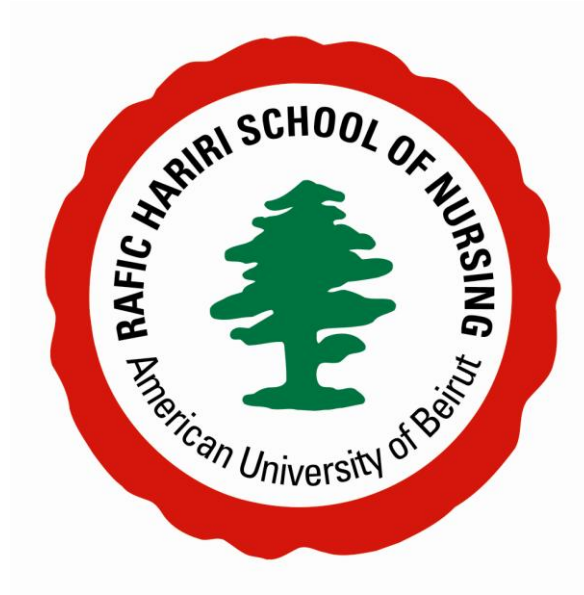# American University of Beirut

RAFIC HARIRI SCHOOL OF NURSING

Self-Study Report

Prepared for

Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education
(CCNE)

March, 2012

CCNE Self Study Report for Reaccreditation

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INTRODUCTION

The University

The American University of Beirut (AUB) is a private, independent, non-sectarian institution of higher learning, founded in 1866. AUB functions under a charter from the State of New York and is administrated by a private, autonomous, international Board of Trustees. The University is registered with the Ministry of Higher Education in Lebanon and with the Board of Education in the State of New York. AUB was granted institutional accreditation in June 2004, and was reaccredited in June 2009 (the monitoring report was accepted in June 2011 http://www.aub.edu.lb/main/about/Pages/accreditation.aspx) by the Commission on Higher Education of the American Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The University has five Faculties and one School: Faculty of Arts and Sciences; Faculty of Medicine, which includes the Hariri School of Nursing; Faculty of Engineering and Architecture; Faculty of Agricultural and Food Sciences; Faculty of Health Sciences; and the Olayan School of Business. At present, AUB offers programs leading to the Bachelor, Master and PhD degrees. The University is co-educational and the language of instruction is English. The University maintains memberships in a multitude of American, International, and Arab education associations.

Located in Ras Beirut, AUB's main campus has a total of 64 buildings. The 60.9 acre (246,459 square meters) campus overlooking the Mediterranean Sea includes athletic fields, private beach, bird sanctuary, and a repository of native and non-native trees and shrubs. It also comprises seven dormitories, the AUB Medical Center, the Charles W. Hostler Student Center for sports, five libraries, computer labs, Archaeological Museum, Natural History Museum, and one of Lebanon's few geological collections. The University Libraries include the central Jafet Memorial Library and two branch libraries: the Engineering and Architecture Library and the Science and Agriculture Library with its annex the Agricultural Research and Education Center (AREC) Library. In addition, the Saab Memorial Medical Library (SML) is one of the best medical libraries in the Middle East and was designated in 1978 by the World Health Organization as the National Focal Point Library for Lebanon. The Faculty of

Agricultural and Food Sciences' AREC, a 247 acre research farm and educational facility, is located in the Beqa'a Valley.

American University of Beirut Medical Center

Since 1902, the American University of Beirut Medical Center (AUBMC) has been providing the highest standards of care to patients across Lebanon and the region. It is also the teaching hospital for the Faculty of Medicine (established in 1867) and the School of Nursing at AUB, which has contributed to the training of generations of medical and nursing students, physicians and nurses; graduates can be found at leading institutions around the world. AUBMC is the only medical institution in the Middle East to have earned the three international accreditations of a) Joint Commission International (JCI), b) Magnet and c) the Commission on Laboratory Accreditation of the College of American Pathologists (CAP), attesting to its superior standards in patient-centered care, nursing, and pathology/laboratory services. Committed to its role as regional leader, AUBMC's impact on the medical sector and on improving people's lives is without equal in the Arab world. Between the University and the hospital, clinical and basic science research is conducted, sustained by philanthropic research grants. In 2009, and under a new leadership at AUBMC, the AUBMC 2020 vision was launched, which is expected to propel the Medical Center and medical care in the region to new levels of excellence.

A major initiative of the AUBMC 2020 Vision is the creation and implementation of the AUBMC 2020 Medical Complex. This constitutes a major expansion of the medical center from a 350-bed capacity institution to a 600-bed capacity, the creation of new patient towers, expansion of existing services, the creation of specialized centers of excellence (including, but not limited to, a Multiple Sclerosis Center, a Heart and Vascular Center as well as a Breast Cancer Center), a new administrative building, an academic and clinical building, as well as a thorough renovation of the Diana Tamari Sabbagh (DTS) building which houses the Basic Sciences departments of the Faculty of Medicine.

The Saab Medical Library, part of AUB, serves as support for all medical and health sciences departments, including the HSON and the Medical Center. In addition, AUB's Jafet Memorial Library has databases and collections that support research

needs of the HSON and the Medical Center. The hospital, with its health care modeled after North American health care system standards, enjoys a reputation as a highly regarded referral center in the Middle East. The Medical Center, among other clinical sites, supports the School of Nursing mission by providing learning opportunities that enable students to develop into professional and competent nurses.

Hariri School of Nursing

The Hariri School of Nursing, founded in 1905 as a three year diploma program, was the first nursing school in the Middle East. In 1936, there was a five year Bachelor of Science in Nursing program (BSN), which was replaced in 1964 by the current four-year program leading to the degree of Bachelor of Science in Nursing. Students entering the School as sophomores graduate in three calendar years. The MSN program, initiated in 2004, grants a Master of Science (MSN) in advanced nursing practice with four tracks: MSN in Adult Care (with optional minor in Nursing Education), MSN in Nursing Administration, MSN in Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing (with optional minor in Nursing Education), and MSN in Community and Public Health Nursing (with optional minor in Nursing Education). Full time students can complete the program in 4 semesters and one summer. Part time students must complete requirements within a maximum of 4 years. Until 1978, the School was one of the components of the Faculties of Medical Sciences. In 1978, it became a division of the Faculty of Health Sciences. In 1982, its status as a school was restored and it was placed within the Faculty of Medicine.

Achieving an autonomous Faculty status has been a major strategic goal for HSON. In 2008, a proposal to that effect was submitted to the AUB administration and has received support. The Board of Trustees (BOT) Committee on Medicine and Health met with HSON Director and faculty on February 16, 2010 during which the proposal was presented & discussed. The AUB administration approved a transitional period during which HSON can function autonomously. The director was invited to serve as ex-officio member on the Board of Deans (BOD). HSON has developed a new organizational structure that is currently being implemented.

In 2008, AUB received a $10-million pledge from His Excellency Saad Hariri to name and endow the School of Nursing. Part of the gift was used to renovate and equip

the new building and part will be used to endow a fund to support the directorship of the school, a faculty chair, and student scholarships. The new Hariri School of Nursing (HSON) Building was inaugurated in February 2009 and the actual move to the premises took place in April 2009. The building, which is now fully functional, houses a state of the art Simulation and Clinical Competency Center (SCCC), a computer lab, a newly inaugurated Hisham Jaroudi auditorium, smart classrooms, and faculty and student facilities.

The Hariri School of Nursing's mission of maintaining the highest educational standards of excellence, integrity, and professionalism in nursing is supported in several ways. Graduate faculty are PhD-prepared; faculty who teach in the baccalaureate programs are Master's and/or PhD prepared. Professional nurses' practice is guided by the Code of Ethics of the International Council of Nurses (ICN). In addition, practice guidelines of the Lebanese Nurses' Practice Act (Decree #1655) and the American Nurses Association are followed.

The overall BSN program outcomes are to prepare a generalist who collaborates with clients to achieve optimal health on the health-illness continuum. The BSN and the MSN programs' structure and learning outcomes reflect the AACN Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice (2008) and the AACN Essentials of Masters Education for Advanced Practice Nurses (1996), respectively.

Characteristics of Students

The Hariri School of Nursing student body is rich with students of many different backgrounds. Over the years, the HSON has attracted students from all over the world and there is a strategic initiative to increase student diversity. The total number of nursing students enrolled in all programs for the academic year 2011-2012 is 212. There are 168 female students and 44 male students. Enrollment in the RN-BSN program is 5 students; the BSN program, 157 students; and the MSN program, 55 students. The diversity of students, which includes some Americans, reflects the multiple religious and ethnic groups within Lebanon and the Middle East and as such enhances transcultural education in the School. HSON currently has 20 international students coming from the following countries: USA, Canada, Jordan (or originally Palestinian), Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Syria and Australia.

Accreditation Status

       The Bachelor of Science in Nursing Program (BSN) and the Master of Science in Nursing Program (MSN) are registered by the Department of Education of New York State (BSN registration number HEGIS code 1203.00; MSN registration number HEGIS code 1203.10). Both programs received unconditional CCNE accreditation in 2007. The CCNE Board of Commissioners approved the Continuous Improvement Progress Report submitted by HSON in November 2010 and determined in their meeting on June 23, 2011 that the AUB BSN and MSN programs continue to meet all accreditation standards. A Substantive Change Notification document was submitted to CCNE in September 2010 detailing the most recent curricular changes that have been made to the BSN and MSN programs. The curricular changes were also submitted to the Department of Education in New York State and received approval in January 2012.

STANDARD I

PROGRAM QUALITY: MISSION AND GOVERNANCE

The mission, goals, and expected aggregate student and faculty outcomes are congruent with those of the parent institution, reflect professional nursing standards and guidelines, and consider the needs and expectations of the community of interest. Policies of the parent institution and nursing program clearly support the program's mission, goals, and expected outcomes. The faculty and students of the program are involved in the governance of the program and in the ongoing efforts to improve program quality.

I-A. The mission, goals, and expected student outcomes are congruent with those of the parent institution and consistent with relevant professional nursing standards and guidelines for the preparation of nursing professionals.

Founded in 1866, the American University of Beirut bases its educational philosophy, standards, and practices on the American liberal arts model of higher education. A teaching-centered research university, AUB has around 700 faculty and around 8,000 students. The University encourages freedom of thought and expression and seeks to graduate men and women committed to creative and critical thinking, life-long learning, personal integrity, civic responsibility, and leadership. Similarly, the Mission of the Rafic Hariri School of Nursing is to promote and maintain the highest educational standards of excellence, integrity, and professionalism in nursing, following the American model of nursing education and practice. The School aims to provide learning opportunities that will enable students to develop into competent nurses who respect cultural diversity while coordinating and delivering high quality, compassionate nursing care in Lebanon and the region, guided by ethical principles.

The mission statements of the American University of Beirut (AUB) and that of the Hariri School of Nursing (HSON) are stated in Appendix I-A-1. The mission of HSON which addresses both undergraduate and graduate programs is accurately reflected in the AUB University Catalogue (Exhibit I-01). The HSON Graduate and Undergraduate

Student Handbooks (Exhibits I-02 and I-03) reflect the missions, goals, and expected outcomes of the various programs. The HSON program offerings, accreditation status, academic calendar, admission policies, and degree completion requirements are all found in the AUB Catalogue. The HSON website http://staff.aub.edu.lb/~webson also has information regarding program offerings, admission, policies, degree completion requirements, tuition, scholarships, graduate assistantships, etc. An Ad Hoc Committee oversees and continuously revises the catalogue section of the School of Nursing, in consultation with faculty members. BSN and MSN program outcomes are also available in the student handbooks. The BSN and MSN coordinators update and revise the undergraduate and graduate students' handbooks, respectively, on an annual basis to stay in line with professional guidelines and developments in nursing.

The mission, goals and expected student outcomes of HSON are congruent with those of AUB (Appendix I-A-2). The goals and outcomes foster shared emphasis on excellence in education design and teaching, integrity and professionalism as well as the utilization and generation of research, lifelong learning, liberal education and service to the region. They continue to be in compliance with the CCNE accreditation standards.

HSON continues to follow professional nursing standards and guidelines and to benchmark its academic programs against comparable programs in the USA, while at the same time accommodating the programs to the requirements of AUB and the context of Lebanon. HSON program outcomes reflect the CCNE essentials for undergraduate and graduate education and practice. (Appendices I-A-3 till I-A-6); program goals & course learning outcomes are clearly differentiated for each level; they reinforce the required clinical competencies and remain in congruence with the norms of the parent institution. For the BSN program, three levels of outcomes were established for the sophomore, junior and senior years, to reflect the progressive academic development of students and delineate competencies to be developed from simple to complex (Appendix I-A-3).

HSON continues to be the leading school of nursing in Lebanon and the region; nationally and internationally recognized for excellence in education, research, and service. In line with the mission of AUB, the school continues to be committed to

offering cutting-edge culturally-relevant and internationally recognized graduate and undergraduate education, fostering life-long learning and scholarship, developing the leaders in nursing and health care, and attracting a competent and culturally-diverse student body.

I-B. The mission, goals, and expected student outcomes are reviewed periodically and revised, as appropriate, to reflect:
- **professional nursing standards and guidelines; and**
- **the needs and expectations of the community of interest.**

The mission, goals, and expected outcomes of HSON are reviewed and revised regularly according to the School's Comprehensive Evaluation Plan (see Appendix I-B-1). The School of Nursing mission and vision were recently reviewed as part of AUB's and the School's strategic planning exercise, which started January 2011 and was completed August, 2011 (Appendix I-B-2). The periodic strategic planning review is a deliberate course of action at HSON with scheduled meetings throughout the year and data uploading twice a year. The timing of the reviews coincides with the school calendar of events and takes place in February and August of each year.

The purposes of the program reviews are to:
a. Assess the key performance indicators (KPIs) and program initiatives
b. Re-examine KPIs and initiatives in view of performance
c. Develop new strategic initiatives as needed
d. Examine the strategies, initiatives, and goals in light of current national and international developments

To facilitate the implementation and review process, HSON has appointed a Strategy Review Team including the executive officer and a Balanced Score Card (BSC) coordinator. The committee reports their findings on a regular basis.
a. The strategy review team identified key performance indicators (KPIs) in 2005 for the school's strategic objectives based on the following perspectives: Customer; Internal Process; Learning and Growth; and Financial. The team

determined the KPI targets that HSON aspires to achieve in consultation with the office of strategy management at AUB.

b. The team then assigned owners to collect and follow up on data on these measures, analyze them, and propose action plans.

c. The Balanced Score Card coordinator compiled and presented all information to the strategy team and faculty who provided feedback accordingly.

d. Data from HSON is currently being imported into new software purchased by AUB for that purpose.

e. The KPIs were revisited summer of 2011 as part of AUB's new strategic planning cycle and customers' feedback. A meeting with the community of interest was held in which the strategic planning report was discussed and their feedback was integrated (Exhibit I-04).

f. The completed HSON strategic planning document is being reviewed by AUB's various Task Forces for alignment and integration within AUB focusing on effective use of resources, feasibility of implementation and financial implications of the proposed strategic initiatives.

Student and program outcomes reflect CCNE accreditation standards and are an integral part of the HSON KPIs and surveys.

