

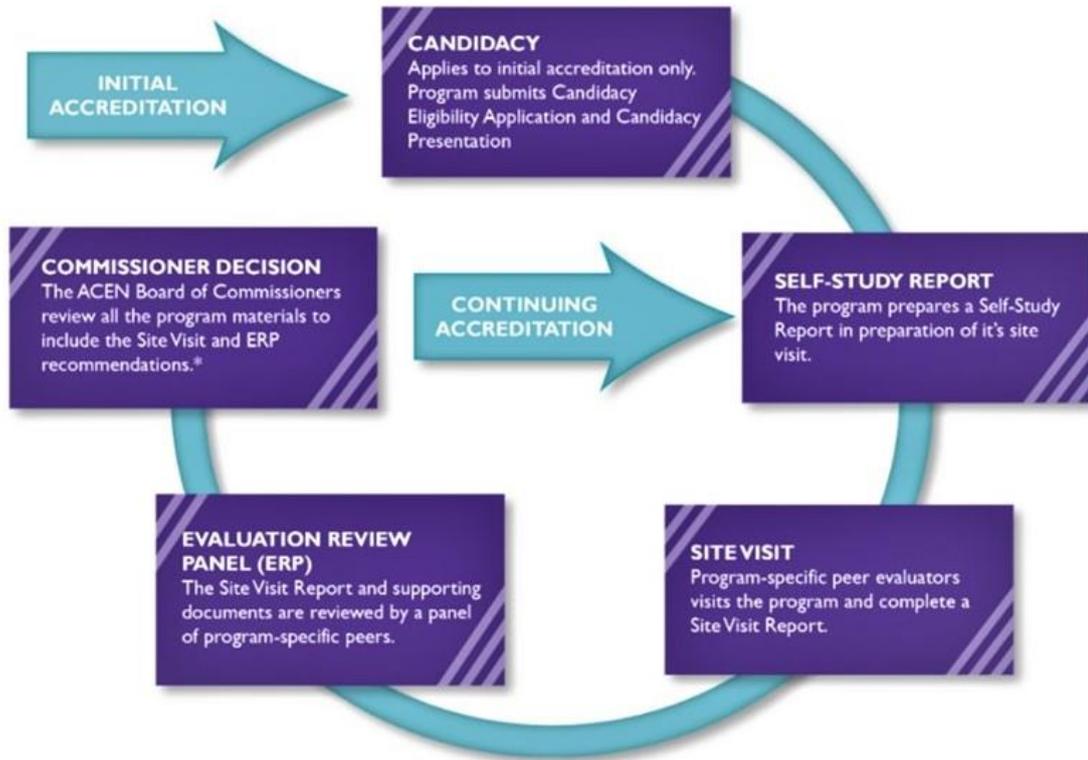
ACEN - A way towards International Accreditation of Nursing Education

The Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN) has been recognized as an accrediting agency by both the United States Department of Education (USDE) since 1952 and the Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) since 2001. It is the CHEA recognition that allows the ACEN to accredit international nursing programs. ACEN is the only accrediting agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education as a specialized accrediting agency for all six types of nursing programs, from practical to doctorate (e.g., clinical doctorate, master's, baccalaureate, associate, diploma and practical degrees).

The ACEN Standards (6) and Criteria are broad enough to enable all programs to demonstrate compliance in a variety of ways. International programs seeking and maintaining ACEN accreditation utilize the same Standards and Criteria; they follow the same peer-review process as the programs in the U.S. and its territories. ACEN recognizes international programs to demonstrate the achievement of Criteria differently based upon rules and regulations of nursing education in that country/region and some of the Criteria may not be applicable.

The ACEN process for the evaluation of nursing education programs is a comprehensive four-step process with the International candidacy eligibility, presentation and onsite consulting visit as the first step. All programs seeking initial accreditation from ACEN must apply for candidacy. Candidacy is granted after a successful professional staff review of a program's potential to meet ACEN accreditation. A program that has achieved candidate status must complete the accreditation process within two years. This is followed by the Program's self-review and Self-study Report as the second step. The third step is the site visit conducted by peer evaluators resulting in the Site Visitors' Report. The final step is a review of the process and the decision on accreditation status by the ACEN Board of Commissioners.

ACEN Accreditation Process



The benefits to international nursing programs to pursue the ACEN accreditation process are:

- Branding for the program internationally
- Helping students meet the U.S. graduate-level nursing program admission requirements
- Facilitating the transfer of credits,
- Provides recognition that the nursing program has been evaluated, and periodically re-evaluated, by a qualified independent group of peers,
- Demonstrates the extent to which the program meets appropriate educational purposes and standards of educational quality specific to nursing education.
- Partnering globally with ACEN as an accredited nursing program for various professional development activities in ensuring quality nursing education is available globally.
- Assists employers seeking graduates who are competent practitioners.

- Alignment of accreditation criteria with program policies/curriculum standards for nursing education.
- Accreditation criteria are aligned with student learning outcomes/program outcomes.
- Heightens faculty members' and administrators' awareness and responsiveness to areas needing improvement.
- Periodical assessment of student outcomes and program outcomes
- Offers professional development opportunity and validation for faculty.

In order for the ACEN to accredit a nursing program, schools must provide information including: Program objectives, Faculty qualifications, Individual course content, Program evaluation plans, Student retention rate, Student completion rate, Licensure pass rate, Catalog of courses available to students, Resources utilized in the program. ACEN mandates each program to have a systematic plan of Evaluation (SPE) to assess the student and program outcomes.
