

EVALUATION TEAM REPORT ON THE ACCREDITATION REVIEW
OF THE BACCALAUREATE DEGREE PROGRAM IN NURSING
AT
TRINITY UNIVERSITY

COMMISSION ON COLLEGIATE NURSING EDUCATION
ON-SITE EVALUATION: April 16-18, 2007
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Introduction

This report presents the findings of the evaluation team from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE), the accrediting body devoted exclusively to the evaluation of baccalaureate and master's degree programs in nursing, regarding the Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) program at Trinity University in Washington, D.C. and its compliance with CCNE's standards for accreditation. This review constitutes the initial evaluation of the nursing program for accreditation by CCNE.

Trinity University (Trinity) is a comprehensive university located on a 26-acre wooded campus in a residential area two and one half miles north of the United States Capitol. Founded in 1897 by the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, Trinity is one of the nation's first Catholic undergraduate colleges for women. Trinity was established to offer equivalent educational opportunities to women of all faiths. Incorporated under the laws of the District of Columbia in 1897, Trinity College was empowered by an act of Congress to confer degrees. In 2004, Trinity became a university. More than 100 years later, Trinity continues the founders' commitment to offer students of all faiths a quality academic program, a value-centered education, and a focus on the intellectual development of individuals. The university is accredited by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools; its education program is accredited by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE).

The university is empowered by charter to offer both undergraduate and graduate degrees. Academic programs are divided into three areas: the College of Arts and Sciences, the School of Professional Studies, and the School of Education. In all three schools, the emphasis is on the preparation of lives for service to the community, to the workplace, and to the larger society as a whole. Trinity educates a student body that is nearly 90 percent African-American, Hispanic, Asian, and international, reflecting the population of the District and the surrounding Washington community. Seventy-five percent of the student body are over age 25; 10 percent are male. Trinity educates more District residents than any other area institution. Trinity's graduates enter a broad range of professions including teaching, public service with the federal and local governments, law and advocacy in public interest organizations, and various social service positions. Trinity's commitment to educating citizens for public leadership is a reflection of its religious heritage and mission, particularly that of social justice.

Fidelity to tradition while embracing transformation in its student body and programs has been Trinity's challenge as well as source of strength. In 2006, the Middle States Accreditation visiting team commended the university's commitment to its mission and the impressive congruence of Trinity University in 2006 with the original vision of its founders in 1897. In fact, rather than an abandonment of mission, Trinity's work and vitality are expressions of renewed relevance and vigor. The team further noted that Trinity has emerged as an increasingly recognized resource for the District and the Washington regional community. This increased recognition served as the platform for the Trinity's decision to initiate the development of the nursing program. Through the work of its president, senior administration gained an appreciation of the critical regional need for development of the nursing workforce. Because of the university's reputation for the successful education of both traditional age as well as adult learners, area healthcare providers were eager to participate in the creation of the nursing education program. The inaugural class of eight students was admitted in Fall 2006. Currently, the nursing program has two full-time doctorally prepared faculty as well as the program director who is also doctorally prepared. The lab coordinator has applied for doctoral study.

The team verified that the program notified major constituents, including Nursing Advisory Council members, chief nursing officers, and community representatives, of the opportunity for third party comments. Public notice was placed in the March 16 issue of The Grapevine. No comments were received.

The team was afforded full cooperation in its efforts to assess the programs and to verify the self-study document. The team would like to take this opportunity to thank program and university representatives for their hospitality and consideration during the on-site evaluation.

Meeting of CCNE Standards

While visiting the campus in Washington, the evaluation team had an opportunity to interview university and department officials, program faculty, students, and community representatives. The team reviewed information in the self-study document and in the resource room as well as other materials provided at its request. The team also accessed Blackboard to observe the delivery of spring semester RN-BSN courses. The following assessments were made regarding compliance with the *Standards for Accreditation of Baccalaureate Nursing Program* by the BSN program at the institution.

