

School of Nursing
Troy Campus

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January 6, 2009

MEMORANDUM

To: Dr. Jack Hawkins, Jr., Chancellor

Through: Dr. Ed Roach, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost

Through: Dr. Damon Andrew, Dean *DA*
College of Health and Human Services

From: Dr. Bernita K. Hamilton, Director *BKH*
School of Nursing

RE: NLNAC Evaluators' Final Report for ASN Program Review

Please find attached a copy of the NLNAC evaluators' final report following the site visit for continuing accreditation of the ASN Program in September, 2008. The report is scheduled for further review by the NLNAC Board of Reviewers on January 28, 2009, which is prior to its final review and action by the NLNAC Board of Commissioners.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

cc: Dr. Donna Bedsole, ASN Program Director



SITE VISITORS' REPORT

Troy University
Troy, Alabama

Program Type: Associate
Purpose of Visit: Continuing Accreditation
Date of Visit: September 23-25, 2008

GENERAL INFORMATION

Nursing Education Unit
Troy University
College of Health and Human Services, School of
Nursing
400 Pell Avenue
Troy, AL 36082

Name of Governing Organization
Troy University
Troy, AL

Nurse Administrator
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Chief Executive Officer
Jack Hawkins, Jr., PhD
Chancellor

State Board of Nursing Approval Status
Date of Last Review: January 2008
Action: Full approval

Accreditation Status: Program
Accrediting Body: NLNAC
Date of Last Review: October 2000
Action: Continuing accreditation; next visit Fall
2008.

Accreditation Status: Governing Organization
Accrediting Body: Commission on Colleges of the
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Date of Last Review: 2003
Action: Full approval for 10 years

SITE VISIT INFORMATION

I. INTRODUCTION

Program Evaluator Team:

Chairperson

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NLNAC Criteria Used: 2006

Program Demographics:

Year Nursing Program Established: 1971 (Montgomery Campus)

Faculty:

Number of Faculty teaching full-time in the Associate Degree nursing program: 11
Number of Faculty teaching part-time in the Associate Degree nursing program: 13

Students:

Total Enrollment: Associate Degree: 262*
Full-time: 39
Part-time: 223

* The totals in the SSR included the students who are in "step one" (enrollment in general education support courses only)

Length of Program:

Associate Degree: 5 semesters; 61.6 credits*; recalculated at 1:3 ratio
16.6 credits (37%) general education; 45 (63%)
nursing

LPN Advanced Placement Option: Same

Third Party Comment:

The nursing unit had a reasonable process for soliciting third party comments. The methods used to announce the accreditation visit to the program's communities of interest were: a memorandum forwarded to nursing service administrators of clinical sites with a request to post the NLNAC visit announcement for public viewing within the agency and newspaper *Montgomery Advertiser* classified posting (September 14, 2008) of the visit. The visit was also noted on the SON-ASN website. Third party comments were not received by NLNAC in response to the solicitation. One person, a state member from the Alabama Commission on Higher Education, attended the public meeting.

Persons/Groups Interviewed:

Bernita Hamilton, PhD, MSN, RN, Director of the School of Nursing
Donna Bedsole, EdD, MSN, RN, ASN Program Director
Crystal Bishop, MS; Director of School of Nursing Admissions and Records Office
Sharon Hamm-Wilson, MSN, RN, Lab Coordinator (Nursing Skills Lab and Nursing Computer Lab)
Kent Snowden, MEd, MLS, Director of Rosa Parks Library
Jack Hawkins, Jr., PhD, Troy University Chancellor
Ed Roach, PhD, Executive Vice Chancellor and Provost
James Bookout, MSB, CPA, Senior Vice Chancellor for Finance and Business Affairs
Carol Supri, MS, Associate Vice Chancellor for Financial Aid
Damon Andrew, PhD, Dean of College of Health and Human Services
Ray White, MS, Vice Chancellor of Montgomery Campus

General Education Faculty on Montgomery Campus who teach general education support courses for ASN Program: N= 6

Support Staff on Montgomery Campus: N= 5

Director of Computer Resources Department

Manager of Physical Plant

Director of Gene Elrod Success Center

Director of Financial Aid

ASN Full-Time Nursing Faculty: N=11

Clinical Adjunct Faculty: N= 1

ASN Students: Second Semester: N= 3

Third Semester: N= 8

Fifth semester: N= 2

Nursing Service Administrators/Personnel: N= 4

Classes attended:

NSG 2282: Gerontological Nursing

NSG 1151: Hospital Measurements

NSG 1131: Basic Nursing Practicum

NSG 1141: Basic Nursing Practicum II - Baptist Medical South

NSG 2281: Advanced Nursing Practicum - Baptist Medical South

NSG 2266: Nursing of Children Practicum - Montgomery Catholic Preparatory School – St. Bede Campus

Documents Reviewed:

Catalogs, Handbooks, Manuals

ASN Program Student Orientation Manual and Information Guide (2008)
Troy University Undergraduate Catalog (2007-2008; 2008-2009)
The Troy University Oracle (University Student Handbook)
Troy University Faculty Handbook
SON Associate of Science Information Sheet and Application
Troy University Academic Evaluation
SON Adjunct Faculty Orientation Manual
SON Faculty Institute: Orientation Book for New Faculty (2008-2009)
Odyssey Handbook: A Guide for Academic Advisors – Troy University
Troy University Faculty Handbook (2008)
Troy University Staff Handbook for Classified and Professional Personnel (2006)
Informational brochures for support services
Troy University Institutional Planning and Effectiveness Handbook (2007)
Troy University Fact Book: Office of Institutional Research, Planning, and Effectiveness (2008)

