Chapter N 1

APPROVAL FOR SCHOOLS OF NURSING

N 1.01 Authority and intent. (1) The rules in this chapter are adopted pursuant to authority of ss. 15.08 (5) (b) and 441.01 (3), Stats. (2) The intent of the board of nursing in adopting rules in this chapter is to clarify requirements and develop efficient timelines for the nursing school approval process and to reduce duplication that exists between the board and nursing accreditation processes for nursing schools.

History: Cr. Register, January, 1983, No. 325, eff. 2−1−83; am. (2), Register, August, 1989, No. 404, eff. 9−1−89; correction in (1) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, August, 1989, No. 404; correction in (1) made under s. 13.93 (2m) (b) 7., Stats., Register, October, 2000, No. 538; CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14.

N 1.02 Definitions. (1) “Annual NCLEX pass rate” means the pass rates for those who took the NCLEX or advanced practice certification examination between January 1 and December 31. (2) “Board” means board of nursing. (3) “Certificate of completion” means a student has completed the portion of the program equivalent to a diploma in practical nursing or professional nursing. (4) “Class” means a graduating class for each 12−month period. (5) “Institution” means the college, university or governing body which has the authority to conduct a school of nursing. (5g) “Institutional accreditation” means that the institution conforms to the standards of education prescribed by a regional accrediting commission recognized by the U.S. department of education. (5r) “NCLEX” means national council licensure examination. (6) “Nursing accreditation” means the school of nursing conforms to the standards of a board recognized nursing accreditation agency. (8) “Out−of−state school” means a school operating in Wisconsin with a physical location outside of Wisconsin. (10) “School of nursing” means a school for professional nurses or practical nurses. (11) “School of practical nursing” means a school preparing students for practical nurse licensure. (12) “School of professional nursing” means a school preparing nursing students at the associate, bachelor’s, or graduate degree level. This includes schools granting any of the following: (a) Certificate of completion for practical nurse licensure or professional nurse licensure. (b) Postlicensure bachelor’s degree. (13) “Simulation” means planned clinical experiences to develop clinical judgment and assess learning utilizing patient simulators in an environment and under conditions that provide a realistic clinical scenario. History: Cr. Register, January, 1983, No. 325, eff. 2−1−83; am. (1) (c) Register, August, 1989, No. 404; CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; renumbering (7) and (9) to (5r) and (5g) under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1., Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17−095; cr. (13) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18; CR 17−096: am. (1), (5g), t. and recr. (12) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18.

N 1.03 Authorization to plan a school of nursing. (1) An institution planning to establish and conduct a school of nursing for professional or practical nursing shall file with the board an application including all of the following: (a) Name and address of the controlling institution and evidence of the accreditation status of the controlling institution. (b) Statement of intent to establish a school of nursing, including the academic and licensure levels of all programs to be offered and the primary method of instruction. (c) Evidence of the availability of sufficient clinical facilities and resources. (d) Plans to recruit and employ a qualified educational administrator and qualified faculty. (f) A proposed timeline for planning and implementing the program and intended date of entry for the first class. (2) The board shall make a decision on the application within two months of the receipt of the completed application and notify the controlling institution of the action taken.

History: CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; CR 17−096: am. (1) (c) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18.

N 1.04 Authorization to admit students. (1) The school of nursing shall file with the board an application including all of the following: (a) Verification of employment of an educational administrator meeting the qualifications in s. N 1.08 (2) (a). (b) Evidence of employment of sufficient number of faculty meeting the qualifications in s. N 1.08 (3) and (4) to teach the courses offered for the first six months. (c) The school of nursing’s philosophy and objectives. (d) An overview of curriculum including all of the following: 1. Content. 2. Course sequence. 3. Course descriptions. 5. Course syllabi for the first year and plan for subsequent years. (dm) Documentation of a school evaluation plan. (e) Verification of the establishment of student policies for admission, progression, retention, and graduation. (em) Documentation of a plan for student or prospective student access to student policies. (f) Verification of the students’ ability to acquire clinical skills by providing all of the following:
1. Written agreements from clinical facilities securing clinical opportunities and documentation of the facility, type, size, number of beds, and type of patients. All written agreements shall be signed and dated after the date on which the school of nursing was granted authorization to plan by the board.

