

Quality Assurance Review and Accreditation: Excerpted Report 2023-24 Faculty of Nursing

Bachelor of Science in Nursing Programs

Programs	Bachelor of Science in Nursing - Collaborative & Collaborative Honors (University of Alberta, Red Deer Polytechnic, Northwestern Polytechnic, Keyano College) Bachelor of Science in Nursing - After Degree & After Degree Honors Bachelor of Science in Nursing - Bilingual Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Honours), Two-year and Four-year programs
Site Visit Review Dates	Week of February 12, 2024

Final Outcomes

Accreditation Status	Accredited
Effective Date	July 5, 2024
Accreditation Term	Seven year term with recommendations and interim reports

About Canadian Association of Schools of Nursing (CASN)

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University of Alberta Accreditation/QA Crosswalk Process

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The Faculty of Nursing program completed all crosswalk documents demonstrating alignment between accreditation and institutional QA requirements.

Program Strengths

The University of Alberta undergraduate nursing programs are well-established within the Faculty of Nursing that is ranked #1 in Canada and #5 in the world (QS World Rankings; also #1 in Canada Maclean's rankings). We enjoy long-standing and successful collaborative relationships, since the 1990s, with our BScN Collaborative Program partners across central and northern Alberta (Red Deer Polytechnic, Northwestern Polytechnic and Keyano College).

The following strengths of the undergraduate programs stand out:

- The Faculty of Nursing has a large research capacity with its faculty who have well funded research programs.
- The Faculty of Nursing has a committed group of tenure track faculty and teaching professors who care deeply about undergraduate education and nursing.
- The Faculty of Nursing has excellent physical teaching and administrative space including a state of the art simulation centre.
- Being a research intensive faculty with all levels of nursing education (baccalaureate, master and PhD) is advantageous for undergraduate students who can find role models for nursing practice, research and Education.
- The Faculty of Nursing has excellent relationships with clinical agencies and is considered a leader in practice education.
- The ability to engage with other faculties across the College of Health Sciences is helping to encourage more relationships to develop around interprofessional courses and projects. The potential for nursing students to gain research experiences is expanding with studentships, honors program involvement in research teams, the Undergraduate Research Initiative and other research assistant jobs over the summer.

- New contract language has allowed clinical faculty to be hired on longer term contracts, supporting more stability for the clinical teaching faculty.

In addition, reviewers identified the following:

- The University of Alberta Faculty of Nursing is nationally and internationally acknowledged for the strength of their faculty and the quality of their graduates.
- Inclusion of the Faculty of Nursing in the relatively newly created College of Health Sciences provides opportunities for collaboration in teaching, research, and provision of services.
- The Tenure Track faculty have highly regarded research programs and have national and international networks.
- Tenure Track and Teaching Professors, staff, and students share relational values.
- Members of the community expressed respect and admiration for all members, and indicated their commitment to the team and the values and mission of the Faculty of Nursing.
- Students reported high regard for their professors, clinical teachers, and staff.

Faculty of Nursing Response

Response to recommended actions to be addressed

Program Structure	
Recommendation	Response
Resources and Environment, Key Element 13: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the practice placement sites facilitate intersectoral collaboration.	Using CASN definitions, intersectoral collaboration refers to actions undertaken with social groups outside the health sector, on health or health equity outcomes or on the determinants of health or health equity. To this end we plan to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Map current intersectoral collaborations in our programs, including theory and clinical placements. • Consult with clinical course leads and interested parties to support the expansion of rural placements with Indigenous collaboration. • Intersectoral collaboration elements are already reflected in clinical assessment tools. We will map them and cross-reference to CASN standards. • We will create an updated list of intersectoral collaborators/ interested parties. • We will be intentional in planning formal engagement of intersectoral collaborators for input and to identify additional placement/ education opportunities.
Teaching and Learning Environment	
Recommendation	Response

Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Key Element 6:

The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the faculty members teaching in the baccalaureate nursing education programs integrate the program philosophy.

We will ensure that Fundamentals of Care (FoC) concepts and Concept-Based Learning (CBL) are updated and clearly integrated in our theory, lab, clinical course components, including pertinent assignments.