HSON continues to adhere to CCNE policies and procedures by submitting CCNE annual reports, a continuous improvement report, and notification of substantive changes document. Similarly curricular changes at the undergraduate and graduate levels were submitted for approval to the New York State Department of Education. These documents and related correspondence can be found in Exhibit I-05.

Feedback from the community of interest is an integral part of the review of student outcomes, as reflected in tracking KPIs, For example, among the KPIs used, HSON conducts student, alumni, and employer surveys to evaluate its academic programs on a yearly basis, and closely monitors feedback from all concerned. Reports are discussed by faculty and recommendations and action plans are made where improvements are needed

I-C. Expected faculty outcomes in teaching, scholarship, service, and practice are congruent with the mission, goals, and expected student outcomes.

Expected faculty outcomes are clearly identified by HSON, are written and communicated to the faculty through the appointment, reappointment and promotion criteria of HSON that are in line with those of AUB, and during the annual faculty appraisal meetings (AppendicesI-C-1 and I-C-2). The faculty outcomes are congruent with those of AUB; faculty members at HSON are expected to follow clearly defined guidelines for teaching, scholarships, service, and practice. These outcomes are enhanced through the intentional use of active, collaborative, and integrative teaching strategies which include:

- Liberal education throughout the nursing curriculum
  - o Provide local, national, and international experiences, framed by reflective questions, in a variety of cultures and communities
  - o Promote activities and projects with students to address community issues and problems, enhance critical thinking and team learning
  - o Apply collaborative learning projects to build communication and leadership skills
  - o Engage in community-based projects
- Active teaching-learning strategies throughout the curriculum
- Practice based on theory and research
- Inter-professional learning opportunities and interdisciplinary teamwork to promote life-long learning

To ensure and maintain competence in providing the most effective teaching, faculty members participate in workshops related to teaching excellence including advanced instructional technologies that are regularly provided at AUB to keep faculty abreast with innovations in teaching & learning methodologies.

Student Evaluation of faculty teaching is a rigorous process at HSON and AUB. HSON has assisted in developing and adapting the standardized Instructor Course Evaluations (ICE) forms to include sections on clinical teaching effectiveness. The results of ICE and regular course evaluations completed by faculty using the course evaluation summary form (Appendices I-C-3 and I-C-4), form an important part of the

annual faculty appraisals conducted by the director along with scholarship, service, and practice. During the appraisal meetings, emphasis is placed on faculty scholarship including research projects and grants, publications, scientific lectures and other scholarly endeavors. Future plans in relation to faculty teaching workload are made accordingly. In some cases teaching workload is decreased or adjusted to allow more time for scholarly activities. The scholarly productivity of the faculty has been on the increase as evidenced by the number of research projects conducted and the number of scientific articles published (see Annual Reports at http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/subpage.asp?id=9, Exhibit I-06 and Appendix I-B-1).

Research has been a priority area at HSON; to that effect 4 faculty members were supported to pursue doctoral studies in the USA; two received their PhDs in 2006 and 2008 respectively and two are expected to graduate in 2012. In addition, faculty recruitment was intensified and a number of PhD prepared and research active faculty members were appointed.

HSON has been successful in creating joint appointments with AUBMC Nursing Services and with the Faculty of Medicine. These appointments are intended to strengthen collaboration between academia and practice, to provide teaching expertise to nursing students at the bedside, and to strengthen research collaboration. Additionally, joint appointments with the Faculty of Medicine have provided opportunities for nursing faculty to work collaboratively with medical colleagues thus providing more opportunities for projects and residencies for graduate students.

I-D. Faculty and students participate in program governance.

In the HSON by-laws and the criteria for faculty appointment, reappointment and promotion, faculty expectations and involvement in governance are clearly defined. The HSON committee structure reflects the faculty members' contribution to governance at the School and is described in the HSON faculty By-Laws (Appendix I-D-1). Decisions related to curriculum, research, academic and student affairs, and faculty-related issues are made at the levels of the various committees; accordingly recommendations are made to full faculty for approval and adoption.

HSON submitted a proposal to achieve an independent Faculty status at AUB. The Board of Trustees Committee on Medicine and Health met at HSON on February 16, 2010 during which the proposal for achieving Faculty status was discussed. Based on the recommendations, proposal was revised & submitted with a business plan (Appendix I-D-2). A transitional period was later approved during which HSON can function autonomously:

- HSON Director serves as ex-officio member on the Board Of Deans (BOD) effective June 2011;
- All appointments, reappointments, & promotion are being processed by HSON;
- HSON is managing its own funds; surplus is being used for HSON scholarships and program development;
- HSON developed a new organizational structure, which was recently approved;
- HSON faculty members will be serving on all essential senate and AUB committees and hence contributing substantially more to AUB governance.

The new organizational and administrative structure provides more power to faculty members in terms of enhancing their involvement in shared governance of issues pertaining to the school through the creation of more administrative positions. For instance, faculty and academic issues at the level of the programs (undergraduate and graduate), rather than being handled directly by the Director, are addressed and channeled through the newly appointed program conveners, who then make recommendations to the director. More information on the HSON organizational structure can be found in Appendix I-D-3.

During the past year, AUB revised its university By-laws, mandating unified by-laws across Faculties. The HSON followed suit and its Task Force on by-laws revised the HSON by-laws to be in line with AUB; the revised HSON by-laws were approved by the faculty in its October meeting, 2011 (Exhibit I-07)

Student involvement in governance is also an integral part of AUB & HSON by-laws (Appendix I-D-1). Student representatives serve on several HSON committees and participate in town meetings to review and discuss curriculum issues. Students are only excluded from participation when agenda items are confidential such as student academic evaluation. HSON students have been instrumental as well in HSON

marketing and student recruitment campaigns; BSN and MSN students have visited high schools to recruit students and participated in the national recruitment fairs held at AUB and in the country. Moreover, both undergraduate and graduate students have class representatives who serve as the link between students, faculty and director.

Students participate also in the campus-wide governance by serving on Student Representative Committees (SRCs) and Student Faculty Representative Committees (SFRCs) as well as on voluntary committees such as wellness clinics, civic engagement committees among others. Additionally, students participate in inter-professional collaborative projects such as open houses, career guidance days, university outdoors, health fairs, health and dental awareness campaigns, immunization campaigns, and in the national events such as the International Nurses' Day. For more information on student activities visit HSON website http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/index.asp

I-E. Documents and publications are accurate. References to the program's offerings, outcomes, accreditation/approval status, academic calendar, recruitment and admission policies, transfer of credit policies, grading policies, degree completion requirements, tuition, and fees are accurate.

The HSON program offerings, accreditation status, academic calendar, admission policies, and degree completion requirements are all found in an updated format on the AUB website online catalogue http://www.aub.edu.lb/registrar/Pages/catalogue.aspx Tuition and fees are accurately published on the AUB website and each student has access to his/her individual statement of fees. The updated HSON website also has information regarding program offerings, admission, transfer of credit policies, grading policies, degree completion requirements, tuition and fees, scholarships, graduate assistantships, etc. (Exhibit I-01).

In addition, information about program offerings, academic rules and regulations, including admission criteria, transfer of credit policies and degree completion requirements are included in the undergraduate and graduate student handbooks. These documents are provided to all incoming students during the planned orientation program to HSON, and they are available on line at the School of Nursing website (Exhibits I-02 and I-03). These documents are reviewed at least once a year by the

program coordinators and updated according to new developments or changes decided by the undergraduate academic and curriculum committee and graduate studies committee. Changes in academic policies are communicated to students during town meetings that are conducted regularly and through email announcements. For example, a new practicum course was announced to the MSN students to meet their clinical hours requirements for ANCC certification through the MSN coordinator and in orientation sessions. Students interested in getting ANCC certification in a specialty area can register for this course.

An Ad Hoc Committee oversees and continuously revises the catalogue section for the HSON, in consultation with faculty members. The BSN and MSN coordinators update and revise the undergraduate and graduate students' handbooks http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/index.asp on an annual basis. The accuracy of information is the responsibility of the HSON and AUB Administration.

I-F. Academic policies of the parent institution and the nursing program are congruent. These policies support achievement of the mission, goals, and expected student outcomes. These policies are fair, equitable, and published and are reviewed and revised as necessary to foster program improvement. These policies include, but are not limited to, those related to student recruitment, admission, retention, and progression.

All AUB and HSON policies are on the AUB website http://www.aub.edu.lb/pnp/Pages/index.aspx and relevant ones in the AUB undergraduate and graduate Catalogues, AUB Student Handbook, and HSON undergraduate and graduate student handbooks. Student recruitment and marketing strategies to the School of Nursing include recruitment visits to Lebanese high schools by the student services, recruitment and career planning officer together with faculty and MSN students. Recruitment activities are done in coordination with AUB's admission office. For example, the HSON participates in School Fairs organized by AUB Admissions Office. New promotional and marketing materials for BSN, BA/BS-BSN, RN-BSN and MSN programs used in student recruitment campaigns were developed and are updated to reflect program changes. Open houses for accepted

students as well as for school counselors are organized annually.   Sending brochures (Exhibit I-08) to local and regional high schools, hospital and nursing Directors, employed nurses, colleges, universities and Ministries of Health is also regularly done. In accordance with its equal opportunity policy, the University recruits and admits students regardless of race, color, religion, gender, disability, or national origin. This practice is in line with the mission statements of AUB and HSON, which include respect for diversity of individuals.

Admission to the BSN program is processed through the Unified University's Admissions Office. Admission decisions are made on completed applications based primarily on the student's academic record (school grades), English Entrance Exam or TOEFL exams, and SAT I results. Specific calculations for this "Composite Score" are used (Exhibit I-09). Factors such as geographic distribution, alumni relationships, and character may also be considered. The AUB Unified Admission Committee, with representatives from each Faculty and School, acts on all admissions to all AUB programs including the BSN program. The HSON Admissions Committee acts on transfer students and Special Students applications.

In view of the nursing shortage in Lebanon and in particular the low enrollment rates at schools of nursing in the country, we have been carefully following cohorts of student applicants and monitoring their progress after enrollment in the school for a number of years. Our results have shown that the composite score predicts only 33% of the student performance in nursing; the 67% are determined by many other factors including the rigorous and professionally and individually driven educational program, the efforts of the HSON faculty, and the seriousness and dedication of the enrolled students. Based on the above and in order to avoid rejecting students with good potential for nursing, the composite scores were not increased for nursing remaining at 470. The admission committee at HSON was charged to study admission criteria used by similar schools of nursing in the US and elsewhere and come up with recommendations for possible changes (Exhibit I-10).

Admission to the RN-BSN program requires applicants to meet the standards set by the University's Admissions Office, with the exception of the SAT I. In addition, students must have a minimum of three years of experience as a nurse.

Admission to the MSN program is processed through a review by the HSON Graduate Studies Committee. The updated Criteria for admission to the MSN program are in HSON brochures, the Graduate catalogue, HSON website and the Graduate Student Handbook. They are also in line with AUB graduate admission requirements: http://www.aub.edu.lb/admissions/ADM_REQ/Pages/GraduateApplicants.aspx

1. A bachelor's degree in nursing or its equivalent degree from another recognized institution, with an undergraduate average of at least 80 in the major field of study (nursing) and a cumulative undergraduate average of at least 75.

2. English Entrance Exam or Test of English as a Foreign Language, as per AUB requirements for graduate studies. Required for admission of new applicants to the MSN program is a score of 550 on the English Entrance Examination (EEE), or 600 on the paper-based Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or 250 on the computer-based TOEFL, or 100 on the Internet-based TEOFL, or 7.0 on the International English Language Test Service (IELTS).

3. A License to practice nursing from country of residence.

4. Evidence of knowledge and competence in physical assessment skills.

5. One year of work experience in nursing.

Policies regarding probation, removal of probation, and promotion are found in the AUB Catalogue and website and in the student handbooks. A BSN student will be placed on probation for any of the following reasons:

- If the student fails six or more credits at the end of a semester
- If the student does not attain the minimum required semester average of 65 for BSN II, or 70 for the following years
- Students in their freshman and sophomore years will be placed on probation at the end of their first semester only if they fail in one half or more of the credit hours carried. These regulations do not apply to part-time students until they have completed at least 12 credits. For part-time students, a semester is defined as the consecutive courses totaling 12 credits.

Action to remove probation at the end of a semester or summer session will be taken provided the full-time student:

- Passes all courses taken during the semester.
- Achieves the minimum required average for that semester; and
- Achieves the minimum yearly average required.

In order for students to be promoted, they must attain a minimum average of 65 in the sophomore year and 70 in the following years. For more details of BSN grading, probation and promotion and for MSN admission, probation, please see Key Element IV-A.

Every effort is made to ensure that academic policies are in line with those of AUB. For example, a new graduate policy was introduced this past year, and the Graduate Studies Committee reviewed it and introduced needed modifications in the graduate student handbook, such as requiring all students planning to take the comprehensive Exam during a given semester to register a zero credit course (N526) for which they get a pass or fail grade depending on their performance on the exam.

Retention rates (percentage of students enrolled in the BSN program who remain in the program) for the School of Nursing are as follows: 72%, 75%, and 64% for 2006-07, 2007-08, and 2008-09 respectively (Appendix I-F-1). These retention rates indicate that students are able to succeed; therefore policies are fair and are conducive to the School of Nursing goals and expected outcomes of success. The periodic lower retention rates reflect the AUB policy of admitting students to Faculties with lower student demand and allowing them to transfer to other Faculties upon success in initial courses (such as admission to the School of Nursing and later transfer to the School of Business, which has a very large applicant pool).

I-G. There are established policies by which the nursing unit defines and reviews formal complaints.

At HSON, in addition to open door policy between student, faculty and the administration, there are town meetings and class meetings with class advisors to hear and discuss student concerns, comments and expectations. Faculty and administration take student complaints and feedback seriously and incorporate them in program appraisal and revisions. HSON student handbooks outline the steps for formal complaints, which are in line with AUB grievance procedure (Exhibits I-02 and I-03). For

example, students are guided in terms of who to refer to depending on the nature of the complaint, such as the course coordinator for a course related matter or class advisor for a class relevant issue. Students have the right to petition the Director if they think they have been unfairly treated in any way. The Director meets with the student and discusses the matter with the concerned faculty before taking the petition to the School's Academic Committee for further action. Additional policies are addressed in Standard IV.

Standard I Summary

Strengths

- The HSON mission and expected outcomes reflect professional standards and guidelines.

- The mission and expected outcomes are reviewed at least every five years.

- The HSON has transparent, defined roles for students and faculty that allow for meaningful participation in governance.

- Documents and publications are accurate and readily available in multiple sources.

- The HSON has submitted a proposal to achieve full Faculty status at AUB; a transitional period was approved during which HSON can function autonomously.

Areas for improvement

- Regular input from HSON Community of interest and in particular alumni and employers can be improved.
- AUB current transfer policy to admit students to Faculties/Schools continues to adversely affect retention rates.