2. Documentation of simulation equipment and experiences.

3. Documentation that clinical experiences are representative of all areas of nursing practice covered by the school of nursing’s curriculum.

(g) An updated timeline for implementing the program and intended date for entry of the first class.

(2) The board shall make a decision on the application within 2 months of the receipt of the completed application.

(2g) A school of nursing which has received authorization to admit students shall provide the board on the first day of March, June, September, and December until the school of nursing receives approval, evidence of employment of sufficient number of faculty meeting s. N 1.08 (3) standards to teach the courses offered four months from the date the report is due.

(2r) The board may review the school of nursing to determine whether s. N 1.08 standards are being met by requiring any of the following:

(a) A site survey.

(b) A self−assessment.

(c) A plan for improvement and any progress reports.

(3) Withdrawal of authorization may occur for failure to meet the standards in s. N 1.08.

History: CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; correction in (1) (d) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17−096; am. (1) (a), (b), r. (1) (d) 4., cr. (1) (dm), (em), am. (1) (f) 1., cr. (1) (f) 3., (2g), (2r) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18.

N 1.05 Approval of school of nursing. (1) A school of nursing may apply for approval of the school of nursing upon graduation of the first class, but may not apply later than graduation of the third class. The school of nursing shall submit all of the following:

(a) A self−evaluation report setting forth evidence of compliance with the standards in s. N 1.08.

(b) The school of nursing’s ongoing systematic evaluation plan. The systematic evaluation plan shall include an evaluation of the annual pass rate of any graduates who took the NCLEX or an advanced practice certification examination.

(2) The board may conduct a site survey of the school of nursing. A determination to conduct a site survey shall occur within 2 months of receipt of completed application for approval.

(3) The board shall make a decision on the application within two months of the completed site survey or receipt of the completed application, whichever is later. The board shall approve the school based on verification that the school of nursing is in compliance with nursing education standards in s. N 1.08.

(4) The board may grant conditional approval. The notice of conditional approval shall contain a short statement in plain language of the basis, specifying the standard upon which the conditional approval is based. A school of nursing that receives a conditional approval may not admit new students to the school of nursing until the school of nursing receives full approval. The school of nursing may apply for full approval in three months from the date the school of nursing receives conditional approval.

(5) If the board denies the school of nursing approval, the notice of denial shall contain a short statement in plain language of the basis for the denial, specifying the standard upon which the denial is based. The controlling institution shall do all of the following:

(a) Implement the time frame established by the board for transfer of enrolled students to an approved school of nursing and report to the board the date of transfer for each student by name.

(b) Arrange for the secure storage and access to academic records and transcripts for the next 50 years. Provide the board with the name and address of the educational institution or other organization that will be responsible for secure storage and access to academic records and transcripts for 50 years.

(c) Close the school of nursing when the last student has transferred.

(d) Submit progress reports during the closure process upon request of the board.

(6) A school of nursing denied approval or given a conditional approval may request a hearing within 30 calendar days after the mailing of a notice. The school of nursing may be granted a stay of the school closure during the appeal process.

History: CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; correction in (1) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17−096; am. (1) (intro.), (b), (5) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18.

N 1.06 Approval of out of state school of nursing. (1) APPROVAL. An out−of−state school of nursing shall be approved if all of the following requirements are met:

(a) The school is approved by the board of the state the school is located.

(b) The school is accredited by a nursing accreditation body recognized by the Wisconsin board.

(2) CONTINUED APPROVAL. An out−of−state school shall maintain approval as long as school of nursing meets the requirements in sub. (1).

History: CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; correction in (2) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1., Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703.