Work in progress includes:

- We have begun revising Clinical Assessment Tools (CATs) to integrate more FoC concepts. The Clinical Assessment Tool (CAT) at the Faculty of Nursing has been updated to reflect the 2022 CASN National Nursing Education Framework for students.
- We have added clarity to indicators for cultural safety, anti-racist and anti-discriminatory nursing practice including Indigenous perspectives on health as this aligns with our curricular framework for relational nursing practice.
- We have included new indicators on digital health technologies to address the shifting landscape of informatics along with an indicator on planetary health that is scaffolded at the junior level with personal awareness/practice with planetary health that moves to a senior level with understanding of how planetary health is impacted by technology, staffing, and the broader policies of a health agency.
- We have strengthened our focus on the FoC in clinical courses where direct patient care is delivered to ensure clarity and alignment with our curricular framework.
- We have added clarity to concepts in each clinical course, specifically identifying how each clinical course concept applies to broader concepts in the health sciences, social sciences, and humanities with the expectation that students pull forward previously covered concepts to build their knowledge and critical thinking.
- We have added additional required FoC readings to nursing courses.
- FoC researchers were guest speakers in our Faculty (June 2024), and they have advised on aspects of FoC integration in all aspects of our programs.

	<p>We will do the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve the alignment of FoC between course objectives and assignments. The Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) will review/ revise course objectives/ assignments • We will succinctly summarize how CBL is integrated into course design, teaching, and student evaluation.
Faculty Profile	
Recommendation	Response
<p>Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Key Element 2: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating, through the use of the template, that the faculty teaching in the baccalaureate nursing education programs possess the academic qualifications and professional experience for the areas in which they teach.</p> <p>Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Key Element 3: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating, through the use of the template, that the contractual educators teaching in the baccalaureate nursing education programs possess the academic, professional, and experiential qualifications for the areas in which they instruct.</p>	<p>The faculty and contractual instructors teaching in the FoN Undergraduate possess the required academic qualifications and professional experience for the areas in which they teach. We will continue to consider prior work experience and professional credentials for any hiring and teaching assignment decisions. To improve our reporting of this information we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete and submit the appropriate CASN template with the requested information about Faculty academic credentials and work experience for submission in our December 15, 2024 interim CASN report.
<p>Teaching, Learning, and Scholarship, Key Element 15:</p> <p>The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the faculty advances nursing knowledge through the scholarship of discovery, teaching, integration, and/or application.</p>	<p>We are creating a detailed report (2017-2024) including scholarly activities of FoN Teaching Professors, sessional Lecturers, and Graduate Teaching Assistants involved in theory teaching. The report will include peer-reviewed scholarly outputs (i.e., scholarly papers, books, book chapters, presentations, conferences, workshops, etc.) and research/scholarly funding and other scholarly activities (research implementation,</p>

	<p>evaluation etc.), according to the CASN domains of scholarship (discovery, teaching, application, integration).</p> <p>To further improve our faculty's contributions to advancing nursing knowledge, we will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop mechanisms to better highlight and measure Teaching Professor (career ATS appointments) scholarly contribution in the areas of teaching, integration, and service (by July 2025) • Invite Teaching Professors' to engage in the scholarship of discovery, as a minor function in their role, through collaborative partnerships with University researchers (by July 2025) • Initiate a survey exploring research collaboration opportunities between Teaching Professors and Tenure Track Faculty (Fall 2024). • In collaboration with our collaborative sites, re-initiate a peer-reviewed Scholarly Conference (April 2025) (dropped during COVID), to increase opportunities for Teaching Professors to disseminate their work. • Initiate monthly scholarship rounds to increase opportunities for teams and investigators to share their work and seek peer feedback (Winter 2025).
Program Environment	
Recommendation	Response
<p>Leadership, Governance and Administration, Key Element 15: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the collaborative partnerships are based on a written agreement that specifies the delivery model, the responsibilities of all parties, a shared decision-making process, and lines of communication.</p>	<p>The delivery model, the responsibilities of all parties, the specifics of the shared decision-making process, and lines of communication are included in the memoranda of deliverables with each collaborative sites [Keyano College (KC), Red Deer Polytechnic (RDP), Northwestern Polytechnic (NWP)] and in the Administrative agreement between the University of Alberta and the collaborative sites.</p> <p>We will review the content of these documents to identify <u>where</u> these items are included. Moreover, we will identify potential gaps and outline our plans to address them.</p>