Actions taken

- Full implementation of the Comprehensive Evaluation Plan is currently driving strategic planning and systematic program reviews.
- New methods have been developed to collect relevant information from alumni and employers and are currently being implemented.
- The HSON stakeholders and COI were involved in the recent strategic planning exercise of the school.
- The HSON student recruitment efforts and the creation of merit scholarships have improved on student enrollment and retention.
- The HSON Admission Committee was charged to review admission criteria used by similar schools of nursing in the US and recommendations were made for possible changes.

STANDARD II

PROGRAM QUALITY: INSTITUTIONAL COMMITMENT AND RESOURCES

The parent institution demonstrates ongoing commitment and support for the nursing program. The institution makes available resources to enable the program to achieve its mission, goals, and expected aggregate student and faculty outcomes. The faculty, as a resource of the program, enables the achievement of the mission, goals, and expected aggregate student outcomes.

Key Elements

II-A: Fiscal and physical resources are sufficient to enable the program to fulfill its mission, goals, and expected outcomes. Adequacy of resources is reviewed periodically and resources are modified as needed.

Fiscal and physical resources continue to be sufficient to enable the program to fulfill its mission, goals, and expected outcomes (Exhibit II-01). HSON continues to receive support from AUB for all aspects of its operations. This support includes the AUB libraries, information technology (IT) services, academic computing services that assist faculty in developing hybrid and on-line courses, workshops on curriculum development and teaching excellence organized by the Center on Teaching and Learning, and research and funding support provided by the university research board (URB), medical practice plan (MPP) and the Office of Grants & Contracts, among others. Additionally, the HSON faculty development fund for capacity building has covered the PhD tuition expenses of promising junior faculty. So far two faculty members supported by this fund received their PhDs and two will be defending their dissertations early in 2012.

An important milestone for the school of nursing is the recent $10-million pledge which AUB received from HE Saad Hariri to name and endow the School of Nursing. Part of the gift was used to renovate and equip the new building and part will be used to endow a fund to support the directorship of the school, a faculty chair, and student scholarships. The new Rafic Hariri School of Nursing building was inaugurated in

February 2009 and in April of the same year the move to the new premises took place. The HSON building currently houses a state of the art Simulation and Clinical Competency Center (SCCC), a computer lab, a fully equipped auditorium and smart classrooms, conference rooms as well as faculty offices and student facilities.

All these facilities are fully functional; a computer lab administrator and a SCCC coordinator were appointed. Additionally, a faculty Task Force to oversee the activities of SCCC was established; workshops to train faculty were offered and clinical scenarios and manuals were developed. All clinical nursing courses are making use of the SCCC for skill and competency training of nursing students

http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/subpage.asp?id=49

The endowment funds in addition to a new SON building are a guarantee to the financial viability of HSON. In addition HSON has been using a planned growth strategy and has put in place a budget monitoring system that resulted in a surplus budget over a number of years. All these measures assure financial viability of the School in the future. Furthermore, a financial analysis and a business plan based on projections of increases in student and faculty numbers as well as other financial commitments has been prepared. The HSON has applied for an independent full Faculty status (Appendix I-D-2) and has been granted a transitional period as stated in Standard I. The School does determine its own academic policies and has the authority to direct its own affairs as stipulated in its own by-laws. A new organizational structure for HSON has been developed and was approved by full faculty. An Assistant Director for Academic Affairs and Conveners of the BSN and MSN programs were appointed (Exhibit II-02). Additionally The HSON surplus is currently being used for student scholarships and for faculty and staff development when applicable.

HSON continues to put emphasis on establishing more scholarships and financial support to nursing students. In addition to the Hariri Endowed scholarship fund, which is expected to start soon, HSON provided 14 (50%) and AUBMC provided one (100%) merit scholarship(s) AY 2010 – 11. For AY 2011 – 12, 14 (50%) were provided by HSON and AUBMC provided one (100%) and 5 (50%) merit scholarship. HSON is still negotiating with the AUB medical center (AUBMC) the re-launching of student bursaries. Other philanthropic scholarships are being provided to nursing students

through the AUB Financial Aid Office (Women's Auxiliary Association, Darwaza, and Abu Khater among others). AUB has been also active in negotiating bank loans for students and in seeking funds to increase its financial aid. All these measures will support and eventually increase student enrollment at HSON.

A number of MSN students work at AUBMC and thus benefit from educational allowances offered as per AUB policy for non-academic employees. See policy on educational benefits at
http://www.aub.edu.lb/hr/benefits/Pages/summary_na.aspx

II-B: Academic support services are sufficient to ensure quality and are evaluated on a regular basis to meet program and student needs.

In addition to the fiscal and physical resources mentioned in standard IIA, AUB continues to support faculty teaching excellence. Most of HSON faculty has been supported to attend teaching excellence seminars that aim to invigorate and enhance teaching and learning at the university. Examples include the Academic and Computing Center, medical education workshops, AACN Webinars and the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation grant. The AUB Web Page on Teaching Excellence was created by the Task Force for the purpose of reporting its activities and serving as a more inclusive medium and forum for exchange of information and points of view pertaining to the enhancement of teaching and learning.

The Center for Teaching and Learning at AUB continues to offer activities and seminars on developing learning outcomes, assessment at course and program levels, teaching and learning methodologies and developing teaching portfolios, which were attended by most HSON faculty members (Exhibit II-03). Success of these activities was evidenced by the high degree of satisfaction of HSON faculty members. The presence of capable resource persons at AUB, among them HSON faculty, as facilitators, contributed significantly to the success of these activities.

Academic support for students continues to put emphasis on career and counseling services to Lebanese and international students, in addition to assistance with student admissions, registration and housing. The writing center provides support services to assist the students in developing their writing skills and completing their

written assignments, since English is a second language for most AUB students. Moreover, the office of the Provost has invited Professor Carol Havilland to work with selected faculty to design and pilot discipline-based writing-intensive courses at AUB. The undergraduate nursing research course at HSON was selected as a writing intensive course. The faculty coordinator of the course received training and has been actively involved in this endeavor. A tutor from the English Department has been also assigned to enhance students' writing skills.

HSON website continues to provide up-to-date information on programs offered, news and events, annual reports, faculty scholarly achievements, and student services information and links. HSON launched for the first time AY 2010 – 11 an electronic newsletter that was disseminated to students, alumni, stakeholders, and the larger community of interest. Two issues have been circulated so far (Exhibit II-04.&http://services.aubmc.org.lb/ext/son/downloads/Newsletter2/HSONNewsletter2011-2012.pdf). News and events are also posted and updated on a regular basis on the HSON LCD screen in the lobby of the school. These services are monitored and evaluated on a regular basis to ensure quality and meet student and program needs.

II-C: The chief nurse administrator: is a registered nurse (RN);
- **holds a graduate degree in nursing;**
- **is academically and experientially qualified to accomplish the mission, goals, and expected student and faculty outcomes;**
- **is vested with the administrative authority to accomplish the mission, goals, and expected student and faculty outcomes; and**
- **provides effective leadership to the nursing unit in achieving its mission, goals, and expected student and faculty outcomes.**

The Director of HSON, Dr. Huda Abu-Saad Huijer RN, PhD, FEANS, FAAN, has been in this position since 2003. She is a nurse and an accomplished researcher, educator, and administrator with an established international career record (Exhibit II-05). Since her appointment at AUB, she has been instrumental in developing the MSN program, revising the BSN and RN-BSN programs, and preparing the school to establish international accreditation, which was granted in 2007; HSON became the first

school of nursing outside the USA to receive unconditional CCNE accreditation for a period of 5 years. As a result, HSON became a regular member of AACN, entitling Dr. Huijer to attend the AACN Deans meetings in Washington DC. She has also been instrumental in establishing international partnerships with US Schools of Nursing namely Johns Hopkins University, University of Michigan, Villanova University, and the University of Maryland.

Dr. Huijer has received in 2010 the Life Time Achievement Award from the McMillan Cancer Fund and the International Journal of Palliative Nursing for her work in pain management and palliative care. She is currently the first nurse President of the Lebanese Society for the Study of Pain and the Chair of the Pain and Palliative Care Working Group of the Lebanese Cancer Society. She was appointed in 2011 by the Minister of Health as Vice President of the National Committee for Pain Relief and Palliative Care, which she was instrumental in establishing and preparing its mandate. The Committee is presided by the Director General of the Ministry of Health. She has been selected as well to become an International Fellow of the American Academy of Nursing and was inducted November 2010.

Dr. Huijer is actively involved at the national level and contributes as a consultant to the activities of the Order of Nurses in Lebanon and to those of the Ministry of Health on issues pertaining to nursing. She is also actively involved at the regional level by attending the meetings of the Deans/Directors of the Arab League Schools of Nursing, by serving on the editorial board of their scientific journal, as external reviewer to a number of appointments and promotions, and as a consultant on issues related to accreditation and nursing research.

Dr. Huijer currently sits on the Board of Deans meetings at AUB and reports to the Board of Trustees during their regular meetings at AUB on issues and developments pertaining to HSON. She has budgetary, decision-making, and evaluation authority that is comparable to that of chief administrators of similar schools of nursing in the USA. She consults, as appropriate, with the Advisory committee, Assistant Director for Academic Affairs, BSN and MSN Conveners, Track Coordinators, faculty and other communities of interest to make decisions to accomplish the mission, goals, and

expected student and faculty outcomes. The director is perceived by the communities of interest to be a highly effective leader and a qualified mentor to faculty and staff.

II-D: Faculty members are:

- **sufficient in number to accomplish the mission, goals, and expected student and faculty outcomes;**
- **academically prepared for the areas in which they teach; and**
- **experientially prepared for the areas in which they teach.**

HSON currently has 16 full time faculty members (10 Doctoral prepared including 2 PhDc and 6 Masters prepared faculty), one part-time Visiting Scholar, 30 part-timers including preceptors and visiting faculty and 15 adjunct faculty and academic associates. Two faculty members retired AY 2009-2010, 2 returned to the USA for personal and family reasons, and two took positions at another university AY 2011 – 12. Two Fulbright Fellows joined HSON AY 2008-2010; one was approved by Fulbright USA to join HSON Spring 2011 but was turned down by American Embassy in Beirut due to lack of funds. One PhD and one MSN prepared faculty joined HSON AY 2011-2012. In addition, four HSON faculty members are on joint appointments with FM and serve as follows: Vice-Chair for IRB, Managing Director of the Abu Haidar Neuroscience Institute, Clinical Associate at the Psychiatry Department, and Assistant Director for the Continuing Medical education Office (Appendix II-D-1 and Exhibit II-06), and 24 joint appointments were created AY 2011-12 with AUBMC Nursing Services.

All HSON faculty are on an 11-month contract and their teaching workload averages 6-8 credits during fall and spring semesters. Summer workload is intentionally kept low to allow for concentrated time for research and other scholarly activities (See Appendix II-D-2). The faculty student ratios at HSON are 1:10 in general which is similar to AUB and 1:5 for clinical courses.

Few appointments are currently under negotiation and the recruitment for the Hariri Chair in Nursing Research has already started. HSON has been successful in recruiting Dr. Debra Moser as part-time Visiting Scholar AY 2011-2012; she will assist HSON in launching the Centre for Nursing Research, in the development of an inter professional PhD program, and in the submission of collaborative HSON research grants possibly

with partner institutions in the USA. Another Visiting Scholar with established expertise in Nursing Education, blended courses, interprofessional education, and interfaculty programs has been recruited and will start September 2012.

Current HSON faculty expertise spans over different fields of nursing such as medical-surgical nursing, maternal-child nursing, psychiatry mental health nursing, community nursing, nursing informatics, nursing education, health care ethics, and nursing administration; some through certification. The majority of faculty members teach at the BSN and MSN levels. Preceptors and adjunct faculty assist in the clinical supervision of undergraduate and graduate students (Exhibit II-07). All faculty members are nurses and hold current RN licensure.

The current ratio of PhD/MSN prepared faculty at HSON is almost 60:40. This ratio is expected to become 70:30 in the near future. Masters prepared faculty will continue to be important for HSON; they contribute to the development of clinical expertise in the undergraduate programs and are essential for strengthening the collaboration with AUBMC Nursing Services and in particular the creation of joint appointments.

The HSON has been investing in developing its own cadre of PhD-prepared faculty by providing funding for PhD study. It aims at supporting two faculty members per year. Four faculty members have been sponsored so far; two have completed their PhDs and two are expected to finish in March 2012. A collaborative PhD program with JHU SON has been proposed and aims in particular at capacity building for HSON in the future. The PhD proposal is awaiting further approvals and funding. A new interprofessional/interdisciplinary PhD proposal is also being discussed with the Faculty of Medicine and Faculty of Health Sciences at AUB.

Faculty recruitment remains an ongoing process at the HSON. Due to the expansion of academic program offerings at the graduate and undergraduate levels, faculty with specific expertise and clinical specializations are being recruited. For the recruitment process, adverts are placed in international nursing journals, in the Chronicle for Higher Education, on websites of AACN, nursing academies and honor societies, and by word of mouth. Recruitment through personal contact is heavily emphasized. A HSON search committee selects and short-lists candidates who are

consequently invited for a first interview via video-conferencing and if successful a second interview is planned at AUB (Exhibit II-08)

II-E: When used by the program, preceptors, as an extension of faculty, are academically and experientially qualified for their role in assisting in the achievement of the mission, goals, and expected student outcomes.

The HSON program attempts to maintain excellence in recruiting qualified preceptors to meet program outcomes. The faculty workload is calculated by the Director to meet the needs of the School of Nursing and to distribute work equitably among the faculty based on academic preparation and approved plans for career development. HSON faculty members are directly involved in the clinical supervision of nursing students at the BSN and MSN levels. However, there is a need for preceptors due to the increasing number of students. Thus, the HSON continues to collaborate with preceptors and adjunct faculty from AUBMC and other service sectors who have adequate academic preparation and clinical experience to meet the BSN and MSN program requirements. The selection and training of preceptors is a joint effort of AUBMC & HSON administration and faculty. Criteria for selection of preceptors have been set by HSON and nursing services at AUBMC, as the latter is the main source of preceptors (Exhibit II-09). Masters prepared nurses with adequate nursing experience and who act as preceptors for novice nurses are eligible to supervise BSN students. Advanced practice nurses and physicians serve as clinical preceptors of MSN students. A preceptor orientation program was developed by HSON and implemented in the past. The program was recently revised and taught by HSON faculty members with expertise in nursing education effective spring 2012 (Exhibit II-10).

To ensure continuity and quality, HSON has been successful in starting joint appointments with AUBMC Nursing Services. The appointment of three Clinical Nurse Specialists was approved AY 2010-2011 and in AY 2011-12 a total of 24 MSN prepared nurses currently working at AUBMC were approved for joint appointments; their integration in the clinical supervision of BSN students has commenced. The appointment of 7 academic associates from nursing and medicine will also ensure the continuous provision of high quality clinical supervision to our MSN students. Finally the

recognition of the work of HSON's national and international preceptors who are directly involved in the supervision of the residencies of MSN students at partner institutions in the USA has been formalized through the creation of HSON adjunct positions.

All preceptors are evaluated by students and course coordinators; their work is highly valued at HSON. Efforts will continue to be placed on creating joint appointments with AUBMC Nursing Services, on selection and training of preceptors, and most importantly on the recognition and retention of preceptors at HSON.

