing.

3) A school that has received a waiver must notify the Board of any changes related to that faculty member, including notification that the faculty member has received the graduate degree.

j) Preceptors

A program of registered professional nursing that uses the personnel of a clinical facility as preceptors to instruct the clinical experience must:

1) Require each preceptor to have demonstrated competencies with patient populations to which the student is assigned;

2) Require each preceptor to be approved by the faculty of the program of nursing;

3) Require the faculty of the program to provide to each preceptor an orientation concerning the roles and responsibilities of students, faculty and preceptors;

4) Require the faculty of the program to develop written competencies/outcomes and provide a copy of these to each preceptor before the preceptor begins instruction of the students;

5) Designate a member of the faculty to serve as a liaison between the preceptor and each student who participates in the clinical experience;

6) Require that each preceptor be present in the clinical facility or at the location of point of care and available to the students at all times when the student provides nursing care or services to patients/clients;

7) Require that each preceptor have a current registered professional nurse license in the state where the student is practicing.

k) Denial of Approval of Nursing Program

If the Division, in the course of reviewing an application for approval of a nursing program, determines that an applicant program has failed to comply with the application criteria or procedures outlined in this Part, or receives information that indicates that the applicant program will not be able to comply with the conditions set forth in subsection (b), the Division may deny the application for approval.

l) Discontinuance of a Nursing Program

1) Prior to termination of a nursing education program, the program shall:

A) Notify the Division, in writing, of its intent to discontinue its program;

B) Continue to meet the requirements of the Act and this Part until the official date of termination of the program;

C) Notify the Division of the date on which the last student will graduate and the program terminate; and

D) Assume responsibility for assisting students to continue their education in the event of closing of the school prior to the final student graduating.

2) Upon closure of the nursing education program, the institution shall notify the Division, in writing, of the location of student and graduate records storage.

m) Revocation of Program Approval

1) The following are grounds for disapproval of a nursing education program:

A) A violation of any provision of the Act;

B) Fraud or dishonesty in applying for approval of a nursing education program;

C) Failure to continue to meet criteria of an approved nursing education program set forth in this Section; or

D) Failure to comply with recommendations made by the Division as a result of a site visit.

2) Upon written notification of the Division's proposed action, the nursing education program may:

A) Submit a written response;

B) Request a hearing before the Board.

n) Out-of-State Education Programs Seeking Student Nurse Clinical Placement in Illinois

1) Out-of-state nursing education programs offering clinical experiences in Illinois are expected to maintain the standards for approved nursing education programs set forth in this Section.

2) Programs desiring to seek approval for student nurse clinical placement in Illinois shall submit the following documents:

A) Evidence of approval/accreditation by the Board of Nursing or other appropriate approval bodies in the state in which the institution is located.

B) A letter requesting approval to provide the clinical offering that indicates the time-frame during which the clinical experience will be conducted, the clinical agencies and the clinical units to be utilized.

C) A course syllabus for the clinical experiences to be offered that specifies the related objectives of the offering.

D) A copy of the executed contractual agreement between the academic institution and the clinical facility.

E) A faculty qualification and/or preceptor form for individuals providing instruction in Illinois.

3) Faculty

A) The institution responsible for conducting the nursing program and the administrator of the nursing education program shall be responsible for ensuring that the individual faculty members are academically and professionally qualified.

B) Nurse faculty of a professional nursing program shall have:

i) At least 2 years' experience in clinical nursing practice; and

ii) A master's degree or higher with a major in nursing.

C) The faculty shall be currently licensed as registered professional nurses in Illinois.

D) Clinical experience must be under direct supervision of qualified faculty as set forth in subsection (g) or with a registered nurse preceptor. The nurse preceptor shall be approved by the parent institution and shall work under the direction of a nurse faculty member.

E) The ratio of students to faculty in the clinical area shall be appropriate to the clinical learning experience.

i) When under direct supervision of the faculty, the ratio shall not exceed 10 to 1.

ii) When a registered nurse preceptor is used, the ratio of students to faculty member shall not exceed 12 to 1.

4) Approval for clinical offerings by out-of-state nursing programs shall be approved for a period of 2 years. A program representative may request renewal of the approval every 2 years. In order to renew, the program shall submit a written report that provides updated and current data as required by this subsection (n).

5) A written report of current clinical offerings and current data shall be submitted to the Division annually. Faculty qualification and preceptor forms shall be submitted when instructors are added or changed.

6) Failure to comply with the requirements set forth in this Part shall result in the immediate withdrawal of approval of the clinical experience offering.

o) If the name of the program is changed or the institution in which the program is located or with which it is affiliated changes its name, the program shall notify the Division within 30 days after the name change. If the Division is not notified within the 30 days, the program's approval may be withdrawn.

p) The Division has determined that nurse programs approved through the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCEN), Accreditation Commission for Education Nursing (ACEN), or the US Department of Education meet the requirements set forth in this Section, except for those programs whose curriculums do not include a concurrent theory and clinical practice education component as required by Section 50-70 of the Act.

(Source: Amended at 45 Ill. Reg. 228, effective January 4, 2021)