External Constituencies

Southern Association of Colleges/Schools Commission on Colleges (January 6, 2005) –
Approval of consolidation/merger of Troy State Troy with Troy State Dothan and Montgomery
Southern Association of Colleges/Schools Commission on Colleges (June 8, 2004) reaffirmation of
Accreditation to 2013
Alabama Board of Nursing review of compliance with outcome codes (2007; 2008)
Alabama Board of Nursing Annual Reports 1999 - 2006
Alabama Board of Nursing Nurse Practice Act
Alabama Board of Nursing Administrative Code
Letters to NLNAC regarding conversion to Troy University
NCLEX-RN Results 2001-2008
ASB approval letters for ASN program

Nursing/Governing Organization Documents

Troy University College of Health and Human Services:
Position description : Director of the School of Nursing
Job description: ASN Program Director
College of Health and Human Services Organizational Chart
College of Health and Human Services By-laws
SON Organizational Chart
SON By-laws
Troy University Academic Operating Procedures Manual
Troy University SON ASN Program Clinical Certification Card
Troy University Policy and Procedures for Disability Services
ASN Program Budget Summaries 2005-2009
Troy State University Institutional Self-Study Report – SACS (2002)
Troy University Compliance Certification Report – SACS (2008)
ASN Program Budget (2005-2006, 2006-2007, 2007-2008)
ASN Program Faculty Teaching Overloads and Salaries
ASN Faculty's Teaching Assignments and Teaching Loads
Faculty Curriculum Vitae and files
Semester Schedules of Nursing and Non-Nursing Courses

Evaluation Instruments Utilized by School of Nursing

Nursing/Governing Organization Documents (continued)

School of Nursing Clinical Agency Agreements
Vitae of A.S.N. Program Director and SON Director

Nursing Unit Minutes

ASN Program Minutes, 2003-2008
ASN Curriculum Committee Minutes
ASN Learning Resources Committee Minutes
ASN Admissions and Progression Committee Minutes
School of Nursing Faculty Organization Minutes and School of Nursing Committee Minutes,
2003- 2008
ASN Student/Faculty Forum Minutes, 2006-2008

Course Materials

ASN Course Syllabi (which include Clinical Evaluation Tools)
Examples of ASN Coursework (papers, projects, etc.)
Examples of Tests in ASN Courses
ASN Curriculum Mapping Materials

Miscellaneous Documents

Copy of Announcement Posted in Clinical Agencies to announce NLNAC visit
Copy of newspaper notification to announce NLNAC visit
Examples of Scholarly Activities of Faculty
Examples of Community Activities of Students
Troy University Federal Student Aid Default Rates
Brochures Available for Students from: Library, Gene Elrod Success Center, Disability Services,
Financial Aid
Troy University Rosa Parks Library Information
Troy University Crime Report
ASN Recruitment Brochures

II. EVALUATION OF THE STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

Mission and Governance

Standard: There are clear and publicly stated mission and/or philosophy and purposes appropriate to Postsecondary or higher education in nursing.

Criteria:

1. *Mission and/or philosophy of the nursing education unit is congruent with that of the governing organization, or differences are justified by the nursing education unit purposes.*
2. *Faculty, administrators, and students participate in governance as defined by the governing organization and nursing education unit.*
3. *Nursing education unit is administered by a nurse who is academically and experientially qualified, and who has authority and responsibility for development and administration of the program.*
4. *Policies of the nursing education unit are consistent with those of the governing organization, or differences are justified by nursing education purposes.*

Commentary:

Troy University has nine institutional goals (SSR, p. 17) that address areas such as partnerships, effective teaching, diversity, and provision of a variety of programs in traditional, non-traditional and electronic format. A review of documents and interviews with faculty and administration verified that the College of Health and Human Services Mission Statement is congruent with the University Mission Statement and the institutional goals. The School of Nursing philosophy is congruent with both the Troy University mission and the mission of the College. The School serves a diverse student body and offers traditional and electronic formats for course delivery. The philosophy differentiates between the various levels of nursing education and identifies associate degree education as preparation for RN practice in the roles of provider of care, manager of care, and member of the discipline of nursing. ASN graduates are noted to be prepared to practice in primary, secondary, and tertiary care settings “where policies and procedures are specified and guidance is available.” Table 2.1 (SSR, pp. 21-23) demonstrates the congruency and link among the Troy University Mission Statement and Goals, the School of Nursing Philosophy and the ASN Program Objectives.

The Chancellor noted that the nursing program provided the “best example of upward mobility within a total framework ranging from the associate degree to the upcoming DNP program.” Troy is noted as the “major supplier of RNs with a reputation for quality.” He, and the other Vice Chancellors and the Dean who were interviewed, noted a commitment to addressing nursing faculty base salaries to move them more toward the regional average.

The commitment to diversity is evident in the enrollment of 40-41% minority students. Table 3.3 in the SSR notes the demographic profile of the ASN students.