STANDARD I. PROGRAM QUALITY: MISSION AND GOVERNANCE

The mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program are congruent with those of the parent institution, reflect professional nursing standards and guidelines, and consider the needs and expectations of the community of interest – all in the pursuit of the continuing advancement and improvement of the program. Policies of the parent institution and nursing program clearly support the program’s mission, goals, and expected outcomes. The faculty and students of the program are involved in the governance of the program and in the ongoing efforts to improve program quality.

This standard is met for the baccalaureate program.

I-A. The mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program are written, congruent with those of the parent institution, and consistent with professional nursing standards and guidelines for the preparation of nursing professionals.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

In interactions with the president, the vice-president for academic affairs, the associate dean of the School for Professional Studies (SPS), the dean of the School of Education, the dean of the College of Arts and Sciences (CAS), faculty, students, and community representatives, all affirmed that the mission, goals, program objectives, and expected outcomes of the nursing

program are congruent with the Trinity mission. The president noted that the nursing program is an exemplar of the university's long standing history of responding to the needs of the surrounding community. In particular, she stated that the nursing program is one of the "major pillars of Trinity University" going forward. The vice-president for academic affairs stated that "employers in the area know Trinity will educate a first-rate RN who will stay in the community. "

Review of minutes of the RN-BSN Curriculum Committee confirmed that the American Association of Colleges of Nursing's (AACN) *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (1998) and the American Nurses Association (ANA) *Standards of Clinical Nursing Practice* (2004) provided guidance for the development of program's purposes and outcomes.

I-B. The mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program are reviewed periodically and revised, as appropriate, to reflect professional standards and guidelines.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Evaluators reviewed Curriculum Committee, Nursing Advisory Council, and SPS Curriculum and Academic Policy (CAP) Committee minutes. As noted in the self-study document, clarification of goals, expected outcomes, and program objectives was completed in December 2006. Review of the systematic evaluation plan indicated that assessment of congruence of mission, goals, and expected outcomes with professional standards will be reviewed and revised every five years. In discussions, the two faculty and the program director further affirmed the continued attention to the incorporation of professional standards, particularly in light of the projected implementation of a generic BSN program.

I-C. The mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program are reviewed periodically and revised, as appropriate, to reflect the needs and expectations of the community of interest.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

The evaluation team confirmed with faculty, community representatives, university administration, and the program director that a thorough needs assessment was conducted to ascertain whether to initiate an undergraduate nursing program. Evaluators reviewed the consultant’s report, which provided an in-depth assessment and also provided ten recommendations for initiation of the program. Review of the Trinity’s strategic plan reflected a desire on the part of the university to initiate an undergraduate nursing program to address the needs of its surrounding community, which is in keeping with its educational mission. In a meeting with representatives of the Nursing Advisory Council, including senior administration of area healthcare facilities, it was clear that there was significant support from the constituents of the external community of interest. One member noted that the nursing program, unlike others in the area, truly did utilize the District as a “learning laboratory,” particularly in relation to access to policymakers and nursing leaders. The commitment of Council members and the president of AORN is a testament to the leadership of the program director and to the desire to enrich students’ learning experiences with the available resources. Council members also noted that they hope to be of assistance in fund development, recruitment, and mentoring of students.

I-D. Roles of the faculty and students in the governance of the program are clearly defined and enable meaningful participation.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Review of RN-BSN Curriculum Committee minutes, minutes of the initial Student Affairs Committee meeting, and the SPS CAP minutes reflected significant participation of nursing program faculty. One faculty member co-chaired the SPS CAP while in her second semester as a faculty member. She was able to bring her years of experience as a nursing faculty member to the table during discussions of the newly evolving nursing program. The program director is currently the SPS representative to the University Curriculum and Policy Committee. The other full-time faculty member is also fully engaged in the governance of the university. In discussions, the president, the vice-president for academic affairs, the associate dean of SPS, and the deans of CAS and Education noted the importance of the nursing faculty’s participation in the overall university governance as well as the governance of SPS.

