



POSITION STATEMENT

SUPPORT OF BSN DEGREE PROGRAMS AT FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

Final Draft 4/20/12

Position:

The California Association of Colleges of Nursing (CACN) supports the 2011 Institute of Medicine *Future of Nursing* recommendation that nurses must achieve higher levels of education and training in response to increasing demands of health care and that policies and practices should be in place to provide opportunities for seamless transition into higher degree programs. As the voice of baccalaureate and higher nursing education in California, CACN members maintain that BSN preparation is best accomplished at four-year institutions with national accreditation of their nursing programs.

Rationale:

Four-year institutions of higher learning in California have a documented history of ability to prepare graduates at the baccalaureate level. They have an infrastructure in place to support bachelor and graduate programming. In this time of increasingly scarce resources, the cost of new program development and refitting an organizational structure is cost prohibitive. The shortage of well-prepared faculty with experience in baccalaureate nursing education continues to grow. At the four-year institutions, curricular plans, support courses, library and student services are fully developed and able to advance student progress. In addition, graduating from a nationally accredited program is essential in order to assure that the curriculum meets rigorous standards and that the degree meets the requirements for progression to graduate education and commissioning for military service.

CACN believes that universities should partner closely with community colleges to offer integrated, seamless transitions from associate degree programs to bachelor's and master's programs and that the barriers that impede educational advancement in nursing should be removed. To achieve such seamless integration, a broad new system, composed of direct transfer, linkage, and partnership programs, is needed. Alternative pathways for RN education must be developed to create opportunities for learners who might not otherwise be able to pursue additional nursing education (Huston, 2012- In press). In addition, funding must continue to be increased for colleges and universities sponsoring baccalaureate and graduate nursing education programs.

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