The School of Nursing is within the Troy University College of Health and Human Services. Faculty participation in University and College governance is through election or appointment. Three full-time faculty indicated they participated in University committees (Athletics, Faculty Development, Faculty Review). Table 1.4 in the SSR accurately reflects ASN faculty participation in elected or appointed committees, councils, and task forces. Faculty also serve on School of Nursing Faculty Organization which meets bi-annually. Joint committees, with representatives from various programs/tracks, are in place. These include: Admissions and Progressions, Curriculum and Educational Mobility, Learning Resources, Evaluation, Faculty and Student Affairs, Policy and Risk Management. Evidence of "Ad Hoc" Committee participation is also evident in Table 1.5 in the SSR.

School of Nursing faculty by-laws note a requirement to meet "at least twice a year and other times as necessary." Committees are noted to be: Admission and Progression Committee, Curriculum and Educational Mobility Committee, Learning Resource Committee, Evaluation Committee, Faculty and Student Affairs Committee, Integrity and Recruitment Committee, Policy and Risk Management Committee, and "Ad Hoc" Committees as indicated. Annual reports are submitted at the end of the academic year.

An ASN Faculty/Student Forum meets once per semester with student representatives elected from each class. Students also confirmed that the presidents of the various classes attend specific faculty members. The class presidents obtain student input and also disseminate information and outcomes of requests to students via BlackBoard, e-mail, and class announcements. Students were able to provide examples of revisions/developments linked to their feedback.

Dr. Bernita Hamilton serves as the Director of the School of Nursing and maintains full responsibility and authority over all nursing programs/tracks. The School includes the associate of science program, a BSN program, an RN-BSN/MSN track, a MSN program with a Family Nurse Practitioner (FNP) track that includes a post-Master's certificate option. A DNP program, the first doctoral program at Troy University, will begin in Fall 2009. Dr. Hamilton, a tenured Professor, holds a PhD, MSN, and BSN in Nursing; review of vitae reflects extensive experience in nursing education. Dr. Hamilton's position is 12-months and she has two full-time program directors (MSN and ASN) and coordinators for the baccalaureate program tracks for additional support. This is an administrative position with no teaching requirements.

Dr. Donna Bedsole serves as the ASN Program Director. This is a 12-month administrative position with authority and responsibility for the ASN program. She holds an EdD in Higher Education Administration, an MSN and a BSN; she is a tenured professor with extensive experience in nursing education. This position has no teaching responsibilities. Dr. Bedsole's academic credentials meet the Alabama Board of Nursing requirement that nursing program administrators must hold "an earned graduate degree in nursing." This is an administrative position with no teaching requirements.

Policies for the nursing unit are consistent with those of the University with the usual discipline specific additions: licensure, CPR certification, physical examination requirements, immunizations/titers and liability insurance. Table 1.6 in the SSR correctly identifies the location of University faculty policies.

Summary:

Compliance

The Program is in compliance with the Standard.

Faculty

Standard: There are qualified and credentialed faculty, appropriate to accomplish the nursing education unit purposes and strengthen its educational effectiveness.

Criteria:

5. *Faculty members (full- and part-time) are academically and experientially qualified, and maintain expertise in their areas of responsibility.**
6. *Number and utilization of full- and part-time faculty meet the needs of the nursing education unit to fulfill its purposes.*
7. *Faculty performance is periodically evaluated to assure ongoing development and competence.*
8. *The collective talents of the faculty reflect scholarship through teaching, application, and the integration and discovery of knowledge as defined by the institution and the nursing education unit.*

Faculty Academic Credentials – Highest Degree Only*										
Number of Faculty	Doctoral Degree		Master’s Degree		Baccalaureate Degree		Associate Degree		Other	
	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing	Nursing	Non-nursing
Full-Time		1	10							
Part-Time			2		11					
Other Skills Lab Coordinator			1							

*excludes director (A.S.N.) and the faculty member who is FT with the MSN program and teaches a one hour elective nursing course in the associate degree program

Advanced Practice Certifications: 2 Family Nurse Practitioners

Faculty Enrollment in Formal Study					
Current Academic Credential	Doctoral	Nursing Master’s	Non-Nursing Master’s	Nursing Baccalaureate	Other
MSN (FT)	2				
BSN (PT)		2			

Commentary:

All full-time faculty hold a MSN appropriate to their areas of teaching. The Alabama Board of Nursing requires that nurse faculty have an “earned graduate degree in nursing or related health field.” This guidelines applies to full-time faculty. Clinical adjuncts are, per ABN guidelines, classified as “clinical supervisors.” One full-time faculty has an EdD, one faculty has applied to a doctoral program, and two faculty are actively enrolled in a doctoral program.

At the time of the visit there was 1 vacant full-time faculty position. The SSR notes two faculty vacancies however; one was filled for the 2008-2009 academic year. This position was filled with an individual who will complete her EdD in December 2008. The directors noted that the program has received applications for the remaining position; interviews for two qualified applicants have been scheduled. Upon hire the position will be filled immediately.

The program has a full-time nursing skills laboratory coordinator who holds a MSN; this person provides skills laboratory support for all nursing program types but states that the majority of her time is with the associate degree students. There is one full-time nutrition instructor who is not a nurse; this person's academic credentials meet ASB guidelines as noted above. This faculty member has a MA in College Teaching of Nutrition and is enrolled in a doctoral program in clinical nutrition; she is also a registered dietician. This faculty member only teaches nutrition content. The nutrition courses are identified with a nursing prefix and, per the director, have been structured as such since the 1970s. Site visitors reviewed course syllabi for the required nutrition course and confirmed that this is a nutrition course with no nursing content.