N 1.07 Accreditation. (1) A school of nursing shall receive nursing accreditation by a board recognized nursing accreditation agency within three years of school approval.

(2) Schools of professional nursing that grant a certificate of completion shall hold accreditation at the level of the complete degree at which a diploma is conferred.

(3) Failure to maintain nursing accreditation shall result in withdrawal of school approval.

History: CR 14−004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; CR 17−096; am. (1) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9−1−18.

N 1.08 Standards. (1) ORGANIZATION AND ADMINISTRATION. The institution shall assume legal responsibility for overall conduct of the school of nursing. The institution shall do all of the following:

(a) Designate an educational administrator, establish administrative policies, and provide fiscal, human, physical, clinical, and technical learning resources adequate to support school processes, security, and outcomes.

(b) Maintain institutional accreditation.

(c) Develop and maintain written school of nursing administrative policies which are in accord with the institution.

(d) Have written documentation between the school of nursing and institutions which offer associated academic study, clinical facilities, and agencies for related services for students.

(2) EDUCATIONAL ADMINISTRATOR. (a) The qualifications for the educational administrator are all of the following:

1. Current, active registered nurse license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin that is not encumbered.

2. A graduate degree with a major in nursing. A doctoral degree is required for a school of nursing offering a graduate degree nursing program.
3. Knowledge of learning principles for adult education, including nursing curriculum development, administration and evaluation and one of the following:
   a. Two years experience as an instructor in a nursing education program within the last 5 years.
   b. One year experience as an instructor in a nursing education program within the last 5 years and the graduate degree included education preparation.
   (b) The educational administrator shall notify the board within 5 business days of a vacancy in the educational administrator’s position or change in educational administrator. Failure to report by the educational administrator is considered a violation of s. N 7.03 (1) (intro.).
   (c) The institution shall designate an interim or permanent educational administrator and notify the board within 5 business days of a vacancy in the educational administrator position. The institution may request board approval of an interim educational administrator who does not meet the qualifications in par. (a).
   (d) The interim educational administrator may serve no longer than 6 months. The institution may request an extension of time based upon hardship. The institution and new educational administrator shall notify the board within 5 business days of the institution’s hiring of the educational administrator.

