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NLNAC receives a number of questions by phone and email. The questions presented here are typical of those received.

Question *In Standard 2, how is “non-nurse” faculty defined? Should our Self-Study Report include narratives and credentials for all general education faculty in the university who teach related courses?*

Answer Many nursing education units/programs include non-nurse faculty to teach aspects of the program of study. Common examples are PhD-prepared faculty who teach aspects of pathophysiology or pharmacology. This Criterion does *not* include general education faculty within other departments or divisions of the governing organization. It includes only those faculty teaching in nursing courses who are not nurses.

Question *I am a nurse administrator of a fairly large nursing program and would like to encourage my faculty to be more involved in the accreditation process. What suggestions do you have for us?*

Answer NLNAC supports and encourages faculty to be actively engaged in accreditation activities, particularly through ongoing assessment and evaluation of the various aspects of the nursing program. Whether you have a designated evaluation committee or meet as a faculty of the whole, it is essential that the data obtained through the identified assessment methodologies be reviewed and utilized in the decision-making process. This is a role for all faculty members.

You may want to identify one or more faculty members to nominate as program evaluators. At present, NLNAC is accepting new candidates to serve in this important role. The program benefits from this participation as evaluators bring new ideas back to their own programs and also develop a more thorough understanding of the accreditation process to share with colleagues. Nurse administrators often comment that having a member of their faculty serve as a program evaluator ensures that the entire faculty is current in their understanding of not only the process, but also of strategies that other programs use to overcome common challenges within nursing programs of all types.

A third way for faculty to be more involved is through regular visits to the NLNAC website to provide input and feedback on NLNAC policies and practices. As an example, we are currently seeking comments related to two new policies that were revised in accordance with newly implemented US Department of Education Regulations (effective July 1, 2010). Of course, we

also encourage all faculty members to periodically attend a Self-Study Forum. At the request of nursing programs, we have added special sessions to the Forum related to particular Standards; we also added a session at one of the Spring Forums for new nurse administrators and faculty. Great ideas like the special sessions come to us through our own evaluation process and also through the frequent emails and questions we receive. So, absolutely, get your faculty involved with NLNAC — it is great for their own professional development, and your program will benefit!

Question *I am a faculty member in a nursing program that has experienced tremendous growth over the past three years. As a result, we have doubled the number of part-time faculty for laboratory and clinical experiences. As we begin our Self-Study process, the coordinator states that we may not be in compliance with the Criterion related to orientation and mentoring of faculty. What exactly are NLNAC’s requirements and how do we meet them?*

Answer Your situation is fairly common, as programs have stepped up their admission processes to meet the demands for additional nurses from the communities they serve. Unfortunately, the resources needed to meet the needs of additional students are not always provided. First, in accordance with Policy #14, NLNAC requires that substantial increases in enrollment be reported in advance of a substantive change. We must review your plan and monitor the changes as they are implemented to ensure that you have adequate resources (e.g., human, learning, support, technology) to meet the needs of students and faculty. Often, in addition to the written report that the program submits, a focused visit is required.

In terms of the part-time faculty, it is essential that you offer orientation, mentoring, and evaluation of performance for all faculty. The type of orientation and mentoring program that you offer is up to you; however, it should be thorough and ongoing. In the recent nursing literature, there have been multiple pieces about mentoring that would be helpful if you do not currently have a mentoring program in place for new faculty. In addition, part-time faculty should be included in faculty meetings and other program activities.

Please remember that NLNAC professional staff are here to serve you. Occasionally, a situation such as the one you are describing requires dialogue with us, so that we might assist you in resolving the concerns you have identified.