The clinical adjuncts are primary individuals who have taught for the program for several years. Clinical adjuncts are evaluated per semester by students using the same evaluation tool used for full-time faculty clinical evaluation. Student feedback is forwarded to the program director for dissemination to the clinical adjuncts. Faculty report there is no formal mechanism for evaluation of clinical adjuncts outside of the student evaluations; this was confirmed with review of faculty files. The program director indicated that clinical adjuncts do not receive future contracts if results of student evaluations and informal feedback from faculty are not favorable. Student evaluation is limited in the area of evaluation of ongoing development and competence of clinical adjuncts.

The ABN requires that clinical supervisors (adjuncts) are .."registered nurse(s) who (are) knowledgeable of educational strategies, subject matter, and is experienced in the clinical technologies essential to the safe practice of nursing". There is no indication of degree requirements in the code. The School of Nursing has an Adjunct Faculty Orientation Manual in print form that includes such information as: organizing framework, accreditation, ABN requirements for education, faculty role, orientation checklist, faculty evaluations, annual requirements, student issues, physical/learning disabilities, academic integrity, and clinical instruction and teaching in the clinical setting. The section on clinical teaching includes teaching-learning principles, teaching strategies, role modeling, and evaluation of student clinical performance.

A review of faculty vitae indicate ongoing participation in continuing education and other activities linked to maintenance of expertise. Table 2.3 in the SSR indicates, per full-time faculty the activities and continuing education completed over the past few years. All full-time faculty are also expected to have proficiency in Blackboard and the required training is provided. The School of Nursing provides seminars/workshops to enable faculty to meet the 24 hour continuing education requirement set forth by the ABN.

Due to the two previously unfilled full-time positions the ASN faculty accepted compensated overload and additional adjuncts were hired to maintain the 1:8 clinical ratio required by the ASBN.

The teaching load expectation for Troy is "12 semester hours per semester (fall and spring) for 10 month contracts;" maximum overloads are set at 6 semester hours per semester. Any overload above 6 semester hours must be approved by the provost. Nursing faculty are on 10 month contracts. Nursing faculty receive some credit for contact hours but not full credit; the calculation formula is noted on p. 87 in the SSR. Data from Fall 2008 indicate that 10 faculty are teaching overload as follows: 2, 6, 4, 1, 4.6, 8, 5.2, 3.1, 1.5, 1.5. Approval by the provost has been obtained for the one faculty who is teaching above the 6 semester hour overload maximum.

Compensation for summer teaching is in addition to the 10-month contract. There are no clinical courses taught in the summer; potential summer courses are Pharmacology, Hospital Measurements, and Health Assessment. The director confirmed that the courses are offered only with faculty availability and student interest.

Faculty evaluation is in accord with University guidelines and includes a Professional Development Plan, Year-End Self Evaluation, and student evaluations. Faculty are evaluated in the areas of teaching, service, scholarly and creative works. A Troy University Supervisor's Review of Faculty Performance is also completed by the Program Director. Full-time faculty are either tenured (N= 7) or tenure-track (N=4). Appointment or promotion to Assistant, Associate, and full Professor ranks at Troy University requires the "possession of an appropriate earned doctorate or an appropriate professional degree from a regionally accredited institution, or accomplishments that are considered equivalent" (Faculty Handbook, Troy University, pp.32-33). The director noted that historically a promotion to Associate rank has required completion of a doctorate - this is to encourage faculty to pursue advanced education.

Troy University defines scholarship as "active involvement in the intellectual and scholarly developments for promotion of effective teaching, maintenance of professional competence in nursing, and advancement of nursing." Clinical practice is included in the definition of scholarship.

Students who were interviewed identify faculty as a strength of the program.

Summary:

Compliance

The Program is in compliance with the Standard with the following areas needing development:

- Continue to recruit clinical adjunct faculty who are credentialed with a minimum of a Master's degree with a major in nursing.
- Encourage MSN completion for BSN prepared clinical adjuncts.
- Complete hiring process for the remaining vacant full-time position to ensure sufficient faculty numbers.
- Refine the process of clinical faculty performance evaluation to assure ongoing development and competence.

Students

Standard: The teaching and learning environment is conducive to student academic achievement.

Criteria:

9. *Student policies of the nursing education unit are congruent with those of the governing organization, publicly accessible, non-discriminatory, and consistently applied; differences are justified by the nursing education unit purposes.*
10. *Students have access to support services administered by qualified individuals that include, but are not limited to: health, counseling, academic advisement, career placement, and financial aid.*
11. *Policies concerned with educational and financial records are established and followed*

Commentary:

Student policies are published in hard copy (Troy Undergraduate Catalog and the Oracle) and online at the Troy University website. Students are provided with a hard copy of the Catalog upon request. Online access includes information on how to access policies/procedures. Where policies are not congruent with Troy University justification for variation is provided (see Table 1.7 in SSR). Students are required to provide a completed Troy University School of Nursing ASN Program Clinical Certification Card to verify clinical requirements such as: liability insurance, physical examination, PPD, BCLS, personal health insurance, drug screen, MMR, varicella to meet the requirements of the clinical agencies.

Changes in student policies are disseminated via print, postings, announcements, online, email or course shells. This was confirmed during student interviews. Students demonstrated knowledge of policies and procedures.