(3) FACULTY. (a) Faculty standards. The school of nursing shall have evidence of the faculty meeting the standards in this section on file in the school of nursing office and available upon request to the board.
   (b) Qualifications for professional nursing faculty. The qualifications for the faculty of a school of professional nursing are all of the following:
      1. Hold a current, active registered nurse license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin that is not encumbered.
      2. A graduate degree with a major in nursing.
      3. Notwithstanding subd. 2., interprofessional faculty teaching interdisciplinary courses not specific to nursing shall have expertise and a graduate degree appropriate for the content being taught.
   (c) Qualifications for practical nursing faculty. The qualifications for the faculty of a school of practical nursing are all of the following:
      1. Hold a current, active registered nurse license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin that is not encumbered.
      2. A baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing.
   (d) Faculty exceptions. An educational administrator may apply to the board for exceptions to faculty requirements who are not teaching graduate level courses. A minimum of 50 percent of faculty must meet the faculty qualifications. A school of nursing that is granted a faculty exception for a faculty member shall provide the faculty member with a supervisor who meets the qualifications in par. (b) or (c). The board may grant any of the following exceptions:
      1. ‘Standard exception.’ A standard exception may be renewed upon showing proof of progress and continued active enrollment each year. The standard exception is for a person who has a baccalaureate degree in nursing and is actively enrolled in one of the following:
         a. A master’s program with a major in nursing.
         b. A bachelor’s in nursing to doctorate program in nursing.
         c. A doctorate program in nursing.
      2. ‘Emergency exception.’ A person with a bachelor’s degree in nursing may be employed for a short-term, unanticipated emergency situation including medical leave. The emergency exception is for a term no longer than one semester. The emergency exception may not be renewed for the course taught or for the individual in consecutive semesters. An educational administrator who requests a second consecutive emergency exception is required to submit a plan regarding the school of nursing staffing levels, courses being offered, and the extenuating circumstances to the board prior to the board approving another emergency exception.
      3. ‘Non−nursing masters degree exception.’ A non−nursing master’s degree exception is for a person who has a unique combination of knowledge, experience, and skills that will best serve the school of nursing, faculty, and students in a specific content area. The person shall meet all of the following:
         a. A bachelor’s degree in nursing.
         b. A graduate degree related to the topic of the course the person is teaching.
       c. Nursing experience in the area of teaching assignment.
   (4) CURRICULUM. The curriculum shall enable the student to develop the nursing knowledge, skills and abilities necessary for the level, scope and standards of competent nursing practice expected at the level of licensure. All curriculum shall be developed by nursing faculty with a graduate degree and designed to teach students to use a systematic approach to clinical decision−making and safe patient care. Curriculum for graduate level courses shall be developed by nursing faculty with a doctoral degree. Curriculum shall be revised as necessary to maintain a program that reflects advances in health care and its delivery. The curriculum shall include all of the following:
      (a) Evidence−based learning experiences and methods of instruction consistent with the written curriculum plan. The methods of instruction may include distance education methods.
      (b) Diverse didactic and clinical learning experiences consistent with program outcomes.
      (c) Coursework shall include all of the following:
         1. Content in the biological, physical, social and behavioral sciences to provide a foundation for safe and effective nursing practice.
         2. Content regarding professional responsibilities, legal and ethical issues, and history and trends in nursing and health care.
         3. Didactic content and supervised clinical experiences in the prevention of illness and the promotion, restoration and maintenance of health in patients from diverse cultural, ethnic, social, and economic backgrounds. Prelicensure programs shall include patients across the lifespan.
   (5) CLINICAL LEARNING EXPERIENCES. (a) Patient experiences shall occur in a variety of clinical or simulated settings of nursing practice expected at the level of licensure and shall include all of the following:
      1. Integrating evidence−based research with patient goals and values to produce optimal care.
      3. Providing patient−centered culturally competent care by doing all of the following:
         b. Recognizing that the patient or designee is the source of control and full partner in providing coordinated care.
      c. Coordinating and managing patient care across settings.
      d. Providing education at a level understandable by the patient.
      4. Collaborating with interprofessional teams to foster open communication, mutual respect, and shared decision−making in order to achieve safe and effective patient care.
      5. Experiencing quality improvement processes to monitor patient care outcomes, identify possibility of hazards and errors and collaborate in the development and testing of changes that improve the quality and safety of health care systems.
      6. Using information technology to communicate, mitigate errors, and support decision−making.
      (b) All entities selected for clinical experiences shall adhere to standards which demonstrate concern for the patient and evidence of the skillful application of all measures of safe nursing practices.
(c) All faculty teaching clinical or practicum courses shall be experienced in the clinical area of the course and maintain clinical expertise.

(d) Faculty–supervised clinical practice shall include all of the following:
1. Development of skills in the provision of direct patient care.
2. Delegation to and supervision of other health care providers.
3. Effective application of the nursing process.
4. Clinical experiences shall be supervised by qualified faculty.
5. All student clinical experiences, including those with preceptors, shall be directed by nursing faculty.

5m SIMULATION. (a) Simulation used to meet clinical requirements shall adhere to all of the following:
1. Nursing faculty with documented education and training in the use of simulation shall develop, implement, and evaluate the simulation experience.
2. Prebriefing and debriefing are conducted by nursing faculty with subject matter expertise and training in simulation using evidence–based techniques.
3. Simulation may not be utilized for more than 50% of the time designated for meeting clinical learning requirements.

6m PRECEPTORS. (a) Preceptors shall be approved by the faculty of the school of nursing.
(b) The school of nursing shall provide each preceptor with an orientation concerning the roles and responsibilities of the students, faculty and preceptors. The preceptor shall have clearly documented roles and responsibilities.
(c) Clinical preceptors shall have an unencumbered license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin as a nurse at or above the licensure level for which the student is being prepared.
(d) Preceptors shall demonstrate competencies related to the area of assigned clinical teaching responsibilities.