II-F: The parent institution and program provide and support an environment that encourages faculty teaching, scholarship, service, and practice in keeping with the mission, goals, and expected faculty outcomes.

Since 2006, the office of the Provost initiated an orientation program for new faculty members. Each year in February and September a 2-day program is offered where faculty members are introduced to the university resources, policies and procedures, and their teaching responsibilities. See
http://www.aub.edu.lb/nfo/Pages/index.aspx

AUB and HSON continue to provide a supportive environment for faculty to feel encouraged in all areas of teaching, scholarship, service and practice according to the mission, goals and expected and desired faculty outcomes. New faculty members are assigned mentors from senior faculty members to help integrate them at HSON and AUB. The director keeps an open door policy and new faculty are encouraged to meet with her on a regular basis to discuss their teaching assignments, current and future research plans, promotion-related requirements, and other issues relevant to their appointment.

In addition to the support services mentioned earlier to enhance teaching effectiveness and research and scholarly productivity, HSON faculty members are encouraged and supported to attend international and national scientific meetings. Faculty development grants have been provided by the Office of the Provost to faculty to present at one international scientific meeting each year. The Office of the Provost has recently reallocated travel funds to Faculties/Schools to be managed at the discretion of the Deans/Directors in support of faculty travel & scholarship. To that

effect, the same policy still holds and faculty members need to apply in due time to HSON to qualify. Faculty are also encouraged to seek outside funding if they wish to attend and present their research findings at other scientific conferences. URB funds are also available to faculty for sabbaticals and research leaves, which are aimed at strengthening scholarly productivity and research collaboration. Post-doctoral fellowships are also encouraged. See http://www.aub.edu.lb/provost/Faculty_dev/Pages/Junior_Fac_Leaves.aspx for the new policy on faculty grants. The HSON annual reports provide detailed information on faculty scholarly presentations at national and international scientific meetings (Exhibit I-06).

Research support continues to be provided at different levels at AUB and HSON. The HSON Research Committee reviews all proposals prepared by faculty members before submission for funding and approval by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Research mentorship takes place through the creation of support and research committees for new researchers and junior faculty. The IRB ascertains, among other things, whether proposed research is acceptable related to the humane treatment of human subjects, and whether it follows institutional regulations, laws and standards of professional conduct. In January 2010, the Human Research Protection Program was established. Its three components are the Institutional Review Boards (one for the social and behavioral sciences and the other for the biomedical sciences), the Research Education Unit and the Research Compliance Unit http://www.aub.edu.lb/irb/Pages/index.aspx . Its mission is to safeguard and foster awareness of and respect for the rights and welfare of human subjects participating in biomedical and social and behavioral research activities under the auspices of AUB. A number of workshops are provided on research-related topics and attended by faculty. Two HSON faculty members, one as co-chair, represent HSON on the IRB social and behavioral sciences committee.

The Faculty of Medicine Research Committee promotes research by the faculty in several ways including reviewing all applications for university funded research grants and selecting projects for Medical Practice Plan (MPP) funding for which HSON is eligible. An HSON faculty member represents HSON on this committee. Finally, the

AUB Office of Grants and Contracts (OGC) provides services to the AUB community by keeping faculty members aware of available national and international grants and deadlines for proposal submission, supporting them in budget preparations, and managing contracts post award. See http://www.aub.edu.lb/ogc/Pages/index.aspx

Nursing faculty service at AUB is defined as service to HSON, AUB, the nursing profession, and to the community at large. Faculty members at HSON continue to support the Order of Nurses in Lebanon and be involved in the development of the nursing profession in Lebanon and the region. In addition to serving on committees of the Ministry of Health, Order of Nurses, community and health centers, faculty members provide lectures and workshops on current issues impinging on health care in Lebanon. In addition to HSON committees, faculty members serve on university committees such as the Senate, Admissions, Commencement, FM Research, IRB, Teaching Excellence, General Education, and Strategic Planning. A percentage of faculty workload is allotted for service and is evaluated during faculty appraisal meetings on an annual basis.

HSON has also supported faculty in conducting research projects with a service focus. Collaborative projects between HSON and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) of Lebanon, the Armenian Relief Cross, the World Health Organization (WHO), the Italian Cooperation, and the Ministry of Health are some examples of which. For more information on these and other projects the reader is referred to HSON Annual Reports available at http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/subpage.asp?id=9
See Exhibit II-11.

HSON continues to place emphasis on faculty practice by creating joint appointments with AUBMC Nursing Services and Faculty of Medicine. Although the number of faculty engaged in actual practice is small, recruitment efforts are currently targeting faculty with a strong clinical background and in particular as clinical specialists and nurse practitioners. The law that governs nursing practice in Lebanon however, does not permit nurses to have their own independent practice, something which is expected to change in the near future once the revised law that was submitted to the parliament gets approved. The majority of faculty members are currently involved in practice-related areas and time is allotted for this purpose in faculty workload.

Standard II Summary

Strengths

- The fiscal and physical resources are sufficient to enable the HSON programs to fulfill their mission, goals, and expected outcomes.
- The School does determine its own academic policies and has the authority to direct its own affairs as stipulated in its own by-laws.
- The HSON surplus is currently being used for student scholarships and for faculty and staff development when applicable.
- A new state of the art school of nursing building has been completed and is currently being used.
- A defined process for regular annual reviews has been put in place and is continuously being monitored.

Areas for Improvement

- Vigorous recruitment of faculty will continue to be a challenge in view of the worldwide faculty shortage and the limited human resources in Lebanon.
- Achieving Full faculty status with full financial & administrative autonomy remains a major goal for HSON.

Actions Taken:

- A transitional autonomous period has been granted to HSON.
- Joint appointments with AUBMC NS and FM have been initiated.
- HSON has been successful in recruiting distinguished nurse scholars to assist in research and innovative teaching endeavors.
- A new organizational structure for HSON has been developed and was approved by full faculty. An Assistant Director for Academic Affairs and Conveners of the BSN and MSN programs were appointed.

STANDARD III

PROGRAM QUALITY: CURRICULUM AND TEACHING-LEARNING PRACTICES

The curriculum is developed in accordance with the mission, goals, and expected aggregate student outcomes and reflects professional nursing standards and guidelines and the needs and expectations of the community of interest. Teaching-learning practices are congruent with expected individual student learning outcomes and expected aggregate student outcomes. The environment for teaching-learning fosters achievement of expected individual student learning outcomes.

III-A: The curriculum is developed, implemented, and revised to reflect clear statements of expected individual student learning outcomes that are congruent with the program's mission, goals, and expected aggregate student outcomes.

There are three programs available at the HSON; the BSN, RN-BSN, and the MSN (See Appendix III-A-1). The RN-BSN has the same program outcomes as the BSN program and the majority of courses are shared. Therefore, the presentation of the BSN program includes the RN-BSN program, unless otherwise indicated.

The University has adopted a culture of learning outcomes that is established in all Faculties and Schools at AUB. As such, measurable student outcomes are included in all course syllabi, in accordance with AUB's annual review for Accreditation by the Commission on Higher Education of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Schools. The HSON faculty members continue to include specific, measurable student learning outcomes in every syllabus. The student learning outcomes are essential components of each course syllabus (Exhibit III-01). The course learning outcomes are congruent with program outcomes as outlined in Appendices III-A-2 and III-A-3 (course learning outcomes/program outcomes grid). The program outcomes are consistent with the HSON mission (Appendix I-A-1) in focusing on research as a basis for practice, consideration of cultural diversity, professional competence, espousing ethical principles, critical thinking, lifelong learning, and the promotion of nursing in Lebanon and the region.

The BSN learning outcomes tackle the areas of knowledge, practice, and research, in addition to communication and leadership skills, as well as professionalism, ethics and collaboration; these domains are reflected in the HSON mission. Course outcomes are congruent with the level outcomes set for the sophomore, junior and senior years. These level outcomes progress from simple to complex, culminating in the program outcomes that reflect the skills and competencies acquired by students upon graduation.

The MSN learning outcomes emphasize advanced nursing practice, synthesis of knowledge from theory, utilization and generation of research, in addition to health policy, leadership, professional and ethical issues. Appendices I-A-3 to I-A-6 include a list of the program outcomes for the BSN/RN-BSN, and MSN programs. The BSN program outcomes are further subcategorized into 3 level outcomes for the sophomore, junior and senior levels, which reflect the increasing complexity of learning and the incremental nature of learned material.

Key Element III-B: Expected individual student learning outcomes are consistent with the roles for which the program is preparing its graduates. The curricula are developed, implemented, and revised to reflect relevant professional nursing standards and guidelines, which are clearly evident within the curriculum, expected individual student learning outcomes, and expected aggregate student outcomes.

- **Baccalaureate program curricula incorporate *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* (AACN, 2008).**
- **Master's program curricula incorporate professional standards and guidelines as appropriate.**
- a. **The master's program tracks incorporate the Graduate Core Curriculum of *The Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* (AACN, 1996) and additional relevant professional standards and guidelines as identified by the program.**

b. **All master's-level advanced practice nursing programs incorporate the Advanced Practice Nursing Core Curriculum of** *The Essentials of Master's Education for Advanced Practice Nursing* **(AACN, 1996). In addition, nurse practitioner programs incorporate** *Criteria for Evaluation of Nurse Practitioner Programs* **(NTF, 2008).**

- **Graduate-entry program curricula incorporate** *The Essentials of Baccalaureate Education for Professional Nursing Practice* **(AACN, 2008) and appropriate graduate program standards and guidelines.**

Expected individual student learning outcomes are consistent with the program/s learning outcomes for each program –BSN and MSN-. The program/s learning outcomes are designed based on the roles for which a BSN and an MSN graduate is prepared for; these roles are derived from requirements of the Lebanese Ministry of Higher Education, the Lebanese Nursing Practice Act and AUB's academic policies related to program requirements.

Implementation/Revision of BSN and MSN programs

The program outcomes for the BSN and MSN programs were reviewed during the Strategic Planning and CCNE self-study exercises to reflect more specifically the AACN Essentials as described in Standard I-A. The course objectives were consequently revised to be in line with the program outcomes and, therefore, with the AACN Essentials. The Course Evaluation Summary Form (Appendix I-C-4) requires evaluation of courses in light of relevant ANA Standards of Practice (explained further in Key Element III-D). The teaching of all nursing courses at HSON is based on the nursing process, which is in line with the ANA Standards of Practice, i.e., assessment, diagnosis, outcome identification, planning, implementation, and evaluation. In addition, most nursing courses stress evidence-based practice and the value of knowledge derived from sound research. The ANA Standards of Professional Performance knowledge and skills are addressed in several courses in all programs of the HSON, and are highlighted in introductory and leadership courses. The reader is referred to course syllabi which can be found in Exhibit III-01.

Development of MSN program

The MSN program is benchmarked against leading programs worldwide and is in accordance with AACN Essentials and ANA Standards (see Exhibit III-02 and Appendix I-A-6.).

The MSN program is organized around four essential interrelated components: nursing theory, research, advanced practice and roles. All tracks in the MSN program include graduate core curriculum content in research, policy, ethics, theory, social issues and health promotion/disease prevention. Some of this content is addressed exclusively in designated courses, whereas other content is integrated throughout the curriculum.

The clinical tracks include relevant advanced practice curriculum related to advanced assessment, pathology and pharmacology. The specialty courses in the Adult Care Track include advanced pathophysiology, pharmacology, assessment, health promotion, interventions and evaluation, and critical thinking. These courses also include clinical components in several areas of adult health care and a residency program in the specialty area of the student's choice. Clinical training is coordinated by faculty from HSON and undertaken under the supervision of physicians and advanced practice nurses. The preparation for the advanced practice nursing role in the MSN program is akin to the clinical nurse specialist (CNS) role, in line with the context of advanced practice in Lebanon.

In line with the ANA Standards of Advanced Practice, the adult care specialty courses are organized around the nursing process, namely assessment, diagnosis, outcome identification, implementation and evaluation. Advanced clinical reasoning is fostered in clinical courses, along with advanced health assessment competencies. Courses are centered on nursing phenomena, with advanced implementation including case management, evidence based practice geared to the promotion and restoration of health, health teaching for clients, and referral to health resources as needed. Adult care nurses coordinate their activities with the health team members, provide staff teaching, and engage in research utilization projects. The preparation for advanced practice roles is reflected in the syllabi of specialty courses (Appendix III-A-1and Exhibit III-01).

The specialty courses in the Administration Track focus on the unique issues relevant to administration and management of health care settings. Emphasis is placed on the role of the nurse administrator in organizational analysis, strategic planning, performance improvement, quality enhancement, policy making, patient safety, healthcare services evaluation, financial management, human resources management, leadership, and information systems as applicable**.** The elements outlined in the ANA Standards for Nursing Administration are covered, and students are instructed in their use for guiding practice. Students in the Nursing Administration track complete projects and residencies that relate to administrative practice. Residencies cover a semester and are coordinated by the Faculty Advisor. An administrative preceptor at the residency site mentors and provides opportunities for the resident to participate in administrative projects and meetings, and to work with the mentor to analyze leadership and management aspects of the mentor's position or those of other organizational leaders, and to analyze the structure and function of the organization or organizational unit. Recently the administration track was revised to better capture the administrative roles that graduates are expected to engage in, with respect to project management and quality. More information is provided in section III-C.

Two new MSN tracks were approved and implemented: 1) Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing in 2007 and 2) Community and Public Health Nursing in 2008 (Exhibit I-05) which includes the respective proposals outlining the significance, philosophy, objectives, curriculum plan and course descriptions. The new tracks are aligned with the current MSN tracks and as such with the CCNE and AACN requirements and benchmarked with a number of similar programs in the USA. The new tracks have provided the nursing profession in Lebanon and the region with new and Advanced Practice Nursing specializations, which are badly needed.

The Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing (PMHN) track prepares students for advanced practice roles in psychiatric and mental health nursing. The structure and outcomes of this track are similar to those of other clinical tracks at HSON. The program provides the requisite knowledge and skills in advanced mental health assessment, pharmacology, physical assessment, pathophysiology and psychopathology. Intervention courses cover individual, family and group psychotherapy. Students also do

a clinical residency either in Lebanon or abroad and are prepared to assess and provide psychotherapy to a variety of patient groups in a variety of clinical settings (in-patient and community). Evidence –based research is used to explore outcomes of advanced psychiatric mental health nursing practice.

The PMHN track provides students with a thorough understanding of the theoretical and clinical basis of psychiatric and mental health nursing practice. The advanced practice program prepares students in advanced assessment both mental and physical, consultation and referral skills, individual and /or group and family psychotherapy, diagnostic reasoning and ethical decision-making. It also offers, for those who wish, a minor in education and a two credit practicum course for those seeking certification (Appendix III-A-1).