The ASN faculty establish the admissions and progression policies; there was evidence of revisions reported to be linked to retention (SSR, p. 100). These included: conversion to a two-step admission process which enables the program to accept students while enrolled in general education course. If students do not maintain the required GPA, they are not allowed into Step 2 which includes the actual nursing courses/clinical and the increased GPA required for the program. These admission standards went into effect this fall.

Student support services include: Student Health Service Center (Troy campus), Student Development/Counseling Department (Troy campus), the Gene Elrod Success Center, Office of Career Services, Disability Services Program, academic advising, career placement, Financial Aid (Troy and Montgomery campuses). Table 3.2 in the SSR presents the academic qualifications of the administrators of the support services.

The Troy University Student Health Services are provided on a fee basis with RNs on duty with referral options to a nurse practitioner or to the University physician. These services are provided at the main campus, located approximately one hour from the Montgomery campus. Montgomery students are provided with local contacts for immunizations, physicals and mandatory drug screening. The Office of Financial Aid (Troy campus) assists students at all Troy University sites. Onsite at Montgomery campus are a full-time Financial Aid Assistant Director and two full-time counselors. Students report that they can receive, at student rates, health care from Auburn University at Montgomery. They provided examples and stated that they found out about this option by “word of mouth.” They were also aware of the availability of health services at Troy.

Troy University has an established "Student Records Policy" that outlines location of records, access, content in records, record destruction, etc. Students have two files - one linked to academic advising and the other linked to clinical requirements. Financial records are also maintained in accord with established policies.

There is no distance education in the ASN program

Summary:

The Program is in compliance with the Standard.

Curriculum and Instruction

Standard: The curriculum is designed to accomplish its educational and related purposes.

Criteria:

12. *Curriculum developed by nursing faculty flows from the nursing education unit philosophy/mission through an organizing framework into a logical progression of course outcomes and learning activities to achieve desired program objectives/outcomes.*
13. *Program design provides opportunity for students to achieve program objectives and acquire knowledge, skills, values, and competencies necessary for nursing practice.*
14. *Practice learning environments are selected and monitored by faculty and provide opportunities for a variety of learning options appropriate for contemporary nursing*

Commentary:

Table 1.2 (SSR, p. 21) provides a comparison of “Governing Organization’s Mission Statement and Goals to School of Nursing Philosophy and ASN Program Objectives.” The Troy University ASN, BSN and MSN Programs share a common philosophy which differentiates their goals and role outcomes as identified in the School of Nursing Philosophy (SSR, p. 19).

The SSR includes a grid noting the eight core competencies of ADN nursing from the NLN with a reported link to program objectives. Visitors reviewed a document linking the core competencies with both program and course objectives, however, faculty had difficulty articulating the link with the NLN competencies. The philosophy notes the roles of the associate degree nurse but these are not clearly evident, other than management, in either the program or course objectives/content. Faculty stated that all of concepts consistently noted in the objectives (e.g.: communication, nursing process, management, legal-ethical, skills) are included under each of the three roles of the associate degree nurse.

The philosophy is structured around the following: humanity, environment, health, nursing practice and learning. There is evidence that the curriculum flows from the philosophy; for example, the SSR (p. 121) states that “during semester II, in which the first nursing courses are taught, the concept of human-environment interaction throughout the lifespan is introduced ... development of basic understanding of humanity and the environment ...” which are correlated to the following concepts identified in course syllabi: “adaptive strategies, growth and development, altered health states, nursing process, management skills, collaborative strategies, and legal/ethical components.”

Following a review of syllabi, discussions with faculty, and discussions with students it was evident that there is a lack of consistent use of the same terminology. The curriculum overall appears cohesive – but there is variation in the view of curriculum concept language.

Learning progresses from the simple to complex. Selected examples of course objectives and learning activities in the ASN curriculum that are used to obtain the desired knowledge and skill sets in the current practice of nursing, community concepts, health care delivery, critical thinking, communications, therapeutic interventions, and current trends in health care are identified in Table 4.7 in the SSR. The courses in the first semester provide content and learning experiences that enable students to acquire a basic understanding of humanity and the environment. Semesters II through V build upon previously

learned knowledge and progress from human-environment interaction throughout the lifespan, health promotion and maintenance and restorative care, and finally to the role of the nurse in assisting individuals and families who are experiencing complex, multi-system stressors. As each semester builds upon the previous semesters' content, the previous semester course work is a pre-requisite to the next course sequence (e.g.: Semester II courses are pre-requisite to Semester III, and so on). The nursing courses are logically sequenced and explained in the Catalog.

Since the clinical ratio for the Troy ASN program is 1:2, Tables 4.8 and 4.9 (p. 167 and 158 of the SSR respectively) were created to show the conversion from the 1:2 ratio to the 1:3 ratio to demonstrate that the total program credit load conforms to Criterion 13.

The associate degree program offers both a traditional track and an advanced placement track for LPNs. Tables 4.3 and 4.4 (SSR) identify the program of study for the ASN Generic Track and LPN Advanced Placement Track respectively. In order to be admitted into the advanced placement track, the student "must pass (with a score of 70) the National League for Nursing Acceleration Challenge Exam I Foundations of Nursing and have a valid Alabama LPN license" as stated in the SSR (p. 127).

The site visitors verified through interviews with both nursing and general education faculty that collaboration exists between the two groups, mostly in an informal manner. There are no conflicts pertaining to scheduling of classes since the majority of the students in the biology classes are nursing students.