7m EVALUATION. The school of nursing shall implement a comprehensive, systematic plan for ongoing evaluation. Evidence of implementation shall reflect progress toward or achievement of program outcomes.

History: CR 14–004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; corrections in (3) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 1., Stats., in (3) (a) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 2., Stats., and in (4) (intro.), (c) (intro.), (5) (a) (intro.), (d) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17–096: am. (4) (intro.), (c) 3., (5) (a) (intro.), 1., r. 5. (a) 2., am. (5) (a) 3., r. (5) (a) 3., a., r. and recr. (5) (b) 3., b., d., am. (5) (a) 4., b., (b) 5., (c) 5., (d) 5., (5m) Register August 2018 No. 752, Eff. 9–1–18; CR 17–096: am. (1) (d), (2) (a) 2., r. and recr. (2) (a) 3., (b), (d), (2) (c), (d), r. and recr. (3) (b) 2., cr. (3) (b) 3., r. and recr. (3) (d) (intro.), 2., 3., (intro.), r. (3) (d) 3. Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9–1–18; correction in (3) (d) 2., 3., (intro.), (5) (a) 3., made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9–1–18; CR 21–009: r. (5m) (a) 3., Register December 2021 No. 792, eff. 1–1–22.

N 1.09 Annual pass rates. (1) GENERALLY. The school of nursing NCLEX pass rate includes all prelicensure students taking the NCLEX in the school of nursing. The board shall consider both the registered nurse NCLEX and practical nurse NCLEX pass rates when evaluating a school of professional nursing that grants a certificate of completion for practical nursing. A school of nursing which contains graduate programs shall include all advanced practice certification examinations related to programs offered in the school of nursing.

(2) ANNUAL PASS RATE STANDARD. The annual pass rate of graduates taking the NCLEX or advanced practice certification examinations for all test takers is a minimum of 80%.

(3) ANNUAL PASS RATE STANDARD NOT MET. If the annual pass rate standard is not met, the school of nursing shall receive a warning letter. The school shall identify factors that are potentially affecting the low pass rate and submit an assessment of contributing factors and institutional plan for improvement of examination results including outcomes and timeframes. The assessment and institutional plan shall be submitted to the board within 45 days of the board notifying the school of nursing of its failure to meet the annual pass rate standard and the institutional plan shall be acted on by the board no later than July 15. Failure to have a board approved plan by July 15 results in a review of the school of nursing under s. N 1.10 (4).

History: CR 14–004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; correction in (1) (title) made under s. 13.92 (4) (b) 2., Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17–096: r. and recr. Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9–1–18.

N 1.10 Continuation of board approval. (1) Schools of nursing shall file with the board all of the following:
(a) Annual self–evaluation reports by February 1.
(b) All documents submitted to or received from nursing accreditation agencies relating to compliance with accreditation standards.
(c) Notification of any actions, withdrawal or change in school nursing accreditation status within 30 days.

(2) Failure to maintain nursing accreditation shall result in withdrawal of board approval and the procedures in s. N 1.11 (2) will commence.

(3) The board may review the school of nursing to determine whether s. N 1.08 standards are being met in the following situations:
(a) Change in school nursing accreditation status.
(b) Nursing accreditation reports indicate standards are not being met.
(c) Complaints regarding the conduct of the school are received and it is necessary to evaluate the complaints.
(d) Failure to meet annual pass rate standard in s. N 1.09.
(e) Violation of any of the rules under this chapter.

(4) The review of the school may include any of the following:
(a) A site survey.
(b) A self–assessment.
(c) A plan for improvement and any progress reports.

(5) If the board makes a determination that s. N 1.08 standards are not being met, all of the following procedures shall be followed:
(a) The school of nursing shall submit an institutional plan, including timelines, to correct identified deficiencies in the school of nursing.

