



## **The Nursing Community Coalition is Alarmed over Department of Education’s Exclusion of Nursing as a Professional Degree**

Friday, May 1, 2026— With the release of the [Department of Education’s final rule](#) addressing student loan limits, the Nursing Community Coalition (NCC) is extremely disappointed to see the exclusion of post-baccalaureate nurses in the professional degree category. While the Department clearly outlines how nursing does fulfill their three-part test, they contend that these nursing degrees fail to satisfy their ambiguous and un-defined “contextual test.” Ignoring all the evidence provided in federal comments, including from the [NCC, 277 national and state organizations](#), and [more than 150 bipartisan members of Congress](#), underscores the Department’s complete disregard for how critical it is to invest in nursing education, remove barriers to enter the profession, and support ongoing nursing workforce needs.

When supporting the health of our nation, it is evident that our post-baccalaureate nurses are a critical part of our health system and that nursing education provides a strong return on investment across the board, particularly for our rural and underserved communities. With more than five million nurses, Advance Practice Registered Nurses, faculty, scientists, researchers, and nursing leaders, the NCC implores the Administration and Congress to correct this glaring omission. As we near National Nurses Week, we remain united in our commitment that nursing needs to be a professional degree.

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*The Nursing Community Coalition includes 65 national nursing organizations that are the cross section of education, practice, research, and regulation within the profession. Collectively, the coalition represents registered nurses, advanced practice registered nurses, nurse faculty, boards of nursing, nurse executives, researchers, and students. The coalition is committed to promoting efforts that advance the health of our nation through nursing care.*