<p>Leadership, Governance and Administration, Key Element 1: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the faculty engages in systematic strategic planning for the unit and its education programs.</p>	<p>The Faculty will engage in developing a new strategic plan, under new Leadership (New Dean & Vice-Dean started on July 1, 2024). The new strategic plan will consider the FoN's strengths and areas of growth to meet its strategic goals in the fields of education, leadership, organizational climate, employee and student development and wellbeing, research and EDII.</p>
<p>Leadership, Governance and Administration, Key Element 2: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the strategic plan reflects societal, cultural, academic, and practice trends and facilitates the achievement of optimum student outcomes.</p>	<p>Strategic planning activities are underway (Fall 2024 - Winter/Spring 2025). FoN leadership will ensure that the strategic plan includes an environmental scan to reflect societal, cultural, academic, and practice trends, and will facilitate the achievement of optimum student outcomes. To this end, the faculty will consider the results of a recent student experience survey, a faculty experience survey, and will engage of students', academic and non-academic staff in the strategic planning process</p>
<p>Leadership, Governance and Administration, Key Element 3: The CAB requires an interim report demonstrating that the leadership of the educational unit makes decisions through shared governance and consultation with students.</p>	<p>To strengthen shared governance in decision-making, the Faculty of Nursing (FoN) plans a number of actions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Highlight current shared governance structures. ● Review/Revision of Terms of Reference and membership of current Faculty of Nursing committees: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Plans to increase consultation with students, through more frequent meetings and increased representation in committees. Allow flexibility for students to be able to participate in FoN committees, by considering alternate members and virtual/ hybrid meeting options. ● Meet with the Nursing Undergraduate Association to discuss ways to increase involvement of student representation on FoN committees. ● Ensure increased student involvement in Faculty Selection Committees. ● Map current involvement of students in committees ● Increase consultation with Indigenous Knowledge Keepers- Onboarding of a new Knowledge Keeper is underway.

Master of Nursing - Nurse Practitioner & Post-MN Nurse Practitioner

Programs	University of Alberta, Faculty of Nursing, Educational Unit University of Alberta, MN - Advanced Clinical-NP, Education Program University of Alberta, Post-MN NP, Education Program
Site Visit Review Dates	Week of February 12, 2024

Final Outcomes

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Program Strengths

On the Infrastructure side: The U of A FoN's MN-NP and Post-MN NP programs are strongly established and serve as an example to other Nurse Practitioner (NP) programs across Canada. Some of the strengths of the program include:

1. Solid leadership - The Faculty of Nursing (FoN) Graduate Office is a well-established team that has clear processes in place to address day-to-day functions of the NP program. The Masters Graduate Program Administrator has been with the program for many years and is an effective support for the academic faculty. Additionally, the recently semi-retired Associate Dean of Graduate Studies remains active in a part-time role, providing historical context to the NP leadership team as they contemplate significant program changes.
2. The NP Program Coordinator has strong leadership capacity with excellent connections provincially and nationally. This supports coherent national curriculum development strategies, and strong intra and interprofessional partnerships with local clinical organizations. These partnerships facilitate healthy practicum relationships.
3. The FoN has a robust group of appointed Clinical Associates as adjunct faculty who provide student clinical experiences, contribute to seminars and lectures, and provide expertise that informs curriculum planning. This group is a key liaison to our clinical partners, and offers a pragmatic voice coming from clinical practice back into academia.
4. The MN-NP and Post-MN NP programs have excellent reputations, situated in the FoN at UofA, ranked #1 in Canada and #5 in the world ([QS World University Rankings, 2023](#)).
5. The Nursing Simulation Centre provides NP students with access to learning experiences that may be difficult to obtain in the clinical setting. Using advanced technology, learning is facilitated through virtual simulation; standardized patients; low, medium and high-fidelity simulators; and anatomical training models.

With regards to program content and structure: The U of A's FoN's strong and competitive MN-NP and Post-MN NP programs align well with the current market requirements and are fiscally sustainable. The programs provide the flexibility required within an ever-changing administrative, political and regulatory landscape. Some key strengths of the program include:

1. The Faculty of Nursing has developed a strong and integrated philosophy, vision and mission, which is committed to clinical learning at a graduate level and to sustaining NP education as part of the graduate program.
2. The MN curriculum framework (2021) is based on the premise that research/inquiry and learning are mutually synergistic. The program intends to provide an experiential basis for exploring, questioning, and critiquing knowledge needed for professional nursing work. Foundation and clinical courses explicitly build a pathway for advanced inquiry and research that supports advanced nursing leaders to

use research evidence, generate innovative solutions for health issues, and build knowledge that advances nursing practice and health systems.