Class observations:

NSG 2282, Gerontological Nursing (Bartlett Hall, Room 329)

Approximately 60 students were in attendance. The teaching methods used included open-ended questions and the use of the Socratic questioning in leading the class discussion. Students spontaneously responded to the open-ended questions; the faculty member clearly had a good rapport with the class. The discussion focused on nursing communication and interventions associated with caring for individuals diagnosed with dementia.

NSG 1151, Hospital Measurements (School of Nursing, Room 105)

Approximately 50 students were in attendance. The instructor utilized PowerPoint slides as an outline for the lecture presentation. The lecture began with "general hints" and concepts were concluded with "safety points". The instructor used open-ended questions to stimulate student participation. Students readily responded to the open-ended questions. The classroom milieu relayed a supportive and respectful learning environment.

Course syllabi for all nursing courses were reviewed onsite. Syllabi included: topical outlines, course requirements, critical requirements, co-requisite requirements, required/recommended textbooks, course policies, course objectives, care plan and written work examples, clinical evaluation tools, etc. In addition to the course syllabi each course had a BlackBoard shell that expands course references and facilitates faculty-student communication.

Faculty consistently review content maps, NCLEX blueprints, and program outcomes to assess the curriculum for rigor, currency, and cohesiveness. Periodic curriculum work sessions are integrated into the academic year as identified in faculty meeting minutes.

Clinical resources support sufficient numbers and varieties of ASN level experiences; a listing of all clinical facilities is cited in Table 4.10 (SSR, p. 161). Clinicals are provided in a variety of settings

including, but not limited to: senior citizen centers, elementary schools, crisis residential facilities, and acute care hospitals.

Site visitors visited both an acute care clinical setting (Baptist) and a community based clinical setting (St. Bede's). The community based setting included Troy nursing students who were enrolled in the pediatric course. Students were actively involved with health screening (vision, hearing, scoliosis) of various ages of elementary school children enrolled in a local Catholic school. The students were supervised by a full-time faculty member. The local Catholic schools do not have school nurses and the link to the pediatric clinical environment with Troy assists these schools with general screening and identification of student needs. Students rotate through several areas in pediatrics in order to provide holistic view of the child. Clinical opportunities include three weeks in an acute pediatric setting and experiences with health screening, care of developmentally delayed/handicapped children in residential settings as well as children enrolled in the Head Start program.

The acute care clinical observation included students in Semester III, NSG 1141: Basic Nursing Practicum II and Semester V, NSG 2281: Advanced nursing practicum. Four NSG 1141 students were interviewed by the site evaluator. Students reported that they receive their assignment the evening prior to clinical so that they can prepare for the clinical rotation. All students verbalized satisfaction with their clinical faculty and the staff at the facility. The students reported that they are well informed about their clinical progress and appreciated the timely feedback provided by their instructor.

Technology used is appropriate to meet student learning needs, course objectives/outcomes and course requirements. As stated in the SSR (p. 139), ASN students have access to 15 new computers with internet access in the School of Nursing Computer Lab located on first floor of the School of Nursing and an additional 36 computers at the Troy University Rosa Parks Library located just one block from the School of Nursing. PDA's were introduced in Fall 2007.

Medical Terminology (NSG 1105) and Introduction to Technology in Nursing Education (NSG 1160) are two elective courses that are taught online. In addition, ASN students may take Nutrition (NSG 2204) online as a substitute for the traditional in-class Nutrition (NSG 2213) course

There is no distance education in the ASN program for the required nursing courses.

Summary:

The Program is in compliance with the Standard with the following areas needing development:

- Refine the congruence among the philosophy and program objectives through the consistent use of concept terminology.
- Refine program and course objectives to more clearly reflect the faculty selected NLN ADN core competencies and ADN roles.

Resources

Standard: Resources are sufficient to accomplish the nursing education unit purposes

Criteria:

15. *Fiscal resources are sufficient to support the nursing education unit purposes and commensurate with the resources of the governing organization.*
16. *Program support services are sufficient for the operation of the nursing education unit.*
17. *Learning resources are comprehensive, current, developed with nursing faculty input, and accessible to faculty and students.*
18. *Physical facilities are appropriate to support the purposes of the nursing education unit.*

Commentary:

A review of documents and interviews with the nurse administrator, the faculty, and University administrators verified the director's input into budget. The SSR provides a three-year comparison (Table 5.1) nursing budget allocation and College allocations. The associate of science program accounts for approximately 1/3 of the allocated School of Nursing budget. There have been slight increases in base budget since 2005 which were verified onsite via a review of the approved ASN Program budgets.

There are some funds available to support faculty travel linked to development. A review of budget summaries reflected a range of \$1,200 to \$5,000 of total annual expenses in this area, however, faculty were unable to identify allocation of these funds with the exception of cost coverage for the NCSBN online test construction program (one faculty). The program director indicated that Troy University has a base of approximately \$80,000 annually that can be used for faculty development with priority funding, at \$750 per request, for presentations at regional/national conferences. Faculty must submit for consideration of these funds and it was verified that several have been awarded this funding.

Table 5.3 provides salary comparison data; Table 5.4 provides nursing salary comparisons with AACN regional averages; Troy salary mean is noted in the SSR to be 8.6% below the mean AACN regional salary. As noted earlier, Troy administrators consistently indicated a plan to address an increase in faculty salaries. This was noted by the Chancellor as a "priority."

The University has an "Annual Planning and Effectiveness Model" used for structuring the budget process. The ASN Program director has input into budget requests; the University provided additional adjunct salary funds to enable adequate clinical coverage for the unfilled full-time positions.