(b) The board shall review the proposed plan and may make modifications to the plan.

(c) The school of nursing shall make progress reports to the board as requested.

(d) The board may withdraw board approval if the school of nursing continues to not meet standards.

History: CR 14–004; cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8–1–14; correction in (5) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703; CR 17–096: am. (1) (a) to (c), (3) (c), (d), (4) (b), (c) Register August 2018 No. 752, eff. 9–1–18.

N 1.11 Closure of a school of nursing. (1) VOLUNTARY. When a school of nursing intends to close, the institution shall do all of the following:
(a) Submit a plan of intent to close a school of nursing to the board, including all of the following:
1. The date of intended closure.
2. Reason for the closure.
3. Place for students who have not completed their nursing education.

(b) Ensure that the school of nursing is maintained, including retention of adequate number of faculty and approved curriculum, until the last student is transferred or graduates from the school of nursing.

(c) Notify the board of the name and address of the educational institution or other organization that will be responsible for secure
storage and access to academic records and transcripts for 50 years.

(2) **Withdrawal of Nursing Approval.** (a) If the board withdraws approval of the school of nursing, the notice of withdrawal of approval shall contain a short statement in plain language of the basis for withdrawal of approval. The school of nursing may request a hearing within 30 calendar days after the mailing date of the notice.

(b) The institution shall do all of the following if approval of the school is withdrawn:
1. Implement the time frame established by the board for transfer of enrolled students to an approved school and report to the board the date of transfer for each student by name.
2. Arrange for the secure storage and access to academic records and transcripts for the next 50 years. Provide the board with the name and address of the educational institution or other organization that will be responsible for secure storage and access to academic records and transcripts for 50 years.
3. Close the school when the last student has transferred.
4. Submit progress reports during the closure process upon request of the board.

(c) The school of nursing may be granted a stay of the closure of the school during the appeal process.

**History:** CR 14−004: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; corrections in (1) (intro.), (2) (b) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703.

**N 1.12 Nursing refresher course approval.**

(1) **Intent of Nurse Refresher Course.** A nurse refresher course is designed for nurses who have not been practicing for five years or more.

(2) **Faculty.** (a) The instructor shall have all of the following qualifications:
1. Masters degree in nursing.
2. Recent clinical experience or clinical teaching experience.

(b) If preceptors are used, the preceptor is selected by the instructor using criteria developed for the course and the instructor provides supervision of preceptors.

(3) **Professional Nurse Content.** The nurse refresher course designed for professional nurse shall have all of the following content:

(a) Theory portion including all of the following:
1. Nursing process review.
2. Infection control.
3. Medication and pharmacology update.
4. Recent trends in nursing techniques and responsibilities.
5. Communication.
6. Documentation and reporting.
7. Supervision and delegation.

(b) Skills lab of at least 25 hours including basic nursing skills review and technology and equipment update.

(c) Directly supervised or precepted clinical experience of 100 hours or more performed in a hospital, clinic, long−term, or sub−acute facility.

(4) **Practical Nurse Content.** The nurse refresher course designed for practical nurses shall have all of the following content:

(a) Theory portion including all of the following:
1. Nursing process review.
2. Infection control.
3. Medication and pharmacology update.
4. Recent trends in nursing techniques and responsibilities.
5. Communication.
6. Documentation and reporting.
7. Supervision and delegation.
8. Aging population.

(b) Skills lab of at least 15 hours including basic nursing skills review and technology and equipment update.

(c) Directly supervised or precepted clinical experience of 70 hours or more performed in a hospital, clinic, long−term, or sub−acute facility.

(5) **Approval Process.** The board will review curriculum of nurse refresher courses submitted for inclusion on a listing of approved courses. Individual course participants shall be required to submit curriculum only if the course is not on the approved list.

**History:** CR 14−004: cr. Register July 2014 No. 703, eff. 8−1−14; correction in (4) (intro.) made under s. 35.17, Stats., Register July 2014 No. 703.