3. Blended/hybrid delivery modalities allow for non-urban students in outlying areas to live and train in their home jurisdiction. This increases program access for students residing outside Edmonton. It also contributes to rural and remote healthcare system stability and potential job security/ satisfaction for non-urban NP graduates who continue part-time employment during their studies.
4. Blended/hybrid delivery modalities have significantly increased enrolment in the advanced clinical NP stream over the past 5 years. This has supported the viability and sustainability of the NP program and increased the number of graduates each year. Greater student cohort size supports the hiring needs of clinical partners and government healthcare workforce planning.
5. The modular structure for the NP clinical management courses supports future program updating to align with single entry to licensure mandates. In addition, since Alberta's healthcare marketplace incorporates the NP role in multiple practice settings, students have opportunities to experience diverse clinical settings within their clinical placement hours. The MN-NP program provides a strong foundation in graduate nursing philosophy, ethics, and research, which prepares not only clinicians but academics and leaders. This type of program prepares NPs for a wider diversity of role within health care

Faculty of Nursing Response

Response to recommended actions to be addressed

Teaching and Learning Environment	
Recommendation	Response
<p>Leadership, Governance and Administration, Key Element 14: The NP-CAB requested a report on clinical placement evaluation from the FoN's agency partners, including evidence that reciprocity has been established and supported.</p> <p>Resources & Environment, Key Element 11: The NP-CAB requested a report demonstrating how practice placement sites provide learning opportunities that effectively foster the outcomes of the nurse practitioner (NP) program.</p>	<p>Clinical placement evaluation currently includes student feedback on their learning experience and preceptor feedback on their teaching experience. Additional data is obtained through joint quarterly meetings of the Provincial NP Services team (Alberta Health Services) and Professional Practice Lead (Covenant Health). Health authorities hosting our NP students in other provinces/territories are invited to provide feedback cycles directly to the NP Clinical Placement Lead or the Director of NP programs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In order to increase the reciprocity of information sharing, aggregate reports of preceptor feedback will be created and disseminated to Alberta clinical partner agencies twice annually. Similar reports will be provided, as appropriate, to the placement coordinators in jurisdictions outside of Alberta. <p>Active engagement during placement planning allows clinical sites to self-select whether or not they will participate in providing placements for the MN and</p>

	<p>Post-MN NP programs. Currently, the Clinical Placement Lead and Director of NP Programs speak with new placement sites to onboard, describe the level of students in each phase of the program, and identify appropriate learning activities or patient experiences that support course and program objectives. The Clinical Placement Lead position is currently vacant.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring is underway for a new NP Clinical Placement Lead. The person hired into this role will be given a comprehensive orientation to ensure that effective relationships are established and maintained with practitioners and leaders in partner organizations, the Director of NP Programs, and the Graduate Office. This revised role will be instrumental in fostering effective preceptor-instructor-student-faculty relationships. A comprehensive orientation plan has been developed for the successful applicant to ensure close connections between the new NP Clinical Placement Lead, the Director of NP programs, clinical partners, and the Graduate Office.
Student Experience	
Recommendation	Response
<p>Resources & Environment, Key Element 8: NP-CAB requires a report demonstrating that equity, inclusion and respect for diversity are reflected in the stated values, policies, and relationships within the FoN NP program.</p> <p>Program Outcomes, Key Element 9: NP-CAB requested a report describing the employment rates of NP graduates, across both MN and Post-MN NP programs, and how this shows the program's effectiveness in meeting societal needs for NPs.</p>	<p>To address societal needs, the NP placement team has worked with NPs in Indigenous communities, connecting students to clinical learning opportunities which enrich the students' experience of culturally appropriate care and also help meet needs within Indigenous communities. We have been successful in connecting students to clinical learning opportunities in Enoch and occasionally Maskwacis. Whenever possible, our team has had students in these settings. Other communities have presented to our students about post-graduation work opportunities, which students appreciate.</p> <p>Indigenous Services Canada (ISC) connections have been received and multiple overtures were made to meet with them for new degree planning and optimization of clinical placement partnerships in Indigenous communities. We continue to pursue more</p>



active partnerships with ISC to enhance student learning.

Optimally, recruitment of Indigenous students from these outlying communities should increase. This will allow students to participate in learning virtually from their communities, engage in clinical placements within those communities, and continue to live and serve their communities after graduation and licensure.

