

NCLEX Testing Announcement

For the first time in its history, CSU's School of Nursing has been moved to conditional approval status by the Georgia Board of Nursing (GBON). This status change follows a decline in the pass rate for our first-time exam takers on the National Council of Licensure Examination for the Registered Nurses (NCLEX), which dropped below 80% in 2020 and 2021.

CSU's pass rates for the NCLEX-RN exam over the last four years:

- 2018 - 85%
- 2019 - 87%
- 2020 - 77%
- 2021 - 61%
- 2022 - Update expected in July 2022

It's important to note that our NCLEX pass rates when including additional attempts are 100% for 2020 and 93% for 2021. GBON bases its approval status on first-time takers only.

We are intensely concerned about this issue and are making every effort to return the program to fully approved status at the first opportunity, which is next year. The SON is implementing a plan that includes internal accountability measures, and we are confident that we will soon see the results we expect from our program and our students.

Our nursing program maintains conditional approval by the Georgia Board of Nursing and continues to be fully accredited by CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education).

The reduction in the passing rate can be attributed to a number of factors, including the COVID-19 pandemic that hindered our access to the in-person, hands-on program for which we are known.

To fulfill our continued commitment to our students and graduates, we are now contacting our graduates from **2021-2022** who did not pass the NCLEX exam the first time to offer both a free prep class and to cover the cost of their re-examination upon successful completion of the prep class.

Our implementation plan includes action steps to address various factors including:

- Providing faculty mentoring and additional tutoring for at-risk students.
- Changing our predictor exam used within the program to better prepare students to take the NCLEX.
- Providing additional resources for student preparation, including practice exams to help students prepare for the licensing exam.
- Providing development for new faculty teaching in the pre-licensure program to assist them in transitioning from nursing practice to nursing education, to include ongoing training in educational needs for nursing students such as the change in NCLEX for 2023.
- Completing an analysis of NCLEX results over the past three years to identify patterns and trends that might inform the nursing curriculum and system of support for students.
- Increasing emphasis on student accountability by focusing on program expectations such as deadlines for completing pre-clinical requirements.
- Scheduling a workgroup this summer focused on updating our curriculum to ensure the NCLEX test plan is integrated throughout the curriculum.

Our School of Nursing faculty and staff are confident that once these measures are fully implemented, the number of our students passing the exam will increase and our program will return to full approval by the Georgia Board of Nursing.

For more information, I invite you to:

- Join me for a brief virtual Q&A on the matter on **????** at **???**. You may connect by visiting **URL**

- View our FAQs page, which we will continue to build out as additional questions arise.

We are grateful for your consistent support of all of our educational programs, and we look forward to our nursing program regaining the level of state and national recognition you and our students expect and deserve from Columbus State University.

FAQs

1. Is the School of Nursing (SON) program going to lose approval/accreditation or close?

Definitely not! We have implemented a plan to improve the NCLEX pass rates for first-time exam takers. Because of this, we are not in danger of losing approval or accreditation and are very confident that the plan in place will restore the standard we have always maintained.

2. If I am a student, does the SON's conditional approval status affect my licensure if I pass the NCLEX?

No. All students of CSU's program who pass the NCLEX are fully licensed as Registered Nurses. In fact, the overall pass rate of SON's graduates in 2021 is 94% when counting those who passed on an additional try, and the pass rate of the 2020 class is now 100% including retakes. However, GBON bases approval status on first-time test takers only.

3. What has caused the SON to be on conditional approval?

The NCLEX first-time pass rates for CSU's nursing graduates dropped below 80% for the past two years for the first time in our program history. We do attribute this chiefly to the COVID-19 pandemic that decreased in-person learning in both the classroom and clinical environments and limited our students' access to the hands-on learning and instructor support that is so important in nursing school. We are also aware that changes in the SON's use of predictor tests and other curricular strategies may have contributed to the decline in pass rates.

4. How long will the SON be on conditional approval?

The SON must demonstrate an increased pass rate for first-time exam takers of 80% or greater this year to petition for full approval status. We plan to have this average restored beginning with our 2022 graduates.

5. If I graduated from CSU SON and I am now a Registered Nurse, could my license be affected based on the conditional approval of the SON?

No. The SON conditional approval has no effect on the licensure of graduates.

6. What is the difference between approval and accreditation of a nursing program?

We have conditional approval by the Georgia Board of Nursing (GBON) at this time and full accreditation by CCNE (Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education). The GBON has several requirements programs must maintain, including a first-time pass rate for graduates of the program on NCLEX (National Council Licensure Examination) of 80% or greater. The GBON also requires us to be accredited by a national nursing accrediting body recognized by the GBON. Accreditation is a separate process that nursing programs undergo to show they are following common standards of quality in programs.

7. What is the current pass rate for the graduates who had to retake the NCLEX?

The overall pass rate of SON's graduates in 2021 is 94% when counting those who passed when retaking the test, and the pass rate of the 2020 class is now 100% including retakes. However, GBON bases the approval status on first-time test takers only.

8. Why should I choose CSU to study nursing, if the school is under conditional approval by the Georgia Board of Nursing?

You should definitely apply to the CSU School of Nursing program! You will be getting the support you need as a student to complete the program and NCLEX and be ready to begin a rewarding career as an RN. You will have the benefit of a committed faculty and staff, updated curriculum to meet the standards of the 2023 NCLEX changes, and resources for student success.