The Community and Public Health Nursing track was launched in 2008. The competencies upon graduation from this track are congruent with the AACN's Essentials as well as the needs of the population of Lebanon and its health care system. The structure and requirements of the program are parallel to those of the other clinical tracks (Appendix III-A-1). The program provides students with a thorough understanding of the theoretical and clinical basis of public and community health nursing. The program prepares students in advanced individual and community assessment, consultation, and referral skills, individual, aggregate, family and community interventions, diagnostic reasoning and decision making. Since this track prepares graduates for direct care roles in community settings, students take the advanced assessment, pathophysiology and pharmacology courses. The Community Public Health Nursing curriculum is similar to the curriculum of the MSN program, with the exception of the specialty courses in practices of public and community health nursing. It focuses on developing skills that allow for flexibility in assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of individuals, groups and communities in need of health care. The specialty courses also include clinical components in several community settings as well as a residency program in the specialty area of the students' choice (Exhibit III-01).

Graduate students in the clinical tracks who are interested in specialty certification are offered a 2-credit practicum course (N528) in order to fulfill the number of clinical hours required in the respective specialty.

Graduate students enrolled in the clinical tracks –Adult, Psychiatry, and community-may opt to pursue a Minor in Nursing Education. The Minor in Nursing Education provides a foundation of knowledge and skills for teaching and learning and enables students to apply instructional theory and research in a variety of educational positions. The content addresses educational theories, instructional methods, testing and measurements, and curriculum development. See Appendix III-A-1

Key Element III-C: The curriculum is logically structured to achieve expected individual and aggregate student outcomes.

- **The baccalaureate curriculum builds upon a foundation of the arts, sciences, and humanities.**
- **Master's curricula build on a foundation comparable to baccalaureate level nursing knowledge.**

BSN Program – Logical Structure

The BSN program is based on a strong foundation in the arts, sciences and humanities. Students who completed the Lebanese high school (Baccalaureat II) enter the BSN program in the sophomore year; otherwise they enter the BSN program in the freshman year. Students entering as freshman follow AUB requirements (see Appendix III-A-1).

BSN Student outcomes: Level I, outcomes A, B, & C

The BSN program includes Social Science and Humanities courses as foundation courses (Liberal Arts), which facilitate the development of cultural sensitivity and compassion in the students, as well as promote critical thinking. Liberal Arts education exposes the student to a variety of perspectives and facilitates sound decision-making skills.

Students who enter at the sophomore level take 102 credits. In line with AUB graduation requirements, 33-36 of these credits must now be in general education (GE). General Education requirements include 3-6 credits of English communication skills; these are the English courses that are already part of our BSN curriculum; 3-credits in Arabic communication skills (a new requirement added to the Curriculum); 6 credits in

Natural Sciences; 12 credits in Humanities; 6 credits in Social Science; and 3 credits in Quantitative Thought. Two basic science courses, a nursing course, and two social science courses required in nursing have now been designated as GE courses namely biochemistry (BIOC 246) and physiology (PHYL 246) in the Natural Science Domain; biostatistics (NURS 203) in the Quantitative Thought Domain; and, sociology (SOAN 201) and psychology (PSYC 202) in the Social Science Domain. In order to meet the new AUB requirement stipulating that all students take 12 credits in Humanities and not to add extra credits to the curriculum, the 6 credits elective courses required at HSON are taken from the humanities course offerings and the 6 credits Civilization Sequence courses were replaced by 6 credits courses in humanities. See Appendix III-A-1.

BSN Student learning outcomes, Level I, items A-F (sophomore)

The students entering in the sophomore year complete introductory nursing courses (NURS 200/1/2), in which they learn about biomedical ethics, how to search the nursing literature, and how to complete a health assessment and provide basic nursing care to individuals using the nursing process. Courses in Academic English, Psychology of Development (PSYC 229), Biostatistics, Biochemistry, Human Morphology, Physiology, and Pathophysiology in the sophomore year contribute to the students' understanding of themselves, of others, and of nursing and medical interventions and serve as pre-requisites for junior and senior courses. (See Exhibit III-01).

BSN Student learning outcomes, Level II, items A-H (junior)

In the junior year, students continue learning about ethics as applied to practice; about relating findings of nursing research to nursing practice; and about providing comprehensive/holistic care to individual clients across the life span in inpatient and outpatient settings using the nursing process (NURS 300 and NURS 302-Adults, NURS 304-Expectant Family, NURS 306-Children). The SOAN 201-Introduction to the Study of Society and PSYC 202-General Psychology prepare students for their senior year in which they broaden their scope of practice to community settings and Psychiatry care and learn to demonstrate responsibility and accountability to individuals, families, and society at large.

BSN Student learning outcomes, Level III, items A-F (senior)

The senior year broadens the students' array of nursing care by adding classes in Psychiatry (NURS 402), Critical Care (NURS 400), Leadership (NURS 410), and Community Nursing (NURS 408). After completing these courses, the students should demonstrate leadership skills in planning, managing, and evaluating the care of clients in addition to effective communication. The Research (NURS 406) course prepares students to appraise and use appropriate research findings from nursing and related fields in nursing practice. The Nursing Informatics course (NURS 404) focuses on basic informatics concepts and health information management applications. Ethical, social, and political issues affecting the healthcare system in Lebanon are integrated into the Leadership course.

Students can transfer from other universities to the BSN program provided they complete the required freshman courses (2011-2012 AUB catalogue, page 466). The BSN is also offered as a second degree to students holding a BS in another major; the curriculum in this case is individualized based on the student's field of study. A new accelerated BS/BA-BSN program (Exhibit III-03) was developed but has not been launched yet pending adequate enrollment.

RN-BSN Program – Logical structure

The structure of the RN-BSN program is very similar to the BSN program, with the same program outcomes and the same level outcomes. The RN-BSN students take the same arts and sciences courses as the generic BSN students. Nevertheless, since these students are experienced nurses, they are exempted from taking the introductory nursing courses (NURS 200/1/2) and take instead a 2-credit course (NURS 205) Foundations of Professional Nursing to update them on trends in nursing. They are given the opportunity to validate Adult Nursing classes (NURS 311) and Maternal and Pediatric Nursing classes (NURS 308). If the students meet the student learning outcomes and demonstrate the required competencies, they are exempted from these courses. The HSON faculty strives to maintain flexibility in the RN-BSN program in meeting the special needs of these students, most of whom work full-time, and often

have family responsibilities. The students are respected for their experience and maturity. For example, students set many of their own learning objectives and strategies to achieve them. This provides for individualized learning experiences and is an excellent motivational factor in learning. Delivery of the RN-BSN curriculum is individualized also because the students come with varying educational backgrounds. There are a number of professional basic educational programs in Lebanon that differ in the scope and type of courses offered. For example some of the RN-BSN applicants hold a diploma that used to be offered by AUB until 1980, or an Associate Degree, and Baccalaureate Technique (BT) offered in various places in the country. These programs differ and course content is carefully evaluated before planning and deciding the course of study of applicants of these programs. For example, if a basic science course offered in the BT program is found to be equivalent to the course offered in the BSN program, the applicant sits for a validation exam and if passed, will earn the related credits.

MSN Program – Logical Structure

Graduate education denotes the critical appraisal of concepts and theories basic to the nursing discipline. The unifying focus in graduate education is specialized and research directed nursing practice. The program also incorporates managerial, administrative, and educational skills. The graduate is expected to be an expert clinician, an informed educator, a knowledgeable researcher, and a skilled manager. Admission to the MSN program requires a BSN degree. All MSN students start their course work with core courses in theory, research and foundations of advanced practice. Then they move into the specialty courses that culminate in a clinical or administrative residency and a graduation project or thesis.

A number of revisions were made to the MSN tracks to ensure maintaining alignment with professional guidelines, CCNE essentials, educational trends as well as the continuous feedback sought from the community of interest (students and alumni). The first revision of the MSN program involved the adult care track where a separate course in advanced pathophysiology and another one in advanced pharmacology were introduced in the academic year 2007-2008 after being integrated in the specialty

courses, upon the recommendation of the CCNE team during their accreditation evaluation spring of 2007.

The other two clinical tracks that were developed (the Psychiatry and Mental Health Nursing track and the community & Public Health Nursing track) followed suit in terms of aligning their curriculum structure with the AACN essentials. Only the psychiatry students, rather than taking a generic advanced assessment course, take an advanced mental health assessment course and instead of the general advanced pathophysiology course take an advanced psychopathology course. The program has been revisited to allow meeting AACN requirements without increasing the total number of credits beyond 36 credits stipulated by AUB.

The administration track underwent a major revision based on feedback from students and alumni, and examination of trends in nursing administration. The new curriculum provides more in depth coverage of nursing administration skills and roles, by introducing more course work in 'nursing' administration. Moreover, health services development and evaluation is now addressed in a new course that was given for the first time in 2010. The revised curriculum was started in 2010-2011. The alignment of the administration track courses was revised so that the curriculum flows from basic to advanced level.

The minor in nursing education was also revised by a designated Task Force and more 'nursing' education content with practical experiences in teaching was included. The revised program will be launched in 2012-2013, when an additional expert in nursing education is expected to join the HSON. The section below outlines how each MSN program outcome is addressed in the MSN curricula of the various tracks (Appendix III-A-3-).

MSN program outcome #1 - Integrate theory and research in nursing and related disciplines as basis for advanced nursing practice and role development.

The Foundations of Advanced Practice course (NURS 501) provides students with knowledge about the advanced practice roles and the foundations and philosophy of care. Legal and ethical issues related to the roles are explored and the role of the APN in effecting health care system change is emphasized.

The Role Development courses (NURS 507/9) build on basic nursing leader/manager and educator roles learned in the baccalaureate program by providing a greater depth in the specialized areas of nursing administration and education. An overview of teaching/learning or management theories as major concepts are presented and case studies and student presentations are used as a means for applying the concepts.

The Nursing Theory course (NURS 500) expands on the idea of nursing theories introduced in undergraduate education. Students analyze and evaluate nursing theories and conceptual frameworks and their development, with implications for practice and research. The student gains critical thinking skills and a greater understanding of theories in general, whether used in management or clinical positions.

MSN program outcome # 2 – Initiate, participate in, utilize and disseminate nursing research

The Advanced Nursing Research class (NURS 502) builds on the basic research learned in the BSN program by analyzing research designs, theoretical frameworks, sample selection, data collection instruments, and data analysis. The students' skills are honed further by several research assignments throughout the program, plus a project or thesis, with consistent mentorship from faculty.

The clinical specialty courses of the adult, psychiatry, and community tracks and the nursing administration track incorporate evidence based practice discussions and applications.

MSN program outcome #3 – Deliver advanced practice nursing based on critical thinking, advanced knowledge and skills in specialized areas of nursing.

The concentration courses in the adult care and community tracks start with advanced assessment, pathophysiology and pharmacology, and for the psychiatry track include advanced mental health assessment, psychopathology and pharmacology. The clinical management and residency courses elaborate in greater detail on comprehensive assessment and management of clients with various actual or potential health problems, requiring critical thinking, and based on pathophysiological, bio-

behavioral, and psychological aspects of advanced nursing practice. The clinical specialty courses are built around nursing phenomena commonly encountered in practice. Students' progress in developing their differential diagnosis skills, which are then examined and applied to select disorders learned in the MSN program. Students in the community track develop skills in community assessment through field projects and propose/execute community interventions through their community intervention and residency courses. In the Nursing Administration Track, critical thinking is used to acquire and use organizational leadership skills. The clinical and residency components of the clinical and administration tracks allow students to apply and practice new skills as well as deliver care or leadership at an advanced level as clinical nurse specialists or managers.

MSN program outcome #4– Demonstrate advanced decision-making across health care settings, using interdisciplinary approach; and #5 – Analyze the impact of socio-cultural, ethical, legal, and health care policy issues on nursing practice and health care delivery.

The Foundations of Advanced Nursing Practice (NURS 501) focuses on the advanced nursing practice roles as compared to the BSN roles learned in undergraduate programs. Ethical, legal, interdisciplinary collaboration and healthcare policy issues are explored. In the Administration track, several lectures stress using a interdisciplinary approach and advanced decision-making across healthcare settings (NURS 507, NURS 508, NURS 520, NURS 527, and MNGT 332). In the advanced assessment courses of the clinical tracks (NURS 503, NURS 512, NURS 522), students practice with other health professionals differential diagnoses in various settings. In the clinical management and residency courses (NURS 505, NURS 506, NURS 517, NURS 518, NURS 519, NURS 523, NURS 524), students integrate cultural and ethical components in advanced decision-making and interdisciplinary collaboration in the clinical arena as they learn to practice the advanced practice nursing (APN) roles, through class discussions clinical experiences.

MSN program outcome #6 – Assume leadership roles in education and management to promote health care.

The concentration courses in education focus on teaching and learning theories, curriculum and test construction, and leadership in nursing education. Students in the clinical tracks have assignments that help them develop their educational skills throughout their course of study. The concentration courses in administration focus on management theories, change management, human resource and strategic management, organizational quality, healthcare finance, collaboration, and ethics in preparing students for a leadership role in nursing and healthcare administration.

Standard III D. Teaching-Learning Practices and environments support the achievement of expected individual student learning outcomes and aggregate student outcomes.

Course syllabi include course description, prerequisites, learning outcomes, teaching methods and evaluation methods, in addition to unit outlines and reading assignments. They are shared with students at the beginning of the semester and clearly delineate the teaching-learning activities in the courses (Exhibit III-01). Teaching-learning activities in the various courses feed into the learning outcomes and are diversified to meet the various learning needs of students. In addition to lectures, in some courses, case studies are used as an instructional strategy to promote active learning, facilitate application of concepts taught and promote an interactive student-centered exploration of real life situations; also simulation lab is utilized using course specific scenarios designed by our faculty members to reflect our curriculum and our culture. Students have written assignments, group projects, reflective journals and presentations in order to apply the information link theory to practice. The use of Moodle, a learning management system, has been incorporated into most of the School of Nursing courses and its effectiveness is being evaluated by faculty and students. A few of the nursing courses are given in a blended format. Faculty members continue to attend courses offered by AUB Center for Teaching and Learning (CTL) to

improve and expand their methods of teaching; all new faculty members take almost all the courses offered by CTL and the Academic Computing Center.

All classrooms are equipped with computer and LCD projector, and in most cases internet access. To enhance clinical teaching, we have the most sophisticated simulation lab in the country in which faculty members either prepare students for clinical practice or support students in reviewing clinical procedures when necessary. Moreover, the School has its computer lab managed by an IT person dedicated to support student learning.

In BSN clinical instruction, matching teaching strategies with the learning needs of the students is critical. Weekly objectives are set, and each student is monitored and supported until s/he can meet the course objectives. Formative evaluation is done through weekly anecdotes, which update the student and the instructor on the students' progress. Strengths are reinforced and areas for improvement are also addressed to help the student meet the objectives. Great effort is put into helping the student adjust successfully to the clinical environment. For example, clinical faculty members encounter at times students who get anxious or are slow in clinical learning and in the acquisition of psychomotor skills, compared to their student cohort. The student is usually offered extra supervised clinical time with a faculty member to gain experience and to facilitate a smoother transition to the upper level nursing courses. Students who do not speak Arabic are usually provided English speaking patients and assisted in finding Arabic classes to enable them to better communicate with patients.

Students in the RN-BSN program are expected to use their prior nursing and life experience as a basis for integrating the program theory, for applying this experience and theory in practice in order to achieve specified clinical outcomes. Students are given written and oral presentation projects, such as case studies and comprehensive nursing care plans, on health problems related to the course in which the student is enrolled. The students write their own objectives and are given independence in clinical areas, but instructors visit them in the clinical sites to assure that they are meeting their objectives.