Student participation on the RN-BSN Curriculum Committee was noted in the Curriculum Committee meeting minutes. One student indicated that she was unable to participate in meetings on Fridays due to other commitments; the meeting day was changed to accommodate the student. The Student Affairs Committee has had one meeting; it appears to be student-led and oriented at this time towards such issues as selection of the nursing pin and the program logo. Students were asked how they receive information and have input into the program. They clearly felt that they have many opportunities to provide feedback from formal course evaluations to E-mails among students, faculty, and the program director. They affirmed that the decision to change to an evening/weekend format was based on student feedback. Students noted that the support and the belief in their value as learners and professionals was a significant reason for their choice of this educational institution.

I-E. Documents and publications are accurate. Any references in promotional materials to the program's offerings, outcomes, accreditation/approval status, academic calendar, admission policies, grading policies, degree completion requirements, tuition, and fees are accurate.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Review of documents, the website, and publications including the admissions packet, advertising materials, faculty and student handbooks, and catalog, were consistent. Minutes of the Curriculum Committee reflected participation of the faculty and program director in the development of admissions and advertising materials. The director of admission for SPS further affirmed that the accuracy of materials is due to the diligent review and sharing of information about this newly developed program by the program director.

I-F. Policies of the parent institution and the nursing program are congruent with and support the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program; these policies are fair, equitable, published, and are reviewed and revised as necessary to reflect ongoing improvement. These policies include, but are not limited to, those relative to student recruitment, admission, and retention.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Evaluators' review of the student handbook and the nursing student guidelines manual confirmed that policies related to admission and progression, degree completion requirements, grading, tuition and fees are clearly presented, consistent, and congruent with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program. Students indicated that any changes in policies or requirements are communicated through Blackboard in a timely manner. Students noted that faculty are readily available by cell phone or E-mail, which also facilitates communication in an effective and efficient manner.

The nursing program director indicated that she reviews all admissions of students who do not meet the stated admission criteria. No accommodations are made for students unless there is a determination made by the program director. This was confirmed by the admissions director and the associate dean of SPS. The program director confirmed that she reviews the advising form including the review of transcripts conducted by the registrar, which is then included in the student file. Students noted that requirements are clearly stated and admission standards are followed.

**STANDARD II. PROGRAM QUALITY: INSTITUTIONAL
COMMITMENT AND RESOURCES**

The parent institution demonstrates ongoing commitment and support. The institution makes available resources to enable the program to achieve its mission, goals, and expected outcomes. The faculty, as a resource of the program, enables the achievement of the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program.

This standard is met for the baccalaureate program.

II-A. The parent institution and program provide and support an environment that encourages faculty teaching, scholarship, service, and practice in keeping with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

The institution supports an environment that encourages faculty teaching, scholarship, service, and practice. The self-study document indicates that Trinity offers several avenues for support of faculty teaching and scholarship. These strategies were confirmed in faculty and staff interviews, fliers, and Curriculum Committee minutes. Examples of such resources are the "Faculty Salon" and the dedication of one day per week devoted to research, scholarship, and consultation. The nursing program consists of two full faculty members hired in August 2006. As do other university faculty, they participated in a formal orientation and mentorship program to facilitate assimilation into the university family as well as an introduction to available pedagogical resources. The nursing program director conducted an individualized learning plan for the orientation of their adjunct faculty member. This individualized orientation included not only attendance at the university orientation program but also sessions that addressed teaching strategies, curriculum development, class presentation, and class development. The adjunct faculty member continues to maintain peer support via E-mails, invitation to faculty enrichment programs, and other similar measures.

The Center for Teaching & Learning was established by the university to assist all faculty in the development of pedagogies as a result of a recommendation by the Middle States accreditation

team. To that end, several program offerings have been sponsored by this center to enhance faculty expertise. Review of materials, including the university budget, and discussion with the program director confirmed that support is provided for faculty attendance at professional conferences.

