Strategic Plan 2025–2030: Glossary of Terms

This glossary defines key terms, acronyms, programs, and concepts referenced throughout the UTC College of Nursing Strategic Plan 2025–2030. Entries are listed alphabetically.

Term / Acronym	Definition
AACN	American Association of Colleges of Nursing. The national voice for academic nursing education that sets standards, competency frameworks (including the 2021 Essentials), and accreditation guidelines for nursing programs.
AACN Essentials (2021)	A competency-based framework published by AACN that outlines the core domains, competencies, and sub-competencies expected of nursing graduates across all degree levels. UTC CON aligns its curriculum to these standards.
ABSN	Accelerated Bachelor of Science in Nursing. A fast-track undergraduate nursing program designed for students who already hold a bachelor's degree in another field.
ACEN	Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing. One of the primary accrediting bodies for nursing programs in the United States, recognized by the U.S. Department of Education.
AGACNP	Adult-Gerontology Acute Care Nurse Practitioner. An advanced practice nursing specialty focused on delivering complex, high-acuity care to adult and older adult patients in acute care settings.
Alumni Council	A governing body of UTC College of Nursing alumni established to promote engagement, mentorship, professional development, and philanthropic giving among graduates.
ANA	American Nurses Association. The professional organization representing the interests of the nation's registered nurses through advocacy, education, and the establishment of nursing practice standards.
APRN	Advanced Practice Registered Nurse. A nurse who has completed graduate-level education and holds advanced clinical certification, including Nurse Practitioners (NPs), Clinical Nurse Specialists (CNSs), Certified Registered Nurse Anesthetists (CRNAs), and Certified Nurse-Midwives (CNMs).
BEONE UTC	The eight institutional values of the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga: Bold and Impactful, Embrace Differences, Optimistic and Visionary, Nimble and Innovative, Excel in All We Do, United and Connected, Transparent and Trusted, and Community Engaged.
BON	Board of Nursing. The state regulatory body (Tennessee Board of Nursing) responsible for licensing nurses and overseeing nursing practice standards within the state.
Carnegie R2 Classification	A Carnegie Classification designation for Doctoral Universities with High Research Activity. UTC is pursuing this designation, and the CON strategic plan explicitly supports this institutional goal through increased grant activity and translational research.
CCNE	Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education. An accrediting body for baccalaureate and graduate nursing programs, affiliated with AACN.
CE	Continuing Education. Post-licensure educational activities that allow nurses and other healthcare professionals to maintain competency, meet licensure renewal requirements, and develop advanced skills.
Clinical Preceptor	A licensed, experienced clinician who provides direct supervision, mentorship, and real-world training to nursing students during clinical practicum experiences in healthcare settings.
Community Impact Dashboard	A data visualization and tracking tool under development at UTC CON that will quantify patients served, student community hours, active partnerships, geographic reach, and health equity outcomes to demonstrate the College's regional contributions.
CON	College of Nursing. Refers specifically to the UTC College of Nursing unless otherwise noted.
CON Advisory Board	A representative board comprising clinical partners, regional healthcare employers, UTC nursing alumni, and community stakeholders that provides guidance on workforce needs, curriculum alignment, and strategic direction for the College of Nursing.
DNP	Doctor of Nursing Practice. A terminal practice-focused doctoral degree in nursing that prepares graduates for advanced clinical, leadership, and systems-level roles.
FNP	Family Nurse Practitioner. An advanced practice specialty focused on providing primary care across the lifespan, from pediatrics to geriatrics, in a variety of outpatient and community settings.

Term / Acronym	Definition
FQHC	Federally Qualified Health Center. Community-based healthcare providers that receive funding under the Health Center Program to serve medically underserved areas and populations, regardless of patients' ability to pay.
HIP	High-Impact Practice. Pedagogical approaches identified by research as significantly benefiting student learning and retention, such as capstone projects, community health practicums, service-learning, and simulation-intensive clinical courses.
HRSA	Health Resources and Services Administration. A federal agency within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services that funds programs to improve access to healthcare for underserved, vulnerable, and special-needs populations, including nursing workforce development grants.
IP (Intellectual Property)	Legally recognized creations of the mind — such as proprietary simulation scenarios, validated assessment tools, clinical decision-support tools, or curriculum frameworks — that may be protected through patents, copyrights, or licensing agreements.
IPE	Interprofessional Education. Educational experiences in which students from two or more health professions learn with, from, and about each other to improve collaboration and health outcomes.
IPEC	Interprofessional Education Collaborative. A consortium of health professions organizations that developed and maintains the core competencies for interprofessional collaborative practice.
KPI	Key Performance Indicator. A measurable value used to evaluate the success of an initiative or strategy in achieving defined objectives.
MCH	Maternal and Child Health. A public health field focused on the health of mothers, infants, children, and adolescents, often referencing HRSA's Maternal and Child Health Bureau funding streams.
Micro-credential	A short-term, focused credential or certification program designed to validate specific skills or competencies, typically in response to workforce demand. Examples include care coordination, wound care, geriatric nursing, and mental health certifications.
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding. A formal agreement between two or more parties — such as the CON and a clinical partner — outlining the terms and expectations of a collaborative relationship, such as clinical placement or partnership programming.
NA-L	Nurse Anesthesia Lifespan. A graduate-level nursing program preparing students for advanced roles in anesthesia care, with placement pipelines to regional hospital systems and surgical centers.
NAS	Nurse Administrator/Systems (program). A graduate-level nursing program focused on preparing nurses for leadership and administrative roles within healthcare organizations.
NCLEX	National Council Licensure Examination. The standardized examination that all nursing graduates must pass to obtain licensure as a Registered Nurse (NCLEX-RN) or Licensed Practical Nurse (NCLEX-PN) in the United States.
NightinGala	The annual College of Nursing recognition and celebration event at UTC, named in tribute to Florence Nightingale. The event formally recognizes faculty, staff, student, and alumni achievements.
NP	Nurse Practitioner. An advanced practice registered nurse who provides a range of healthcare services, including diagnosis, treatment, and prescribing, often specializing in a defined patient population or care setting.
OB Fellowship	Obstetrics Fellowship. A post-graduate clinical training program designed to prepare nurses for specialized practice in obstetric and maternal-newborn care, slated for launch in Fall 2027 at UTC CON.
PMHNP	Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner. An advanced practice specialty focused on the assessment, diagnosis, and treatment of mental health and substance use disorders across the lifespan.
Post-Graduate Certificate	A formal academic credential awarded to nurses who have already completed a graduate degree and wish to gain additional specialty competencies (e.g., a Post-Graduate Educator Certificate at UTC CON).
QI	Quality Improvement. A systematic, data-driven approach to identifying gaps and implementing changes that improve processes, services, or outcomes within an organization.
RN-to-BSN	A credential bridge pathway designed for nurses who hold an associate degree in nursing (ADN) and wish to complete a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) to advance their education and career.
Sigma Theta Tau / STTI	The international honor society of nursing. The Zeta Alpha Chapter at UTC recognizes and supports academic excellence and leadership in nursing students and professionals.

Term / Acronym	Definition
SNA	Student Nurses Association. The chapter of the National Student Nurses' Association (NSNA) at UTC, which organizes community service, professional development, and advocacy activities for pre-licensure nursing students.
TBSN	Traditional Bachelor of Science in Nursing. The standard four-year undergraduate nursing degree program at UTC, designed for students entering directly from high school or as first-time college students.
TNA	Tennessee Nurses Association. The professional nursing organization representing registered nurses across Tennessee, affiliated with the American Nurses Association.
UTC	University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. The host institution of the College of Nursing and a member of the University of Tennessee System.