In the MSN program, a variety of resources are provided for theory courses, including interactive on line programs to enhance and diversify student learning. Also

on-line discussion forums and assignments are integrated in a number of courses. An interdisciplinary approach is used in clinical teaching. In the adult care, psychiatry and community tracks, students practice advanced health assessment with medical students in the outpatient department of AUBMC. In the clinical courses, the faculty assists students in setting their own clinical objectives at the outset of the semester. Then clinical site placement is coordinated by the faculty and clinical preceptors are chosen and contacted to meet the students' needs. Since the start of the MSN program, at which time we had to resort to medical preceptors and diabetes educators for the training of students in the clinical tracks, advanced practice nurses and clinical educators became more available resources serving as preceptors for MSN students. Students communicate weekly their clinical experience through written clinical logs and meet regularly with the faculty member/clinical course coordinator to follow up on their progress. Flexibility is maintained such as changing preceptor or site if needed in order to ensure meeting learning outcomes. The Simulation and Clinical Competency Center is used for training MSN students in advanced health assessment.

The AUBMC is an excellent clinical facility for teaching nursing students. The hospital provides a large variety of cases, which exposes students to many different patient populations. AUBMC is a teaching hospital and most patients welcome the students. The students have access to the supplies and equipment they need to learn and provide care. The nurse managers, many of whom are AUB HSON graduates, collaborate well with faculty and students. MSN students are encouraged to become involved in research and attend medical rounds and participate in focused interdisciplinary case discussions and outside conferences. The AUBMC follows the American system in its standards of care, charting, and the use of the English language. Nursing practice at AUBMC follows the American Nursing Association's standards of care. The Clinical and Professional Development Center is re- accredited as a provider of continuing education by ANCC. The nursing services department at AUBMC is Magnet designated since June 2009. The medical center is currently undergoing major renovations, opening new specialty centers and centers of excellence such as the neuroscience center and the adult cancer center. See Exhibit III-04.

In addition to AUBMC, students are placed in other hospitals, schools, nursing homes and community centers in both the undergraduate and graduate programs. This practice is becoming more common, as student numbers increase and new health care facilities and specialty centers open in Lebanon.

In the MSN program, students who cannot get satisfactory experiences in Lebanon in line with their area of specialty due to the scarcity of resources are provided with opportunities for clinical residency at Schools of Nursing abroad. To that effect, a number of partner universities have agreed to supervise and mentor students in a range of specialty areas. So far clinical residencies for the clinical track students have been done at AUBMC, the Chronic Care Center and other community centers in Lebanon, the Johns Hopkins University School & Hospitals Health Care System, the University of Michigan Ann Arbor Health Care System, Vanderbilt University, Fort Collins Colorado, St. Jude's Children's Cancer Center in Memphis, and the University of Maryland in the USA. Moreover, a student did her residency recently at the University of Technology in Sydney and another in Ireland at the University College Dublin in oncology and palliative care. For the Administration Track, residencies have taken place at AUBMC Nursing Services, Department of Human Resources AUB, Makassed Hospital, Ministry of Health, WHO, St. George Hospital, Labib Hospital, Hammoud Hospital, Hamad Medical Center in Qatar, University of Michigan, MD Anderson in Texas, and Johns Hopkins University in USA. See Appendix III-D-1 and Exhibit III-05.

Key Element III-E: The curriculum and teaching-learning practices consider the needs and expectations of the identified community of interest

The HSON receives on a regular basis feedback from alumni, clinical preceptors, clinical faculty, and the larger community of interest (COI). The HSON and for the last 5 years has been soliciting feedback from its COI namely from students, graduates, alumni, and primary employers. The Comprehensive Evaluation Plan (Appendix I-B-1) schedules formal curriculum evaluations every three years, plus strategies to systematically evaluate constituencies on a regular basis (every 1-3 years), which is also in line with the HSON Strategic Plan.

Revision of teaching and learning practices continues to be based on responses from the student Instructor Course Evaluations (ICEs), the Course Evaluation Summary (CESF) forms, student satisfaction and exit surveys. The CESF includes input from instructors and the community of interest and makes comparisons with the Standards/Essentials. See Appendices I-C-3 and I-C-4.

Undergraduate program revisions

Changes made in the BSN curriculum were as follows (Appendix III-A-1): NURS 201 (Introduction to Nursing Practice) changed from 3cr. to 2 cr. NURS 300 (Nursing Care of Adults I, Theory and Practicum), 304 (Nursing Care of the Expectant Family, Theory and Practicum), 302 (Nursing Care of Adults II, Theory and Practicum), 306 (Nursing Care of Children, Theory and Practicum), 402 (Mental and Psychiatric Nursing, Theory and Practicum), 408 (Community Health Nursing, Theory and Practicum), and 410 (Leadership and Management in Nursing, Theory and Practicum) were changed from 6 cr. to 5 cr. Nursing 400 (Critical Care Nursing, Theory and Practicum) from 6cr. to 4cr.. A clinical practicum (Practicum I) was added during summer of junior year in addition to the practicum in spring semester of the senior year.
Arabic 201 was added as a GE course. All nursing courses are currently using Moodle and few are offered in blended format. NURS 406 Nursing Research was designated as Writing Intensive. NURS 203 Biostatistics was designated as GE course.

Simulation technology was introduced and is being used in all nursing courses in preparation for clinical. With the reduction of credits in the clinical nursing courses there has been a redistribution of credits to reflect 2 credits of theory, 2 credits of clinical and 1 credit of simulation. Time in simulation lab is distributed between acquisition of needed skills for any particular course, role plays and scenarios employing critical thinking with standardized patients. See Appendix III-E-1.

Additional changes include block teaching in nursing 201, 202 and 408. We are continuing to evaluate the feasibility of continuing this method as it has created a tremendous stress for both faculty and students. Additionally, the 2 credit nursing informatics course has been moved from the junior year to the fall semester of the senior year.

The HSON Undergraduate Academic and Curriculum Committee periodically reviews the curriculum. The reviews tend to be based on the process of benchmarking the BSN curriculum against US schools of nursing of comparable size, and on reviewing student and faculty feedback on academic matters (number of credits and placement of courses in the program). Although students have consistently evaluated the BSN nursing curriculum positively, they find it extremely demanding. Based on feedback over the last 5 years from the COI, the BSN curriculum has undergone some changes. Theory and clinical courses were combined and total number of credits per combined course was reduced and aligned with international requirements. A practicum course was added to be offered in the summer of the third year in addition to the practicum course offered in the fourth year. Other changes included varying the sequence and placement of courses with emphasis on ensuring equity in the number of credits offered each semester, reduction in the overall number of credits, and few additions in the BSN curriculum. For example, the health assessment course was moved from summer to spring and the statistics course from spring to summer to ease the load of the sophomore year. All major nursing courses were reduced by one credit. However, in order not to jeopardize clinical teaching and since the students requested more clinical experience, two additions were introduced. First, clinical simulation experiences were integrated in all nursing courses. Second, two new practicum courses, zero credits each, have been added to the summer of the junior year (Practicum I) and the spring of the senior year (practicum II). These changes are reflected in the revised BSN curriculum (see Appendix III-A-1).

The RN/BSN program has undergone similar revisions as the BSN but the process of validation of competencies which has been successful with positive feedback from faculty and students remains in effect.
See Exhibit III-06.

Graduate programs revisions

Similarly the revisions made to the MSN curricula as described above were made based on feedback via the student satisfaction and exit surveys, alumni and employer surveys. In addition, faculty members utilize feedback in the ICE reports and input in the

CSE forms in refining their courses on a yearly basis to better meet the needs of students. For example, with a more heterogeneous pool of MSN students, coming with BSN degrees from different places, a need to provide more review sessions on physical assessment as refresher was shared by students, so more hands-on sessions were planned in the simulation lab at the school prior to sending students to the clinical areas. Moreover in the advanced pathophysiology course, on-line quizzes covering normal physiology were introduced to better assist students in assimilating advanced pathophysiologic phenomena covered in class. See Exhibit II-07.

Standard III F. Individual student performance is evaluated by the faculty and reflects achievement of expected individual student learning outcomes. Evaluation policies and procedures for individual student performance are defined and consistently applied.
Student Evaluation Policies and Procedures

The achievement of aggregate learning outcomes for the BSN and MSN programs are evaluated through the course outcomes. These outcomes are then used to evaluate student performance. Specific grading criteria are outlined on each course syllabus.

Advising Policy

Upon admission, every student is assigned an academic adviser. Students meet with their academic advisors periodically during the semester and during the advising period to discuss their academic progress. Meetings are documented as needed in the student file for evaluation and follow up. Students whose performance is less than satisfactory are counseled individually to assist them in developing a plan to improve their performance.

Guidelines for advising are used across AUB and discuss the role of the Advisor, desired communication skills, important topics to be discussed in advising meetings with students, the students' role, and frequently asked questions. At AUB, it is the responsibility of the Academic Advising Process Improvement Team to continuously

improve the academic advising practices at the university as a whole. See
http://www.aub.edu.lb/ctl/Documents/activities/02-03/advising-notes.htm
for advising practices at AUB.

AUB Grading Policy

General grading policies are explained in the student handbooks, AUB University
Catalogue and on the HSON website. The grading system at AUB and HSON is
described as follows:

is used.

Cumulative Average	GPA	Cumulative Average	GPA	Cumulative Average	GPA	Cumulative Average	GPA
<60	0	67	1.86	75	2.73	83	3.46
60	1	68	1.98	76	2.82	84	3.54
61	1.13	69	2.09	77	2.92	85	3.63
62	1.26	70	2.2	78	3.02	86	3.7
63	1.38	71	2.31	79	3.11	87	3.78
64	1.5	72	2.42	80	3.2	88	3.86
65	1.63	73	2.52	81	3.29	89	3.93
66	1.74	74	2.62	82	3.38	>=90	4

I	Incomplete
P	Pass
PR	In Progress
W	Withdraw
F	Fail

The manner in which grades are assigned at AUB is considered to be strict when
compared to similar American institutions and as such, a letter entitled, *Supplementary
Academic Information* is sent with all transcript requests and reads as follows:
"Grading at AUB tends to be criterion-based rather than norm-based. Hence, there is a
concentration of grades around the 75 percent mark, with relatively few grades above
80 percent to 85 percent. Rather than the bell curve that norm-based grading produces,

criterion-based grading produces a steeple curve. Graduate schools should therefore realize when assessing applicants from AUB and their academic records that an average of 80 percent is very good. Students, who have an average of 85 or 80 and above who are also in the top 10 percent of their class, qualify for the Dean's Honor List. Seventy-five average in the major admits a student to graduate work on probation at AUB and eighty average in the major admits to regular graduate status at AUB. As a result of this criterion-based grading system, the grades of AUB students tend to be lower than that of students in American universities and colleges. For this reason, the university provides students applying to graduate programs in the US with this 'Supplementary Academic Information' as an aid in the evaluation of the student's performance in comparison with his/her peers at US universities. This supplementary academic information is given only to provide a contextual background basis of comparison and is not part of the student's official transcript."

BSN program grading policy

The grading system for the BSN program can be found on the HSON website AUB Catalogue, and in the Undergraduate Student Handbook. Each course syllabus includes policies regarding evaluation and expectations of performance and is discussed fully in the first session of each course. Evaluation of the students' achievement includes their work in theory and practice, as well as their professional demeanor. The passing grade in all nursing courses is 70. Students need to pass both the theory and practicum components of a nursing course in order to pass it. A description of grading policy is found in the 2011-2012 catalogue page 462-465.

BSN Student Evaluation

Students are evaluated based on course objectives that derive from the program outcomes.

BSN Student Evaluation Methods (didactic)

Assessment measures used to evaluate students' achievement of outcomes in the theory courses include multiple choice and essay examinations, evaluation of presentations, group work, short assignments, case studies, and term papers based on preset criteria. Criteria used for assessment include mastery of knowledge, critical

thinking, writing and oral presentation skills, ability to work in groups, and ability to search and critique the literature. See Exhibit III-08.

BSN Student Evaluation Methods (practicum)

Assessment measures used in the practicum courses include competency based evaluations of clinical skills, nursing care plans, case studies, client and staff teaching, auditing documentations, monitoring procedures, and problem solving exercises that include decision making and critical thinking skills. Competencies evaluated include dexterity, communication skills, organization and time management skills, teamwork or ability to work in teams, as well as ethical and professional conduct. See Exhibit III-09

Independence is also fostered in the BSN students by adjusting the amount of supervision as the student becomes more proficient. In the sophomore year, students have constant, direct supervision as they learn skills for the first time. In the junior year, the students require less supervision, unless they are acquiring new skills for the first time. In the senior year, students are much more independent and are coupled with RNs on the units, especially in the Leadership and Management course and practicum, with little direct supervision from faculty.

Students in the RN-BSN program are required to use their prior experience to achieve specific clinical outcomes. The students write their own expected learning outcomes and are given independence at clinical; but instructors follow them to assure that the students are meeting their objectives. If a previously taken course is found to be equivalent to a required course, the student may sit for a validation exam. In the courses to be validated, students are given written and oral presentation projects, such as case studies and comprehensive nursing care plans on health problems related to the course being taken, in addition to a written test. Clinical competence is evaluated using case studies and direct supervision by faculty in specialized clinical areas.

Clinical instruction and evaluation have been continuously under scrutiny at HSON. A generic clinical evaluation tool was developed and is currently being used in all nursing courses; it is intended to enhance consistency in evaluating clinical performance relative to competencies reflected in course and program outcomes, and allow for supporting pass/fail clinical grading. This tool allows for variation in patient age, complexity, and context. See Appendix III-F-1.

Preceptors' and clinical instructors' evaluation of students

HSON preceptors and clinical instructors are a valuable source for providing evaluative feedback on students and graduates. Preceptors are registered nurses who hold a Masters degree in nursing who may or may not be currently working on a unit at AUBMC. Clinical instructors are faculty members of the SON who precept students. Regular meetings are held between course coordinators, clinical instructors and preceptors in which students are evaluated on their clinical performance. The coordinators of the courses assess the preceptors and recommend whether they should be retained or not.

MSN Student Evaluation

Students are evaluated based on course learning outcomes, which derive from the program outcomes.

MSN student evaluation methods

Assessment measures used in the theory courses include class and take home examinations, oral presentations, group work participation based on specified criteria, short assignments and term papers, as well as evaluation of student graduation projects and thesis through oral defenses and evaluation of the completed written documents See Exhibit III-09. Outcomes evaluated include mastery of knowledge, critical thinking, synthesis of knowledge, professionalism in written and oral presentations, and the ability to critique and use the literature to support evidence-based administrative and clinical practice.

Assessment measures used in the clinical and practicum adult care track courses include on site hands-on examination for the advanced assessment course, focused and comprehensive health assessment reports, evaluation of clinical experiences by preceptors, client write-ups that include evidence-based care plans, and reports of interdisciplinary clinical protocols. For residency courses, students put their clinical objectives with support from faculty and preceptors along with related strategies to achieve them. Students are evaluated based on achieving the set clinical objectives. See Appendix III-F-2.