II-B. Fiscal and physical resources are sufficient to enable the program to fulfill its mission, goals, and expected outcomes. These resources are reviewed, revised, and improved as needed.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Trinity has maintained a financial strategy of fiscal restraint and productive fundraising that has resulted in sufficient financial resources to meet program goals and outcomes. According to the 2006 Middle State Association of Colleges and Universities report, Trinity's faculty salaries compare favorably with both AAUP cohorts II-A and II-B. Significant grants from Kaiser Permanente and the National Institute of Health and Washington Hospital Center have provided funding for program start-up, equipment, and supplies. In interviews, the university president, associate dean of the SPS, the director of the nursing program, and faculty affirmed the process for development of the nursing program budget as written in the self-study document. According to the 2007 Trinity budget versus actual report for SPS, allied health professions division (of which the nursing program is a part), 50 percent of allocated funds remained in the budget at the six month interval. At the eighth month of the academic year, 36 percent of the budget remained.

Evaluators toured the newly renovated area in the main campus building, which houses two state-of-the-art technology-supported classrooms funded by Kaiser grants. Space is also provided for a health assessment lab, which is equipped with exam tables and other resources necessary for the RN-BSN curriculum. The smart classrooms are shared with other disciplines when not in use by nursing faculty. All faculty, including the adjunct faculty member and the program director, have separate offices, which facilitates student counseling and advisement. Faculty reported satisfaction with the current quantity and quality of office and classroom space.

II-C. Academic support services are sufficient to ensure quality and are evaluated on a regular basis to meet program and student needs.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Through interactions with the program director, the director of admissions for SPS, the dean of students, the director of health services, and the assistant director of academic support services, the evaluation team confirmed that academic support services are sufficient to ensure quality and are evaluated on a regular basis. Nursing faculty refer students in need of assistance with writing and reading comprehension or tutoring services to the Office of Academic Support. This center also offers study skills assistance and assessment testing. Students enrolled in this program characterize themselves as employed full-time with families, lacking strong computer skills, and not enrolled in a collegiate course for several years. They reported appreciation for this resource and cited examples of how services have been utilized. The Office of Academic Support reports the outcomes of student support sessions via frequent verbal and written follow-up progress reports to the referring faculty.

The university library coordinator of applied technology provides faculty support by offering instruction in the use Microsoft programs, such as PowerPoint or Word, as well as instruction in the use of support services such as Blackboard and PowerCampus. IQWeb services facilitate student registration. As indicated in the self-study document, the library provides support to students in performing literature reviews and using audio-visual technology to meet course requirements. Faculty conferences with the director of the library occur minimally on a monthly basis regarding book selection and educational materials. Wireless computer access affords student and faculty access to online resources on demand. This service meets the needs of nursing students as adult learners. Students reported a positive response to the convenience of wireless access.

nursing and plans to apply for doctoral studies. This individual teaches the health assessment course and lab which draws upon her skills as an expert clinician. Areas of clinical expertise represented by faculty include community health, gerontology, and case management. The professional experience of one faculty member is in keeping with the university's mission of "education for global leadership" by serving on national task forces in health policy and in local government.

The team confirmed through discussions with faculty, the program director, and the associate dean of SPS that the workload for nursing faculty is consistent with other SPS faculty. Review of the faculty handbook confirmed the clear delineation of faculty roles as defined by faculty rank and university mission. Faculty provide student advisement, participate in university and program committees, and engage in scholarship appropriate to their interests and expertise.

The faculty-student ratio and class size is small; a factor that supports the university's mission in meeting the learning needs of its diverse student population. The current complement of full-time and adjunct faculty are sufficient to accomplish the program goals of the RN-BSN curriculum.