Faculty are allowed eight hours per week in outside professional employment to enable maintenance of clinical practice skills/knowledge. Faculty receive pay from the sites of this employment; scheduling does not interfere with the responsibilities/assignments linked to Troy employment. Free tuition for one 3-credit hour course, taken at Troy, is available to full-time faculty; both undergraduate and graduate hours are included.

The School has three full-time secretaries with one position serving primarily as a receptionist. The remaining two positions provide secretarial support for all of the nursing program options available on the Montgomery campus.

The ASN Program relocated to a renovated building in downtown Montgomery in 2000. The two-story building has two classrooms (seating for 100 and for 60). The Bartlett building, one block away from the school of nursing building, houses a number of classrooms; however, the school of nursing only utilizes two classrooms which seat 68-80 students. The Vice Chancellor stated that there are many classrooms on campus that are vacant during the day. Each of the classrooms is equipped with computer and internet access. The school of nursing building also houses the nursing skills laboratory. The laboratory is divided into two areas by a free-standing wall. One area is used primarily for undergraduate students for skills demonstration, practice and validation. The other area is set-up for physical assessment and contains four hospital beds.

The ASN program uses both of the above noted classrooms but also uses other classrooms located on campus. The students have access to a computer laboratory directly adjacent to the skills lab which houses 15 computers, a scanner and a printer. The school of nursing also includes conference space, lounge areas and administrative areas. All full-time faculty have private offices.

The director confirmed that each program receives 50% of the clinical lab fees for use in program support; this provides for approximately \$20,000 additional dollars for the associate degree program for purchase of student learning resources. The SSR outlines examples of recent purchases and site visitors reviewed inventory summaries of learning resources. The computer lab was updated in 2007 with fifteen new computers and there is evidence of ongoing purchase of learning resources based on faculty input.

The main library is located on in Lurleen B. Wallace Hall on the Troy Campus. This library has a collection of 400,000 bound volumes, 50,000 media items; 2,304 current periodical subscriptions; and more than one million items in microform. In addition there is access to more than 100,000 electronic databases that provide more than 20,000 full text periodicals and 50,000 books.

Troy University Rosa Parks Library, located on the Montgomery Campus, provides online access (WEBCAT) to more than 10,000 full text journals, online databases and over 40,000 full text books. Access is available 24 hours a day, 7 days per week. Via new Library students can access electronic versions of printed books in a wide range of categories. There are a total of 51 computer terminals housed on the first and second floors of the library. Twenty-five of the 51 computers are housed on the first floor and are available to the student population in the afternoons; this computer lab is utilized for the TROY 1100 new student library orientation. Sixteen of the remaining 26 computers are equipped for secure computer based testing and are available to library patrons throughout the day. In addition to computer access, students have access to three small study rooms, which can be reserved, that are equipped with a VCR, monitor and small 4-6 person conference table. There is additional open space with smaller 2-person tables that can be utilized for reading and studying; finally, there is a smaller seating area with TV.

Faculty have placed current textbooks on reserve for student use. Older editions of course textbooks can be found in the stacks. The budget has decreased from \$102,000 (2006-2007) to \$76,000 (2008-2009). The decrease is due to the elimination of multiple forms of access. For example, microfiche has been under utilized and therefore may have been eliminated for some of the periodicals. However, the ASN program has been budgeted to receive \$6,000 of the \$14,000 allocated to the School of Nursing.

Information on library resources and interlibrary loan is included in the ASN Orientation Manual and Information Guide 2008 (pp. 36-48). Troy University is a has a cooperative, sharing agreement with

several libraries and most books and photocopies of periodical articles may be borrowed at little or no cost to the student. Troy is also a member of the Montgomery Higher education Consortium (MHEC). In addition to Troy, the consortium includes: Alabama State University, Auburn University at Montgomery, Alabama Public Library Service, Faulkner University, and Huntingdon College. Students may obtain a consortium sticker at the Rosa Parks Library. This is placed on the student ID and the student is allowed to access to, and check out of, materials from any MHEC member library.

Troy University is a member of the Southeastern Library Network (SOLINET) and the Online Computer Library Center (OCLC) which provides additional interlibrary loans as well as group purchasing of supplies and electronic data basis.

Library support services are available online and include a Live Chat service, "Ask a Librarian" service, electronic reserves and a link to initiate interlibrary loan requests.

Summary:

Compliance

The Program is in compliance with the Standard.

Integrity

Standard: Integrity is evident in the practices and relationships of the nursing education unit.

Criteria:

19. *Information about the program, intended to inform the general public, prospective students, current students, employers and other interested parties, is current, accurate, clear, and consistent.*
20. *Complaints about the program are addressed and records are maintained and available for review.*
21. *Compliance with Higher Education Reauthorization Act Title IV eligibility and certification requirements is maintained.*

Commentary:

The Troy University Undergraduate Catalog 2007-2008; 2008-2009 does not include information on the LPN advanced placement track other than “present evidence of current Alabama licensed PN licensure if the student is entering the LPN-ASN advanced placement track, as well as documentation showing one year of LPN work experience during the past three years unless graduation occurred within the last calendar year and be able to achieve certain core performance standards required by the duties of the nursing profession.” The website and the print version of the application packet for this track contain all current and accurate information including the curriculum plan, testing requirements, credit allocation.