Evaluations of the residency portion of the administrative track are done to assess the ability of the student to: assess and analyze organizational functions, demonstrate synthesis of didactic knowledge and apply it in professional roles, and assume roles of participant and leader in projects.

All tracks evaluate the students' abilities to demonstrate increasing initiative, independence, and professionalism in the specified professional role, and use research evidence as the basis for evaluating administrative and clinical practice.
This past summer all BSN and MSN course syllabi were revisited and examined for alignment of program outcomes, course outcomes and evaluation methods. See Appendices III-A-2 and III-A-3.

MSN program grading

The minimum passing grade for a graduate course is 70. However, students are required to maintain a cumulative average of at least 80 in all courses taken for graduate credit. Students who are absent without excuse for more than one third of the number of sessions in any course, or who fail to sit for scheduled examinations, or fail to fulfill course requirements, will be given the minimum grade for graduate courses, which is 55. Results of tutorial courses, residencies, projects and theses are reported as pass (P) or fail (F).

Students admitted with "deficiencies", such as those who do not meet the AUB English language proficiency requirements, may need to register for prerequisite courses that are baccalaureate courses; such courses do not carry any graduate credit. The minimum passing grade for a prerequisite course is 80.

HSON has policies regarding placement on probation or dismissal from the school for the BSN and MSN programs and they can be found on AUB graduate and undergraduate catalogues (Exhibit I-01)

To complete requirements for the Master of Science in Nursing, students must pass a comprehensive examination. There are three examination questions that are based on content from the MSN core courses and the specialty courses. Two faculty members read and grade each question. Comprehensive exams are given a pass/fail grade. A final grade of Satisfactory (Pass) is required to pass the exam. The desired

learning outcome is the synthesis and application of knowledge of advanced nursing practice. See Appendix III-F-3

In conclusion, the students' performance reflects achievement of expected outcomes. The HSON evaluation policies are clear and are consistently applied.

III-G: Curriculum and teaching-learning practices are evaluated at regularly scheduled intervals to foster ongoing improvement.

Revisions of teaching-learning practices are undertaken at the level of committees and by faculty members. The HSON Academic and Curriculum Committee is responsible for the BSN curriculum evaluation and revision and the HSON Graduate Studies Committee (GSC) oversees the MSN program.

The Undergraduate Academic and Curriculum Committee and the Graduate Studies Committee at HSON use two other modalities for obtaining student feedback and evaluating teaching-learning practices. Undergraduate and graduate student representatives share students' feedback with these committees regarding teaching learning practices. In addition, two Town meetings, held yearly by HSON Director, are conducted to clarify student concerns. These two committees also examine results of student and alumni surveys yearly to identify areas in need for improvement.

Instructor Course Evaluation (ICE) forms

Across the university campus, a standardized Instructor Course Evaluation (ICE) form is filled by students every semester in order to evaluate teaching-learning practices. Based on faculty feedback, the ICE form has been amended to include three different forms: A, B, and C. Form A, is a standard form that applies to all disciplines across AUB; Form B applies to theory courses offered in the nursing program; and Form C applies to evaluating clinical nursing courses. Objective and subjective feedback is provided.

Results of the ICEs are sent to both, the course instructor and the Director of HSON; the results have multiple purposes. First, they are used by the director for faculty appraisals and promotions. Second, they provide the faculty with specific information deemed necessary to improve the course's instructional plan. Third, they constitute an important part of the faculty's teaching portfolios.

In line with the CCNE self-study guidelines, the Course Evaluation Summary Form was created and implemented. The form aims at analyzing teaching-learning practices as reflected in the ICEs or other forms submitted by students, along with instructor analysis of areas of strengths and areas needing improvement. Based on the provided data, the course syllabus is then revised to maintain excellence in teaching-learning practices. Each semester and after each course offering, improvements are incorporated accordingly. This is part of the HSON Comprehensive Evaluation Plan used to conduct systematic evaluation. At the level of individual faculty members, a mid-semester course evaluation is performed every semester with students. Modifications are made as feasible during that semester to enhance student learning.

In addition to ICE's and CESFs, questionnaires are continuously sent to the Community of Interest (COI) and have been utilized to evaluate the curriculum as explained in Key Element III-F. Current data for the Graduate Exit Survey, Graduate Outcome Survey, and the Alumni Survey among others as outlined in the Comprehensive Evaluation Plan continue to be monitored and actions are taken where improvements are needed. The School of Nursing still holds annual faculty retreats, usually in the summer, to discuss student/program assessment issues related to program and student learning outcomes.

Standard III summary

Strengths

- Thorough evaluation of curricula is being conducted and results utilized promptly.
- BSN and MSN programs are solid, registered in NY, CCNE accredited, and benchmarked against leading schools in the US.
- Faculty attend a variety of seminars/workshops offered by AUB's center on teaching and learning and the Melon Foundation on teaching excellence on a regular basis and develop own teaching portfolios.
- HSON Comprehensive Evaluation Plan guides strategic planning initiatives.

Areas for improvement

- Feedback mechanism from COI needs to be improved.

Action taken

- Continuous monitoring of Comprehensive Evaluation Plan for HSON.
- The Psychiatry & Mental Health Nursing track was revised to include common courses on physical assessment and pathophysiology similar to other MSN clinical tracks.
- Adding focus groups to obtain feedback from COI has been partially implemented.
- A practicum course (N528) was developed for MSN students seeking specialty certification

STANDARD IV

PROGRAM EFFECTIVENESS: AGGREGATE STUDENT AND FACULTY OUTCOMES

The program is effective in fulfilling its mission, goals, and expected aggregate student and faculty outcomes. Actual aggregate student outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected student outcomes. Actual alumni satisfaction data and the accomplishments of graduates of the program attest to the effectiveness of the program. Actual aggregate faculty outcomes are consistent with the mission, goals, and expected faculty outcomes. Data on program effectiveness are used to foster ongoing program improvement.

IV-A. Surveys and other data sources are used to collect information about student, alumni, and employer satisfaction and demonstrated achievements of graduates. Collected data include, but are not limited to, graduation rates, NCLEX-RN® pass rates, certification examination pass rates, and employment rates, as appropriate.

As stated in standard I-B, the Hariri School of Nursing evaluates regularly its student outcomes using the comprehensive evaluation plan (Appendix I-B-1). Based on the HSON strategic plan and in line with the comprehensive evaluation plan, key performance indicators (KPIs) were identified and tracked over the past 5 years starting with the academic year 2006-2007 (See Exhibit IV-01). One source of data collected by the Student Services Officer includes enrollment, graduation and employment rates of undergraduate and graduate students, which are collected annually.

Graduates from the BSN program do not normally take the *NCLEX-RN®* examination except for those graduates applying for positions in the US. All BSN graduates in Lebanon sit for the National Licensure Examination (colloquium). HSON tracks the pass rates as well as the employment rates of the graduates. The colloquium pass rate and the employment rate of AUB graduates has been close to100% in each of the past five years. There are no national exams in Lebanon for the MSN graduates.

Other sources of data used for measuring student outcomes includes student satisfaction and exit surveys, alumni and employer surveys. Satisfaction surveys cover domains contributing to BSN and MSN program outcomes and are conducted yearly on all BSN and MSN students towards the end of spring semester. Exit surveys are conducted as close as possible to graduation every year and reflect the students' evaluation of their expected outcomes achieved in the program of study in terms of communication, knowledge, critical thinking, management, education and leadership skills; clinical and scholarly experiences; satisfaction with specific courses; and preparation for their careers.

The Alumni surveys address the graduates' achievements and their perception of the extent to which the program of study prepared them for their current positions. Appendix IV-A-1 shows the various scales of the surveys that are used as KPIs and monitored. Alumni surveys and employer surveys are conducted annually to get information about the aggregate student outcomes from the perspective of BSN and MSN graduates and their employers (see Appendix IV-A-1). The response rate for both surveys has declined dramatically since 2007-8 (Table IV-A-1)

Table IV-A-1: Response Rate for BSN Alumni and Employer Surveys 2006-07 to 2010-11

Response Rate	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Alumni	68%	18%	9%	13%	9%
Employer	100%	26%	NA	NA	NA

The reason for the declining rate of return may be related to survey administration; in 2006-07 all questionnaires were distributed personally as hard copies. This resulted in a high response rate; whereas in 2007-08 the questionnaires were administered electronically. Efforts to improve the response rates of alumni are underway. The Student Services and Career Planning officer at HSON is keeping track of the whereabouts of graduates in collaboration with HSON faculty and the Nurses Chapter of the AUB Alumni Association. By maintaining an up-to-date list of alumnus

addresses we hope to better track graduates and increase the response rate to the alumni survey.

As an additional source of data, MSN Residencies are periodically evaluated by faculty, preceptors, and students and feedback is used for program and residency improvement. Students completing their residencies at Johns Hopkins University are sent a one page survey one year after completion of their clinical or administrative residencies.

IV-B. Aggregate student outcome data are analyzed and compared with expected student outcomes.

The number of students admitted to the entry level BSN program in each of the past five years and the number of graduates are shown in Table IV-B-1 by cohort since 2006-2007. All graduates are employed immediately upon graduation, either at the American University of Beirut Medical Center or other hospitals in Lebanon. Many of the BSN graduates apply and are later admitted to the MSN Program. HSON graduates are eagerly sought after by local and international employers. The Arab American Oil Company (ARAMCO) in Saudi Arabia is particularly assertive in recruiting HSON BSN and MSN graduates.

Table IV-B-1: Entry Level BSN Program 2006-07 to 2010-11

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Admitted*	49	46	32	53	55
Graduates	26	21	16	-	-
Employed	26	21	16	-	-
Colloquium Pass rate	100	100	100	-	-

*numbers include transfer students

Moreover, the table shows the colloquium pass rate that entitles BSN graduates to get licensure to practice nursing in the country. The rate has been consistently at 100%.

Table IV-B-2 below shows the situation with the MSN students.

Table IV-B-2: Entry Level MSN Program 2006-07 to 2010-11

	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11
Admitted	9	20	24	19	23
Graduates	8	20	17	-	-

Data on student surveys is regularly tracked by an appointed HSON strategy team and closely monitored by program coordinators and faculty. Long term goals or targets are set for each KPI and trends evaluated in relation to the outcomes. For example, the long term target for student enrollment is set at 250 total undergraduate and graduate. BSN student numbers have increased in 2009-2010 after going down earlier; also the MSN admissions picked up after decreasing in 2009-2010. The financial situation explains the fluctuations in student enrollment.

Student satisfaction data are summarized in Tables IV-B-3 & IV-B-4.

Table IV-B-3: BSN Student Satisfaction Data 2006-7 to 2010-11

Source	KPI	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Target
BSN Satisfaction Survey	Overall Satisfaction	89%	72%	79%	89%	88%	85%
BSN Satisfaction Survey	Satisfaction with instruction	73%	68%	76%	85%	83%	85%
BSN Satisfaction Survey	Satisfaction with advising	59%	45%	56%	54%	56%	75%
BSN Exit Survey	Skill Development	87%	91%	90%	84%	89%	95%
BSN Exit Survey	Courses	76%	83%	80%	87%	76%	90%
BSN Exit Survey	Clinical Experiences	75%	77%	82%	91%	88%	85%

As stated above, targets are set for student surveys and results compared accordingly. For instance, a target of 95% on skill development was set for the BSN and MSN exit surveys. As noted in table IV-B-3, BSN students' satisfaction varies from year to year. Overall satisfaction increased above target in 2009-2010 and in 2010-11. Satisfaction with instruction increased in 2009-10 then remained in the vicinity of the target. Satisfaction with academic advising and clinical experience is below target, though it is improving slightly compared to 2007-2008. Satisfaction with skill development is at a higher level; although satisfaction with courses is not as high. Satisfaction with clinical experiences surpassed the target in the past 2 years.

The results of the BSN student satisfaction and exit surveys are discussed at the undergraduate academic and curriculum committee. The committee modifies courses and teaching arrangements in response to students' comments and concerns (See Exhibit III-06).

Table IV-B-4 shows that MSN students are generally more satisfied than BSN students. Overall satisfaction with the program is now consistently above 90%. Satisfaction with instruction is not as high, but at an acceptable level. Academic advising is the one area in which student satisfaction levels are below target, suggesting the need for change. As with BSN students, results of the exit surveys are more positive, with the domains of skill development and clinical experiences close to target. More fluctuation is noted with courses and advising.

Table IV-B-4: MSN Student Satisfaction Data 2006-7 to 2010-11

Source	KPI	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2010-11	Target
MSN Satisfaction Survey	Overall Satisfaction	-	81%	85%	92%	95%	90%
MSN Satisfaction Survey	Satisfaction with instruction	-	89%	86%	88%	86%	90%
MSN Satisfaction Survey	Satisfaction with advising	-	69%	62%	60%	54%	75%
MSN Exit Survey	Skill Development	71%	94%	97%	89%	94%	95%
MSN Exit Survey	Courses	85%	89%	71%	87%	79%	90%
MSN Exit Survey	Clinical Experience and Residency	85%	100%	100%	79%	100%	100%
MSN Exit Survey	Advising and mentoring	86%	93%	91%	85%	89%	95%

The Graduate Studies Committee discusses MSN student satisfaction data and amends courses and teaching arrangements in light of student feedback (Exhibit III-07). Faculty members have somewhat higher teaching loads relative to faculty in overseas universities. This may account in part for the moderate levels of student satisfaction during the program. However, exit surveys result in much higher levels of satisfaction with advising and mentoring. This is because MSN students complete residencies and projects or theses under faculty supervision. They are also mentored by advanced practice nurses during their six week residency, which may be undertaken at an

academic health center overseas. The close working relationship faculty members develop with students towards the end of the program probably accounts for the high levels of satisfaction with advising and mentoring.

Since response rates for alumni and employer surveys were low in recent years, new methods of data collection such as interviews and focus groups are being used. For the MSN program, a study conducted in 2009-2010 jointly with the Department of Nursing Services at AUBMC surveyed nurses enrolled in the MSN program and recent graduates regarding skills and competencies, acquired utilization of competencies in current practice, as well as intentions and reasons to stay or leave AUBMC. The main employer of HSON graduates remains the AUB Medical Center. The School-Hospital Nursing Service joint-committee is working on a joint initiative to collect information from graduates using interviews and focus groups. In line with these recommendations, a study has been conducted jointly by AUBMC nursing services and HSON that addresses the expectations and job intentions of MSN students and graduates. A total of 51 nurses completed the survey (49.5% response rate), including 57% MSN students and 43% graduates. Almost all (94.1%) nurses reported that graduate studies improved the quality of their clinical performance, their leadership skills (90.2%), their utilization of research findings (88.2%) and involvement in research activities (86.3%), collaboration with others (86%), in addition to patient/client education (82.3%) and incorporating ethical principles in their practice (78%).