II-F. The faculty roles in teaching, scholarship, service, and practice are identified clearly and are congruent with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

Review of the faculty handbook, faculty vitae, and job descriptions, as well as discussions with nursing faculty confirmed that faculty roles are congruent with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the nursing program. Faculty expertise in areas such as research and evidence-based practice and policy development articulate well with the program goals and expected outcomes. One faculty member has extensive undergraduate teaching experience, which has been critical to the development of the curriculum, while the other faculty member has a background in long term care and is quite knowledgeable about local and national health policy formulation. Both faculty and the program director provide service to the community through their participation on community boards, including the District of Columbia Board of Nursing. Service to the profession was evident through presentations at regional and national conferences and through participation as an appraiser for the Magnet Recognition program and as an evaluator for the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education.

1. Recognize the educational, spiritual, and professional dimensions of health care of individuals, families, groups, and communities;
2. Uphold values of altruism, autonomy, human dignity, integrity, and social justice in personal and professional settings;
3. Practice effectively as a provider, designer, manager, and coordinator of nursing care;
4. Fulfill the role of member of the nursing profession;
5. Be academically prepared for and alert to the advantages of pursuing graduate education; and
6. Be committed to continuing education and life-long learning.

Assessment of achievement of goals and terminal objectives are planned through data collection in the form of aggregate data relating to critical thinking, evidence-based practice, leadership, global health knowledge, graduation rate, job placement rate, and graduate study. In addition, alumni and satisfaction surveys are planned, as evidenced in the resource room. These instruments among others will demonstrate the integration of the concepts of KSVME across the curriculum. Development of the portfolio evaluation reflected the integration of KSVME with terminal objectives and expected outcomes as well as in the leveling of unit and course objectives.

These outcomes are in accordance with the standards and guidelines for professional nursing practice as identified in AACN's *Baccalaureate Essentials* (1998), and ANA's *Clinical Practice Standards* (2004). Appendix F in the self-study document demonstrates the relationship among learning outcomes, professional standards, and the mission, goals, and expected outcomes for the program. Faculty reported that refining the language and assessment instruments is a "work in progress" as did the program director. The program director provided an assessment instrument inclusive of the KSVME indicators outlined in the conceptual framework. The document further clarified how the conceptual framework identifies behaviors across the curriculum as indicators of course and program outcomes.

III-B. The curriculum is developed, implemented, and revised to reflect professional nursing standards and guidelines. These standards and guidelines are clearly evident within the curriculum structure and expected learning outcomes. Course/unit/level outcomes are consistent with the roles for which the program is preparing its graduates.

The baccalaureate curriculum incorporates knowledge and skills identified in *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 1998).

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

The curriculum flows from the mission, goals, and expected outcomes identified in the self-study document. The outcomes and course objectives address the standards of AACN's *Baccalaureate Essentials* (1998) and ANA's *Clinical Practice Standards* (2004). The students are prepared to address diversity, culture, and globalization of tomorrow's health care systems as a result of their academic experience, which is rooted in practice experience with individual clients, families, and communities for health promotion, illness prevention, and health restoration addressing health disparities of vulnerable populations. A wealth of related experiences is identified in conjunction with the course and student learning objectives across the curriculum. For example, in Nursing 320: Policy & Politics in Nursing, the professor presented a discussion on health care issues and delivery methods in African countries. Also, during the site visit, the executive director of AACN presented on the topic of leadership.

The geographical location of the university affords opportunities for experiential learning and expansion of concepts that enhance and motivate learning, further accentuating the commitment to lifelong learning. Classroom observation of student learning suggested an environment of student-centered learning, which promotes critical thinking through ethical, legal, social, economical, and political factors that influence health care locally and globally. This interaction creates a unique awareness for students who, through experiential learning opportunities in the community, were able to verbalize how their theoretical knowledge relates to practical application in the workplace. During a luncheon with the students, several of them presented examples of how they have "evolved" since entering the program. This connection of

theory and practical application allows the adult learner to make sense of his or her experience as he or she matures professionally and personally.

The community of interest also reiterated the change in students enrolled in the Trinity program. During a luncheon, employers of current students described students as “having demonstrated a raised consciousness regarding their contributions to the practice environment, which has motivated and influenced the standard of care provided in their various practice settings.”

III-C. The curriculum is logically structured to meet expected program outcomes.