Although not noted in the Catalog or the Student Handbook, it was clarified that nursing students, once accepted into the nursing program, are exempt from the prerequisite Biology and Chemistry courses noted in the course descriptions for Anatomy and Physiology and Microbiology. This was approved by the Troy University Undergraduate Academic Council. Dr. Bedsole, the ASN Program Director, stated that this exemption was included in the orientation for newly admitted students who are taking general education courses.

There are some typographic errors in the SSR (p. 125) linked to course numbers but the published course numbers are correct and consistent in print and online.

The SSR (pp. 193-194) summarizes student complaints. The grievance procedure for the nursing department is noted in the Troy University School of Nursing ASN Program Student Orientation Manual and Information Guide 2008 (pp. 17-18). It outlines the program guidelines for proposals and grievances related to policies, procedures, and/or curriculum. “If the student and the ASN Program Director do not reach a mutually satisfying resolution...the student may pursue the concern/grievance through further administrative channels”. The Troy Undergraduate Catalog (p. 17) outlines the University grievance timeframe and procedure.

The institution has a written comprehensive program to promote student loan repayment that addresses: student loan information, counseling, monitoring, and cooperation with lenders. Default rates are reported at 4.3% (2003), 5% (2004) and 5% (2005), and 5.3% (2006). Based on the review of these documents, the team concludes that the nursing unit is/is not in compliance with the Higher Education Authorization Act. It should be noted that the number of borrowers entering repayment in 2004 was 3,614 (default rate of 5.0%) the number entering repayment in 2006 was 8,090 (default rate of 5.3%).

Summary:

Compliance

The Program is in compliance with the Standard with the following areas needing development:

- Review and revise the Catalog to include LPN admission requirements (e.g.: test score) and curriculum plan in the Catalog.
- Review and revise program materials (paper and electronic) to include the exemption from pre-requisite Biology and Chemistry courses.

Educational Effectiveness

Standard: There is an identified plan for systematic evaluation including assessment of student academic achievement.

Criteria:

22. *There is a written plan for systematic program evaluation that is used for continuous program improvement.*
23. *Student academic achievement by program type is evaluated by: graduation rates, licensure/certification pass rates, job placement rates, and program satisfaction.*

Commentary:

The program has a comprehensive systematic plan for program evaluation that includes all NLNAC Standards and Criteria. Expected levels of achievement were noted. The timeframes for items are general (e.g. annually) rather than specific resulting in some difficulty tracking discussions on data and program decisions linked to data. The document includes some response to data in the areas of development, maintenance, and revision.

The expected level of achievement for graduation was 50% of students will complete the ASN program within four years for the date of enrollment in the first clinical nursing course. This benchmark is reported to have not been met since Spring 2001. Due to the Datatel system method of reporting data visitors could not confirm accuracy of reported retention data although it is clear that the benchmark has not been met. Faculty noted the following to assist with student retention: change in admission policies and procedures, availability of Honor Society peer tutors, strong faculty advising, reading and math tutoring, test review, and individual assistance with test taking skills.

The SSR noted that due to a statewide higher education desegregation case linked to elimination of racial discrimination in Alabama's public universities, the nursing faculty were advised by legal counsel not to change admission criteria until a settlement in this case was reached. The case settled in December 2006 and new admission criteria (e.g.: increase in GPA, selective admission) are approved and noted in the 2007-2008 Catalog.

The expected level of achievement for the LPN to RN advanced placement cohorts have exceeded or met the benchmark since Spring 2001. It should be noted that this is a small cohort with entry of approximately 10 students per admission cycle.

The expected level of achievement for NCLEX-RN is set at 80% for first the time writers; this is based on the Alabama Board of Nursing requirement of first write pass rates of "no less than 80%." This benchmark has been met or exceeded since Spring 2003. Program data over multiple years indicates that the majority of students who do not pass first write NCLEX-RN are successful with re-testing.

The expected level of achievement for job placement is 85% of graduates will be employed in nursing one year after graduation. Data are obtained via the Troy University School of Nursing Graduate Evaluations. The benchmark has been met or exceeded since Spring 2003. The same tool is used to gather information on graduate program satisfaction. The expected level of achievement of 80% of graduates will rate the program satisfaction overall and per item as "agree." The SSR identifies a 100% satisfaction from 2001-2006.

The program uses a variety of data collection tools linked to the required program outcomes. Visitors reviewed some of the summaries of these onsite. Return rates for both graduate and employer surveys are low. There were not trended data analysis summaries although there were annual summaries of such items as NCLEX-RN results, student progression, and concept mapping.

Area		2008	2007	2006	2005
	NA*				
Graduation Rates					
Traditional program		31% fall 30% spring	18% Fall 27% Spring	46% Fall 30% Spring	48% Fall 50% Spring
LPN advanced placement		80% fall 50% spring	57% Fall 87% Spring	75% Fall 66% Spring	60% Fall 83% Spring
NCLEX Pass Rates			86.5%	91.7%	91.1%
Certification Pass Rates	NA				
Job Placement Rates			100%	100%	100%
Program Satisfaction				100%	100%

* not applicable

Summary:

Compliance

The Program is in compliance with the Standard with the following area needing development:

- Refinement of the link of program decision making to trended, analyzed, and aggregated data.

III. RECOMMENDATION FOR ACCREDITATION STATUS:

Recommendation:

Continuing Accreditation:

Continuing Accreditation as the program is in compliance with all accreditation standards. Next visit in eight (8) years.