In addition, two focus groups were conducted with nurse managers and clinical educators who were asked about their perceptions regarding the performance of MSN graduates. They stated that MSN graduates show more evidence-based approach than BSN graduates. However, they reported that the performance of MSN graduates at the bedside does not show improvement as much as expected. The study revealed discrepancies between the expectations of the MSN graduates and those of nurse managers in terms of their roles related to clinical involvement, coaching other staff members and sharing knowledge with others. The group recommended more clinical practice at the MSN level especially for those MSN students accepted with minimal experience after their BSN, or requesting more years of experience as criteria for admission to the MSN program. They acknowledged the challenges faced by MSN

graduates in terms of the limited opportunities for promotion, scope of practice and clear job description for advanced practice nurses. The group also recommended more communication of expectations between the HSON and Nursing Services regarding the MSN program.

HSON has been active in developing strong collaborative relationships with AUBMC Nursing Services. To that effect three joint appointments with Clinical Nurse Specialists working at AUBMC have been created and all three have been actively involved in teaching graduate students in their residencies, thus facilitating communication regarding the MSN program. Furthermore and for a number of years, the Graduate Studies Committee at HSON has had an invited member from AUBMC Nursing Services participating in graduate curriculum deliberations. These efforts are expected to continue and further develop in the future.

Faculty members evaluate their courses through student instructor course evaluation surveys (ICEs) administered independently by the Office of Institutional Research and Assessment. The results are confidential to individual faculty members and to the Director of HSON. The Director discusses the evaluations individually with each faculty member. Faculty members commit to plans for improvement on the basis of this feedback. All faculty members are strongly encouraged to attend teaching development programs offered by Academic Computing Services and workshops and other regular learning events arranged by the Centre of Teaching and Learning at AUB. The university regularly welcomes international experts to share their expertise in teaching and learning with AUB faculty.

At the course level, results of the standardized Instructor Course Evaluations (ICEs) that are offered every semester by AUB's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment are used by the instructors in planning course schedules, teaching methods and assignments, along with the Course Evaluation Summary Form (CESF) that allows a more thorough analysis of courses. The ICE includes a section evaluating learning outcomes, in addition to course and teacher effectiveness. Revision of this form was made academic year 2008-2009 to better reflect nursing courses Appendix I-C-3). Furthermore, a section in the satisfaction surveys asks the students, in addition to their

overall satisfaction, about the quality of instruction, learning experiences, and course requirements with regard to their expectations.

Clinical instruction and evaluation have been continuously under scrutiny at HSON. Several faculty retreats were dedicated to the subject as well as for curriculum planning in 2007, 2008, 2009 (Exhibit IV-02). The faculty evaluated the generic clinical evaluation tool designed at the conclusion of the 2006 retreat and came up with a monitoring plan to assure proper follow-up and evaluation of student clinical outcomes. The clinical evaluation has been used in all clinical courses.

IV-C. Aggregate student outcome data provide evidence of the program's effectiveness in achieving its mission, goals, and expected outcomes.

The program continues to regularly collect student outcome data to evaluate achievement of program mission, goals and expected outcomes. These outcomes are the key performance indicators that are tracked regularly in strategic planning. The BSN and MSN program outcomes are in line with the School's mission and trends in nursing education (see Appendices I-A-1, I-A 3 and I-A-4). Moreover, this summer, outcomes of all nursing courses were reviewed to ensure their alignment with BSN and MSN program outcomes and modifications were made as needed. For instance, some of the MSN administration courses did not reflect adequate integration of research as stipulated in the mission and MSN program outcomes, and so they were revised accordingly (see Appendices III-A-2 and III-A-3).

The pass rate on the Colloquium exam, which is the equivalent to the NCLEX-RN licensing exam in Lebanon, continues to be 100%. There is no certification exam in Lebanon for the MSN graduates yet. Nevertheless since 2007, three MSN graduates sat for and passed the certification exam in the oncology clinical specialty in the US, which speaks to the rigor of the MSN program.

Graduation rates for the BSN program, ranging between 64% and 73%, reflect the rigor of the program; only a few weak students do not succeed in completing the program. For the MSN program, graduation rates range from 65% to 100%; a few students withdrew in the past couple of years due to financial reasons, family events or traveling abroad.

Employment rates of the BSN graduates continue to be close to 100%, with AUBMC being the major employer. Palestinian graduates were not provided with a license to practice in recent years so these graduates sought non nursing positions. However this year the parliament agreed to grant these nursing graduates the license to practice nursing in Lebanon and so they were hired. This supports AUB and the School's mission in terms of ensuring a diverse student body. AUBMC gives priority in its hiring of nurses to AUB graduates over graduates of other universities.

The majority of the MSN students are employed during their course of study. Upon graduation, some remain in the same institution whereas others leave, mostly traveling abroad. Since June 2007, 70 MSN students graduated. Of those only 4 are not currently working due to travel and family responsibilities. Of the remaining 66 MSN graduates, 32% still work as bedside nurses and 32% are in management positions, 12% have faculty positions, 9% are working in research, 6% are working as clinical nurse specialists, and 4% are either clinical educators or pursuing doctoral studies. These findings reflect limitations in positions for MSN graduates as clinical nurse specialists, yet at the same time the need for these graduates and trust of employers is reflected in the management and teaching positions acquired by them.

The BSN exit survey results show improvement in skill development but dissatisfaction with courses and clinical experiences. These results may be accounted for by having new faculty members and attempts by current faculty to use new teaching methods that students are resisting, as reflected in the qualitative comments given by students.

The MSN satisfaction survey results show better results, with a steady increase towards the targets except for advising. The MSN exit results have a similar pattern, but again satisfaction with courses is less than expected, probably due to the new tracks with some courses offered for the first time and probably the change in faculty members, such as those teaching in the community track.

Besides the surveys, the quality of MSN student projects is reflected in their dissemination. All MSN students are required to complete a graduation project or thesis. (See Appendix IV-C-1). Students and graduates of the MSN program were involved in poster and paper presentations at the first international nursing conference organized

by the Order of Nurses in Lebanon in May 12-14, 2011. There were 14 presentations, making 19% of the total number of presentations. In addition, 3 of our MSN graduates published their thesis in peer reviewed journals (see Exhibit IV-03). Four MSN graduates presented their research at conferences in Ireland and the USA, thus reflecting achievement of the outcome of dissemination of nursing research.

IV-D. Aggregate student outcome data are used, as appropriate, to foster ongoing program improvement.

A number of changes were made in the BSN curriculum driven by student satisfaction and exit survey results, as well as requirements stipulated by the University administration, in addition to keeping in line with the School's mission and strategic goals.

Based on student satisfaction surveys, the BSN program continued to be perceived as condensed by students; thus it was revised by the curriculum committee, with reshuffling of courses that used to be offered in the summer to the regular spring semester, namely the assessment course, and moving the biostatistics course to the summer of the sophomore year to alleviate the load. In addition, the total number of credits for the nursing courses was reduced based on student feedback and a thorough benchmarking exercise with comparable schools of nursing in the USA, and in order to meet the General Education requirements set by AUB without adding more credits to the program.

The issue of dissatisfaction with advising for both BSN and MSN students was addressed by planning town meetings during which student concerns are addressed, intensifying communication with students by the BSN and MSN coordinators regarding policy and curricular issues (Exhibits III-06 and III-07). Moreover, new faculty members were provided with mentors and asked to attend teaching workshops.

Based on results of the BSN exit and alumni surveys that reflected a need for more clinical practice and in line with the BSN program outcomes related to clinical competence, the BSN curriculum was revised by adding a clinical practicum during the summer of the junior year (See Exhibit III-06). Moreover, the clinical practicum of the leadership and management course taken in the spring of the senior year was extended

to increase the clinical experience of students. Moreover, in keeping with the school's mission of promoting the highest educational standards of excellence and provision of an interactive learning process that promotes critical thinking, innovative practices have been integrated in all undergraduate clinical nursing courses through the use of the simulation laboratory that was launched in the academic year 2009-2010. Varying levels of simulation teaching are used, from low fidelity learning of basic nursing procedures to the most advanced high fidelity scenarios where junior and senior students train on the Sim Man and Sim Baby in enacting quasi-real clinical cases and responding to simulated patient conditions.(for more information on actual use of simulation lab. (Appendix III-D-2)

Based on the MSN student feedback in the satisfaction and exit surveys, a Task Force was formed to revise the administration track. Focus groups were held with nurse administrators for feedback regarding the curriculum. Revisions were made accordingly and the revised curriculum was implemented effective fall 2010-2011. Moreover, with the increasing demand for clinical educators among employers, a task force reviewed the minor in education that is offered as optional for the clinical tracks. Revisions included more courses on nursing education and additional content (theory and practicum) on teaching methods. Launching the revised minor is pending hiring more faculty members who are experts in education. Similar to the BSN action plans to address advising, town meetings are held to discuss student concerns. Moreover, since attendance of town meetings is usually suboptimal, the student representatives to the curriculum (for BSN students) and Graduate Studies Committees (for the MSN students) were charged to bring student concerns for discussion. The MSN coordinator also maintains regular communication with MSN students regarding registration and advising issues, as well as first hand announcements regarding new program developments (for more information see Exhibit III-07).

IV-E. Aggregate faculty outcomes are consistent with and contribute to achievement of the program's mission, goals, and expected student outcomes.

HSON faculty members are expected to engage in teaching, research and service related activities. A faculty appraisal form that was developed in 2003 and

revised in 2007 is still being used, based on the above criteria (See Appendix I-C-2). All faculty members are informed about the appraisal form and procedure and their feedback on the different elements is solicited. The appraisals usually take place in March-April every year. All faculty members are requested to complete the appraisal forms ahead of time and submit evidence of their scholarly accomplishments accordingly. The forms are discussed on an individual basis with each faculty member during a 1-1.5 hour scheduled appraisal time with the director of the HSON. Criteria for the appraisal center on achievements in teaching, research, & service/practice are based on performance indicators. The workload is also discussed and approved, taking into consideration productivity in the above areas. Special consideration is given to faculty working towards their PhDs in planning the workload.

Specific criteria for evaluating faculty are addressed in detail in the Appointment, Promotion, and Merit document: Criteria and Procedures HSON document (Appendix I-C-1). Research productivity of the faculty members reflects congruence with AUB and the school's mission in terms of their emphasis on research, and the BSN and MSN program outcomes that address research utilization and generation. The following information on faculty achievements is from the last three annual reports:
Scholarly Publications: 06/07: 25; 07/08 – 28; 08/09 26; 09/10 – 28; 10/11 –23. It is worth noting that the number of publications per year exceeds the target of 20 set in the KPIs in 2007. The 2007-2011 - data is available, along with the last three annual reports, in Exhibits I-06 and IV-04, and Appendix I-B-1.

All HSON faculty members are encouraged and supported to present at international and national scientific meetings. Many of them present on a yearly basis at international conferences, thus keeping current and disseminating research in line with the school's mission of excellence in research and scholarship. A list of all lectures given, along with other services provided by faculty to HSON and AUB can be found in HSON Annual Reports (Exhibit I-06).

HSON has been for a number of years actively involved in organizing national conferences of relevance to the nursing and health care fields; a national conference on the nursing workforce in 2008, Nursing Informatics Conference in 2010,

Interprofessional Education Conference to launch the Lancet Report in 2011, Two Conferences on Cancer Pain and Palliative Care held during the annual MEMA (Middle East Medical Assembly) in 2011, and most recently a Nursing Ethics conference in 2012. More information is provided in exhibit IV-05. In addition, faculty members at the HSON have contributed to the first international conference of the Order of Nurses in Lebanon, including presenting a plenary session, four paper presentations and moderating sessions. They also continue to be involved in the development of the profession in Lebanon. In addition to serving on committees of the Ministry of Health, the Order of Nurses, community and health centers, they provide lectures and workshops on current issues impinging on health care in Lebanon and the region. More specific details can be found in individual faculty CVs (Exhibit II-06).

Service is an important part of the HSON and AUB missions, which the faculty takes very seriously. A percentage of faculty workload is allotted for service. In accordance with AUB's regional mission, the School of Nursing has served and is still serving the Middle East by producing successive generations of leaders and highly qualified professionals in nursing. The school of nursing faculty continues to give workshops and clinical training courses to nurses from the Middle East and in particular from Iraq. The School of Nursing has worked with governmental and private organizations to develop academic and vocational nursing programs for the region, in addition to offering workshops and consultancies. See Exhibits I-06, IV-05 and IV-06.

By attending and participating in workshops offered by the Center of Learning and Teaching, in addition to other courses related to innovative teaching methods and the use of simulation in clinical teaching, faculty members contribute to meeting excellence in teaching as stipulated in AUB and the School's mission statements. See Exhibit II-03

IV-F. Information from formal complaints is used, as appropriate, to foster ongoing program improvement.

Procedures for handling formal complaints at the Hariri School of Nursing follow AUB policy and are outlined in the undergraduate and graduate student handbooks which can be found on HSON website http://hson.aub.edu.lb/users/index.asp

The students are also given the student code of conduct booklet upon entering AUB, which addresses disciplinary matters (both academic and non-academic), and plagiarism and procedures for handling them; this information is also included in student handbooks. In addition, the graduate student handbook addresses students' rights and responsibilities pertaining to thesis and project work.

Undergraduate students are encouraged to communicate any concerns they might have to the appropriate persons. For problems with registration or processing related petition-letters, they consult with the student services officer. For course-related issues, they refer to the course coordinator. Problems with students' academic progress are followed by the student's assigned academic advisor. Class-related issues and problems are referred to the class advisor. If unsatisfied with the first level of problem referral, students can go up in the hierarchy of the school to the BSN coordinator. If necessary, issues are referred to the Director, who in turn verifies information by contacting the faculty and students. The Academic evaluation Committee usually makes the final decision regarding academic issues.

In addition, students have representatives on the following Committees: Academic and Curriculum, Admission and Recruitment, and Student Affairs. This is an important avenue for relaying student grievances and concerns. Town meetings have been held as well by the director at the class or school levels if needed, during which students can discuss their concerns and are encouraged to provide strategies as to how they can be resolved. The director then initiates discussions with the faculty or others concerned to find a solution.

In the graduate program, students' concerns are addressed in town meetings held at least twice per year in the presence of the MSN coordinator and the Director. Moreover, students have a representative on the Graduate Studies Committee. These also constitute additional means for relaying student grievances and concerns. As noted in sections IV-B and IV-D, concerns raised by graduate students in satisfaction and exit surveys were discussed and acted upon.
The University is currently in the process of creating an Ombudsperson office where students, faculty members and staff complaints can be handled.

Standard IV summary

Strengths

- Student performance is evaluated by the faculty and based on student outcomes.
- Systematic evaluation of courses and teaching practices continues to be closely monitored.
- Program evaluation continues to be comprehensive in nature involving students, faculty, and COI.
- Faculty scholarly productivity is continuously on the increase.

Areas for Improvement
- Structured ongoing feedback from alumni and employers about the academic programs remains a challenge.

Actions Taken
- AUBMC and HSON conducted a study to enhance program feedback from alumni and employers.
- Preceptor training has been put in place.
- Faculty workshops were held and course offered to all faculty on the use of simulation technology in nursing education.
- Comprehensive Evaluation Plan and Balanced Score Card have been automated and continue to be monitored.
- HSON Strategic Planning completed in 2011.
- Monitoring the Assessment of Program Learning Outcomes for Middle States Accreditation at AUB initiated.