

# Social Mission in Accreditation

Shalini Raichur; Monika Misak, MD

## INTRODUCTION

Institutional compliance with accreditation standards ensures schools meet the "gold standards" of educational practice.<sup>1</sup> Some standards are in areas that fall under social mission, or "the contribution of the school in its mission, programs, and the performance of its graduates, faculty, and leadership in advancing health equity and addressing the health disparities of the society in which it exists."<sup>2</sup> Accrediting bodies are uniquely positioned to encourage standards of social mission and health equity within health professions education.

This research sought to answer: to what extent are social mission themes present in the written standards of major U.S. and Canadian health professions accrediting bodies?

## METHODS

The concept of social mission has been defined through 18 measurable areas.<sup>3</sup> For the purposes of this study, the 18 areas and their subsequent indicators were translated into themes and subthemes which comprised the codebook for the qualitative analysis.

Two coders reviewed and coded accreditation standards from nine accrediting bodies. Coding was iterative and discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The total number of coding instances of individual themes and subthemes found in each accrediting body's standards were counted and illustrative examples of standards were described.

Accrediting Body	Curriculum	Community Collaborations	Student Diversity	Student Activism	Faculty Activism	Primary Care
ACEN	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-
ACPE	Yes	-	Yes	-	Yes	-
ARC-PA	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
CACMS	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
CCNE	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
CNEA	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-
COCA	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
CODA	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	Yes
LCME	Yes	-	Yes	-	-	-

Example of a standard coded to student diversity:

ARC-PA

1.11: The sponsoring institution must demonstrate its **commitment to student, faculty and staff diversity and inclusion** by: a) supporting the program in defining its **goal(s) for diversity and inclusion...**d) making available, resources which **promote diversity and inclusion.**

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## RESULTS\*

The three nursing accreditors included standards explicitly related to community collaborations, but lacked standards requiring student diversity. While curriculum and student training were present across all accreditors, a key-word search of the standards found that "racism" or "anti-racism" were not mentioned in any of the studied health professions standards.

\*The final results have been submitted for publication. This is a sample of results.

## CONCLUSIONS

There is wide variability in social mission content across accreditation standards of various accrediting bodies. Accreditors have the potential to actively promote social mission in health professions education, with the means of achieving health equity.

## REFERENCES

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