The baccalaureate curriculum builds upon a foundation of the arts, sciences, and humanities.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

The curriculum is structured to move the students toward achievement of the expected program outcomes building from a liberal arts foundation. Students complete a minimum of 128 semester credit hours with 42 credits of general education and 32 credits in the upper division nursing courses. The nursing faculty works in collaboration with the admissions director for the SPS to advise prospective and current nursing students. Students receive support from the nursing faculty as they develop a plan to meet the liberal arts foundation as well as plan their direction in the nursing core.

There is a philosophy of transformative learning that permeates the curriculum. The focus of the curriculum moves the students from individuals, to families and communities, to a global perspective in a logical and sequential perspective. In addition, the content proceeds from wellness and health promotion strategies to illness and restorative care. One professor reported during an interview that the nursing students help to broaden the thinking process by adding a new dimension to the discussion topics in the general education courses. For example, she cited a discussion that ensued in a philosophy class where ethical considerations were expounded upon. It was clear that the professors embrace the addition of nursing students to the university and to the culture of classroom learning communities.

III-D. Curriculum and teaching-learning practices are evaluated at regularly scheduled intervals to foster ongoing improvement.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

There is a systematic assessment plan presented in the self-study document, which focuses on curriculum evaluation. The plan denotes both formative and summative assessment. The courses that have been taught are evaluated at the end of every semester by the students and faculty. In addition to the program assessment plan, a cycle for university curriculum evaluation is part of the identified process.

In the course evaluations, students have the opportunity to conduct a self-evaluation related to their experience in meeting course objectives, as well as an evaluation of the faculty and the value of the teaching-learning strategies utilized. The data collected provide the faculty with the opportunity to refine their courses before the next offering.

Input from the Nursing Advisory Council is another opportunity for qualitative assessment data. Healthcare providers from the community of interest assist the nursing program with defining needs and descriptive ways to foster program improvement. Instruments that will be used to gather data are being developed and refined accordingly, integrating KSVME concepts across the curriculum. The outcome data will include input from students, graduates, community of interest, preceptors, and clinical agencies. There are currently no assessment data due to the recent inception of this program. There is an assessment plan in place with a consistent feedback loop identified that will inform program decision-making based on identified strengths and weaknesses.

Students reported the faculty consistently have open door policies and are receptive to their input regarding minor changes in the courses. The changes that have been made based on student input that include in a change in class time from days to evenings to accommodate the working adult. Students reported that this open exchange between faculty and students not only enhanced their learning but also improved self-esteem relating to communication and advocacy. The students see this governance as a way to learn to grow and develop as

colleagues. They further described the faculty as “mentors, role models, experts, and leaders who were vested in students’ personal success.”

III-E. The didactic and clinical teaching-learning practices and learning environments support the achievement of student learning outcomes.

Compliance Concerns? Baccalaureate: No

Rationale:

Faculty have identified multiple methods to create a learning environment that addresses the needs of the adult learner while considering uniqueness of learning styles. Some of the methods observed in classroom instruction included lectures, presentations, written assignments, and oral presentations. The faculty described the multiple approaches as “participatory learning and active learning strategies.” The self-study document describes examples of teaching methodologies that are guided by theories specific to adult learning. The teaching-learning practices encourage the student to research, reflect, and critically think at levels that are raised in depth and scope as they progress through the curriculum. There is a focus on creating a learning environment that considers multiculturalism and diversity in thinking and expression.

III-F. The curriculum and teaching-learning practices consider the needs and expectations of the identified community of interest.

Compliance Concerns? Baccalaureate: No

Rationale:

The self-study document outlines the internal communities of interest as the students, faculty, and administration of Trinity. This is the first baccalaureate level program in the health professions for the university, and it has been embraced by the campus community.

The external communities of interest include the regional health care facilities, the D.C. Board of Nursing, and the residents of the Washington metropolitan area. The external communities of interest verbalized their support for the program and further rationalized the need to “expand culturally diverse nursing workforce to serve the population of the Washington, D.C.

metropolitan area. The area in particular that surrounds the university is predominantly composed of an underserved, vulnerable, urban population.

