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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 discussing compliance with Standard 2, several faculty members in our baccalaureate program have raised the question of the type of evaluation that should occur with our part-time clinical faculty. At present, the only evaluations conducted are those done by the students in the assigned clinical groups. Is this sufficient?

ANSWER Criterion 2.8 states that systematic assessment of full- and part-time faculty performance demonstrates competencies consistent with program goals. Programs approach the assessment in various ways. Some have structured plans that meet the requirements of their governing organization for all faculty and staff as prescribed by contract or formal agreements; other programs develop evaluations that specifically reflect the clinical aspects of the performance. With a focus on improvement in the instruction of students, the evaluation process should encompass the aspects of the role and the expectations of the program. However, the intent is for the evaluation system to be inclusive of both students and the nurse administrator or designee. Frequently, programs assign full-time faculty to serve as mentors for part-time faculty in the same nursing course or clinical setting. This type of assignment ensures that part-time faculty have a resource for questions and/or guidance if student issues arise, as well as a designee to systematically evaluate the part-time faculty member's effectiveness in the assigned setting. The full-time faculty member, course coordinator, or clinical coordinator may be designated as the staff member responsible for the performance evaluation of part-time faculty. The expectation is that faculty files will contain documentation of the evaluation process, and that part-time faculty will be able to speak to the process and expectations associated with their role in the supervision of student clinical experiences.

QUESTION In preparing for an upcoming accreditation site visit, I was assigned as the faculty member responsible for reviewing the print and audiovisual collection in our College Learning Center. Unfortunately, I marked multiple books, DVDs, and videotapes for removal only to discover that the

administrator for this area had replaced the materials on the shelves. Our funds for materials are limited, and the program was informed that the college is no longer removing outdated items. What do you suggest?

ANSWER While there is no specified time period for the determination of outdated materials, it is typical practice to remove most health-related materials from the general collection within five or so years. The exception to this practice would be for historically significant editions of materials for courses in nursing theory or history. As you know, materials that offer pharmacology-related references can become outdated quickly as can other nursing materials specific to patient care and safety. Most programs rely heavily on online databases as learning resources for students in all program types as funds to purchase print materials have become more and more limited. As students now commonly have access from any computer, including at home, it is common for the online collection to be a focus for learning resources and less so print materials. I would encourage you to meet with the administrator of this area and discuss the dangers in keeping outdated materials for both the students and the college community, which may include the community-at-large if yours is a public-accessible facility. Also, please do not forget to review the learning resources in your skills lab, computer lab, and other resource areas to ensure that all materials available to students are up to date and appropriate to prepare students for their roles in the health care setting.

QUESTION I called the NLNAC office to order accreditation manuals for several new faculty members, and I was told that the manuals are no longer in print and to download the most current manual from the website. Can we continue to use the manuals we have?

ANSWER The NLNAC maintains a current NLNAC Accreditation Manual that is available at all times on the NLNAC website. Any paper copies of the manual are now out of date and should not be used. Instead, the online version of the manual (www.nlnac.org/manuals/Manual2008.htm) should be used for current information about accreditation policies and practices, as policies have changed since the last paper manual was printed several years ago. If you have not reviewed the current manual, it would be helpful to do so. 