



Department of
Safety and Professional Services

WISCONSIN BOARD OF NURSING

GUIDELINES FOR NURSING SCHOOL APPROVAL

April 2024

**WISCONSIN BOARD OF NURSING
GUIDELINES FOR NURSING SCHOOL
APPROVAL**

I. Role of the Board of Nursing

The Board of Nursing has the legal authority to establish minimum standards for schools for professional nurses and schools for licensed practical nurses in Wisconsin. (Ch. 441.01, Wis. Stats.) All nursing schools for professional nurses or practical nurses operating in Wisconsin shall be approved by the Board.

(§ 441.12, Wis. Stats.)

II. School Approval Process. Step 1: Authorization to Plan a School

The institution planning to establish a school of nursing for professional or practical nursing shall submit a written proposal including Form #3025. The written proposal shall include five items:

- (1) Name and address of the controlling institution and evidence of the accreditation status of the controlling institution.
- (2) 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.
- (3) Evidence of the availability of sufficient clinical facilities and resources. [Note: No contracts with clinical facilities may be signed until after the institution receives authorization to plan from the board.]
- (4) Plans to recruit and employ a qualified educational administrator and qualified faculty.
- (5) A proposed timeline for planning and implementing the program and intended date of entry for the first class.

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. (§ N 1.03(2), Wis. Admin. Code)

III. School Approval Process. Step 2: Authorization to Admit Students

Once the institution is prepared to seek the authorization to admit the first class of nursing students, the institution shall submit an application with the Board including Form 3027 and the following information: (§ N 1.04, Wis. Admin. Code):

- (1) Verification of employment of an educational administrator meeting the following requirements (Form # 1114):
 - Holds a current, active registered nurse license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin that is not encumbered.
 - Holds a graduate degree with a major in nursing. A doctoral degree is required for a school of nursing offering a graduate degree nursing program.
 - Has knowledge of learning principles for adult education, including nursing curriculum development, administration, and evaluation and either 2 years experience as an instructor in a nursing education program within the last 5 years or 1 year experience as an instructor in a nursing education program within the last 5 years with a graduate degree which included education preparation.
 - Current knowledge of nursing practice.
- (2) Evidence of employment of sufficient number of faculty to teach the courses offered for the first six months. The faculty shall meet the following requirements (Form #1114):
 - Holds a current license active registered nurse license or privilege to practice as a registered nurse in Wisconsin that is not encumbered.
 - Holds a graduate degree with a major in nursing for professional nursing schools.
 - Holds a baccalaureate degree with a major in nursing for practical nursing schools. [Note: Interprofessional faculty teaching interdisciplinary courses not

specific to nursing shall have expertise and a graduate degree appropriate for the content being taught.]

- Apply for faculty exemptions if appropriate (Form # 2662)
- (3) The school of nursing's philosophy and objectives.
- (4) An overview of curriculum including the following:
 - Content
 - Course sequence
 - Course descriptions
 - Course syllabi for the first year and plan for subsequent years.
- (5) Documentation of a school evaluation plan.
- (6) Verification of the establishment of student policies for admission, progression, retention, and graduation.
- (7) Documentation of a plan for student or prospective student access to student policies.
- (8) Verification of the students' ability to acquire clinical skills by providing the following (Form # 1004):
 - 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.
 - Documentation of simulation equipment and experiences.
 - Documentation that clinical experiences are representative of all areas of nursing practice covered by the school of nursing's curriculum.
- (9) An updated timeline for implementing the program and intended date for entry of the first class.

The nursing school should provide proof of the requirements listed above by submitting Form #3027 and the required supplementary material. The Board shall notify the institution of the action taken on the application within 2 months of the receipt of the completed applications.

Until the school of nursing receives approval, the school of nursing shall provide to the Board evidence of employment of sufficient number of faculty (meeting § N 1.08 (3) standards) to teach the courses offered four months from the date the report is due. The faculty reports are due on the first day of March, June, September, and December.

The Board may review the school of nursing to determine whether § N 1.08 standards are being met by requiring a site survey, a self-assessment or a plan for improvement and any progress reports. A withdrawal of the authorization to admit may occur for failure to meet the standards in § N 1.08.

IV. School Approval Process. Step 3: School Approval

A nursing school that has previously received authorization to admit students is eligible for school approval after the graduation of its first class of students but no later than graduation of third class (Note: Class means a graduating class for each 12-month period). The school of nursing shall submit the following:

- (1) A self-evaluation report, Form # 3029, setting forth evidence of compliance with the standards in § N 1.08.
- (2) 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.

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.

The Board shall make a decision on the application within 2 months of the completed site survey or receipt of the completed application, whichever is later. The Board shall approve the school of nursing based on verification that the school of nursing is in compliance with nursing education standards in § N 1.08.

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 3 months or later from the date the school of nursing received conditional approval.

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 denial, specifying the standard upon which the denial is based. The controlling institution shall do the following:

- (1) 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.
- (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 of nursing when the last student has transferred.
- (4) Submit progress reports during the closure process upon request of the Board.

V. Requirements for Continuation of Approval

Schools of nursing shall file with the Board the following:

- (1) Annual self-evaluation reports (Form # 3028) by February 1st.
- (2) All documents submitted to or received from nursing accreditation agencies relating to compliance with accreditation standards.
- (3) Notification of any actions, withdrawal or changed in school nursing accreditation status within 30 days.

Accreditation

Schools of nursing are required to maintain nursing accreditation through a Board recognized accreditation body (including Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE) and Accrediting Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN)). Failure to maintain accreditation shall result in withdrawal of school approval.

Board Determines N 1.08 Standards are Not Being Met

The Board may review the school of nursing to determine whether § N 1.08 standards are being met in the following situations:

- (1) Change in school nursing accreditation status.
- (2) Nursing accreditation reports indicate standards are not being met.
- (3) Complaints regarding the conduct of the school are received and it is necessary to evaluate the complaints.
- (4) Failure to meet annual pass rate standards.
- (5) Violation of any of the rules under Chapter N 1.

The review of the school may include any of the following:

- (1) A site survey.
- (2) A self-assessment.

- (3) A plan for improvement and any progress reports.

After the review, if the Board determines the standards are not being met, the following procedures will be followed:

- (1) The school of nursing shall submit an institutional plan, including timelines, to correct identified deficiencies in the school of nursing.
- (2) The Board shall review the proposed plan and may make modifications to the plan.
- (3) The school of nursing shall make progress reports to the Board as requested.
- (4) The Board may withdraw Board approval if the school of nursing continues to not meet standards.

VI. Annual Pass Rates

Generally, the school of nursing national council licensure examination (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 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.

The annual pass rate of graduates taking the NCLEX or advanced practice certification examinations for all test takers is a minimum of 80%. 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 § N 1.10 (4).

VII. Out-of-State Schools of Nursing

An out-of-state school of nursing operating in Wisconsin shall be approved by the Board if the school of nursing is approved by the board of the state the school is located and the school is accredited by a Board recognized accreditation body (including CCNE and ACEN). The school of nursing maintains approval as long as those requirements are met. In order to be approved, submit Form # 3067OEE and any requested documentation. Faculty and preceptors for clinicals taking place in Wisconsin must have a Wisconsin license or privilege to practice in Wisconsin.

VIII. Additional Information

If you have any additional questions or concerns, please contact the Board of Nursing at DSPSBON@Wisconsin.gov.