



Apex Recognition Award

Educational Program Standards

The core requirements for participating in the program are:

1. All respiratory therapy faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) are licensed by the state (not applicable in Alaska) and hold a current registered respiratory therapist (RRT) credential.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a completed employee roster that includes each respiratory therapist's state license number and NBRC credential(s) as well as information requested to allow NBRC credential validation for each respiratory therapist. The program director and director of clinical education should be noted on the roster. For degree advancement programs, the faculty may be licensed in any state.
2. All respiratory therapy faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) have a baccalaureate degree and 50% of the respiratory faculty hold a master's degree or higher or are currently pursuing a master's degree.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a copy of the earned degree, diploma, or college transcript. If the employee is currently pursuing a master's degree, a copy of the in-progress college transcript is sufficient.
3. The respiratory therapy program director must hold a current registered respiratory therapist (RRT) credential with a masters degree or higher. or be pursuing a master's degree.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a copy of the earned masters or higher degree, diploma, or college transcript. If the program director is currently pursuing a master's degree, a copy of the in-progress college transcript is sufficient.
4. The respiratory therapy program director and director of clinical education (if an entry-to-practice program) must be a member of the AARC and the AARC Education Section.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the AARC number or copy of the AARC member profile showing active AARC and Education Section membership for the respiratory therapy program director and director of clinical education. Adding the AARC number to the provided Excel employee roster is sufficient evidence.
5. All of the respiratory therapy faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) are members of the AARC and 50% of the respiratory faculty are members of the AARC's Education Section.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the AARC number or copy of the AARC member profile showing active AARC and Education Section membership for each staff member. Adding the AARC number to the provided Excel employee roster is sufficient evidence.

Please note: Your AARC memberships will be assessed as of your date of application to the Apex program, so please be sure to confirm that you have 50% AARC members before applying. You can check membership for your staff using the directory tab on AARConnect at <https://connect.aarc.org/home>

6. At least 75% of the respiratory therapy faculty (full-time, part-time, and adjunct) must hold at least one relevant professional specialty credential, including but not limited to: RRT-ACCS, RRT-NPS, CPFT, RPFT, RRT-SDS, AE-C, CTTS, C-NPT, or RPSGT.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a completed employee roster that includes each respiratory therapist's specialty credential as well as copies of each respiratory therapist's credential validation (certificate, accrediting agency letter, or website verification). NBRC credentials will be verified by providing the requested information for credential validation.



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7. Program must be in good standing with the Commission on Accreditation for Respiratory Care (CoARC).
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a copy of the official letter from CoARC attesting to the status of the program.
8. Program must have an active Lambda Beta chapter.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes proof of current, active chapter from the Lambda Beta organization, usually the annual dues payment receipt.

The additional requirements include:

9. A Doctor of Medicine or Osteopathy is designated as Medical Director of the program and is actively involved with student development.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a copy of the Medical Director's credentials and medical license.

A brief narrative detailing how this standard is met as well as documents to demonstrate active participation of the medical director in the curriculum (e.g., syllabi, lesson plans, advisory committee minutes, physician contact forms, etc.) is also required.
10. Program must include at least one research methodologies course or course that includes significant content related to research methodologies.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content related to research methodologies and a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.
11. Program must include at least one education course or course that includes significant content related to educational principles (patient education, age-specific learning theories, etc.).
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content related to educational principles and a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.
12. Program must include at least one disease management course or course that includes significant content related to disease management.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content related to disease management and a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.
13. Program must include at least one course on evidence-based practices or course that includes significant content related to evidence-based guidelines, including content on clinical practice guidelines.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content and clinical application related to evidence-based practice methodologies and a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.



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If the program submitted is an entry-to-practice program (base, satellite, or both), it must meet the additional standards below:

14. Program must include student completion of at least 10 service-learning hours.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes program policy or course syllabus defining the purpose of the activities and a brief narrative detailing the expectations of the service learning requirements.
15. Program must have received the CoARC Distinguished RRT award in the award cycle immediately prior to application submission.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes a copy of the CoARC Distinguished RRT award certificate from the most recent award cycle.
16. Program must include at least one course or other activity that provides significant interprofessional education opportunities through activities in a simulation laboratory, clinical, or classroom.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content related to interprofessional education or a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.

If the program submitted is a degree advancement program, it must meet the additional standards below:

17. If the program is delivered in a format that is online 75% or more, documentation of faculty preparation to teach at a distance must be provided.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes certificates of completion of professional development courses or programs and course accreditation certificates (such as formal programs such as Quality Matters® or institutionally supported development programs).
18. Program must include at least one capstone activity that encourages students to think critically, solve challenging problems, and develop communication, research, and goal-setting skills, such as a thesis, course, project, etc.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the description of the capstone activity and how the student meets the capstone requirement (for example, course syllabus, program curricula plan, or student professional development plan) and, if possible, samples of completed activities.
19. Program must include at least one course on leadership in respiratory care or a course that includes significant content related to leadership in respiratory care.
 - Evidence to support this standard includes the course syllabus demonstrating significant course content related to leadership theories and/or principles and a brief narrative detailing how this standard is met.