The community of interest is further delineated to representatives of a nursing Advisory Council for the program. The communities of interest expressed the need to maximize the workforce of nurses in the area that will fill the labor need but also support urban development in the region. The Advisory Council is composed of leaders in health care, business, arts, and the surrounding community. They meet twice a year to discuss current issues and trends. Review of the minutes associated with the inaugural meeting in January 2007 demonstrated a commitment to the Trinity nursing program and to the employees through various tuition assistance plans. Existing partnerships between Trinity and Washington Hospital are outlined in the self-study document and were verified by the evaluation team. The partnerships have and continue to develop within the community, many of which have demonstrated their support and vested interest through the addition of resources for the nursing program.

A wide variety of clinical and practicum experiences are noted in review of the course syllabi. The faculty described creative ways in which the current and future courses will provide integration of didactic and clinical experiences. Some examples were clinics, community centers, schools, health clinics, and health centers. There is a selective plan for identification of potential preceptors along with evaluation instruments to assess the experience from the preceptor and student perspective. Contracts for affiliations with agencies and clinical sites are currently in the process of development as the first clinical course will be offered in Fall 2007.

The faculty fosters an environment of participatory learning that encourages critical thinking and serves as motivation for students' personal and professional growth. Students reported that the faculty are highly engaged, and exemplify role models who are committed to the profession as well as students' personal success. This commitment to the students is further expressed through a curriculum that provides flexible entry tracks and places emphasis on participatory learning through active learning strategies. An example of participatory learning is noted in the courses, Policy and Politics and Leadership and Management in Health Care. The context of these courses promotes advocacy in social disparities, while students use reflective learning as a method to gauge professional development. Students have opportunities to meet with community leaders and legislators, further gaining skills of communication and affirming role development as professional leaders.

Students are provided with Academic Support Services such as writing, tutoring, and technical support to accommodate their needs. These services are supported and encouraged by the nursing faculty. Students with learning disabilities are assisted with support services as necessary.

**STANDARD IV. PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS: STUDENT PERFORMANCE AND
FACULTY ACCOMPLISHMENTS**

The program is effective in fulfilling its mission, goals, and expected outcomes. Actual student learning outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program. Alumni satisfaction and the accomplishments of graduates of the program attest to the effectiveness of the program. Actual faculty outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected outcomes of the program. Data on program effectiveness are used to foster ongoing improvement.

This standard is met for the baccalaureate program.

IV-A. Student performance is evaluated by the faculty and reflects achievement of expected outcomes. Evaluation policies and procedures are defined and consistently applied.

Compliance Concerns?

Baccalaureate:

No

Rationale:

This is a newly developed program that is in the process of developing courses, evaluation tools, and policies and procedures. It was clear through discussions with the program director and faculty that program evaluation is a critical element of program development. As the evaluation team reviewed the systematic evaluation plan, there was some lack of clarity regarding the acquisition of KSVME to be measured through job placement rates, employer/alumni satisfaction, and exit interviews. Initially, it was not clear how these methods will address the acquisition of these skills, and how the acquisition of KSVME is related to course/terminal objectives and expected outcomes in the RN-BSN program. The program director provided the evaluation team with a clinical evaluation tool that is in development for the pre-licensure program that defines KSVME in relation to student learning outcomes across the curriculum, leading to the attainment of the stated terminal objectives and expected outcomes. The program director indicated that this document will also be used to demonstrate the relationship of student learning outcomes across the RN-BSN curriculum to terminal objectives and expected outcomes. Review of the syllabus for Nursing 400: Experiential

Rationale:

The nursing program does not have a separate grievance policy. The 2006-2007 academic catalog provides a clearly defined grievance policy for appeals in Chapter IX, which applies to all students in SPS. As noted in the self-study document, this is also available to students online. There have been no formal complaints to date.