Future planning to further improve include:

- Part of the new NP degree design process is working with Indigenous groups to formalize Indigenous recruitment and admissions processes, focusing on representation and equity for individuals with diverse backgrounds (Indigenous, people of color, and others from equity-seeking and underrepresented groups).
- New students are now mandated to complete the Indigenous Canada MOOC before beginning their program, to ensure all students enter graduate programs with a baseline understanding of the history of Indigenous peoples in Canada.
- Admissions processes are updated annually and are being reviewed in fall 2024 to further support applicants from diverse backgrounds for admissions and success.

Graduating NP students are asked to complete a program exit survey in June of their graduating year. The survey has asked questions about student career plans, and has included categories of work from which students can select (e.g. working in an RN role, working in an NP role) but has not included specific questions regarding the graduates' employment status - until this year's survey was distributed. It has become increasingly important to identify the employment result for graduates across the jurisdictions served by the program, so that reports on effectiveness can be generated for interested parties in government and university leadership.

- The 2024 MN NP and Post-MN NP Exit Surveys have been updated to ask specific questions regarding employment status, role of

	employment, and location. This data will aid in reporting program effectiveness to critical financial, governmental and clinical partners.
Faculty and Supervision	
Recommendation	Response
Quality Improvement, Key Element 5: NP-CAB requires a report showing how evaluation data are used to make program improvements.	<p>Students provide feedback regarding their placement to their instructor via Student Perspectives on Teaching (SPOT) surveys. This information is analyzed by faculty members, who also bring forward highlights for the NP teaching team to address at the annual teaching retreat.</p> <p>Preceptor feedback is received via a Google form that goes out 3 times yearly to the preceptors who have served in the term. The responses (usually about 30-40% response rate) are collated by the Director of NP programs in the form of an annual report and brought forward to the NP Subcommittee of the Graduate Education Committee, and also to Faculty of Nursing Graduate Education Committee. This report is used to inform priorities for the upcoming program year.</p> <p>Meetings between the Clinical Placement team (usually the NP Placement Lead), the Director of NP programs, the Provincial Nurse Practitioner Services office (Alberta Health Services), and the NP Professional Practice Lead (Covenant Health) occur at least twice each term. The meeting not only addresses clinical placement needs but also preferentially focuses on any issues that the health authorities are experiencing. Inevitably, those issues have aspects that affect the FoN, and the meeting supports creative solution-finding for those issues. We plan to further develop these planning partnerships.</p> <p>Faculty members provide feedback annually to the Director of NP programs, directly addressed at the faculty annual retreat and curriculum planning sessions within the NP teaching team.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collectively, the feedback from these mechanisms drive course-specific and program-wide iterative improvements. Wide-ranging changes are being made at the degree-design level for an upcoming novel NP degree proposal.

Resources	
Recommendation	Response
<p>Resources and Environment, Key Element 2: NP-CAB requested a report identifying how a strategic student enrollment plan aligns with faculty resources and guides student admissions to the NP program.</p> <p>Program Framework & Curriculum, Key Element 5: NP-CAB requires a report demonstrating that the current NP curriculum addresses jurisdictional entry-to-practice competencies and standards of practice for NPs.</p>	<p>The FoN is currently engaged in creative enrollment planning, as we move forward with designing a new NP degree. Enrollment must be sufficient to meet the financial needs of the NP degree program, while allowing for incremental hiring into faculty and staff positions. This hiring process will depend on both the financial projections for the new degree and availability of PhD-prepared NPs to take the lead on program delivery. The recent retirement of one of the NP professors is putting strain on permanent faculty, but contractual faculty have been hired and are being supported towards long-term teaching professor contributions. Recruitment for tenure-track NP faculty is underway.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current enrollment is optimized and is built on historical strategies to enhance the feasibility of the program. However, resources were not previously addressed when the enrollment in the current program was optimized. Design of a new degree will address enrollment challenges. <p>The FoN currently offers an NP program that meets three specialty streams of education for clinician preparation. These three streams are recognized across most jurisdictions in Canada, allowing graduates to launch into careers as Family/All Ages, Adult/Older Adult or Neonatal Nurse Practitioners. The FoN team is aware that some provinces focus more on a primary care role for NPs; the current curriculum adequately prepares graduates for primary care practice. The Adult/Older Adult stream prepares acute care and ambulatory clinic NPs, a role which is beginning to take hold in some other provinces.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans for a new NP degree will address generalist entry-to-practice competencies which are standard across Canada, allowing for even greater portability of the credential for graduate NPs.