

**CONTINUATION OF APPROVAL STATUS
BASED ON 2006 NCLEX-RN® EXAMINATION PASS RATES, REVIEW OF 2006 ANNUAL REPORT, AND
REVIEW OF SELF-STUDY REPORT**

**VERNON COLLEGE
ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING EDUCATION PROGRAM**

SUMMARY OF REQUEST:

Consider staff recommendation concerning approval status and requirements to be met for the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program based on review of the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2006, review of the 2006 Annual Report, and review of the self-study report.

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:

Year	Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate	Number of First-Time Candidates Passed/Total
2006	Full	70.00%	63/90
2005	Full	81.25%	52/64
2004	Full	83.87%	52/62

- The Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program began operation in August 1992.
- The current program director was appointed to the director position in August 1991.
- In January 2003, the program was directed to complete a self study due to a 72.00% pass rate for 2002. Corrective actions were implemented by the program after the Board accepted the self-study report at the January 2003 Board meeting and these corrective actions were evidently effective as the program's pass rate remained 80% or greater until 2006.
- Due to the 70.00% pass rate on the 2006 NCLEX-RN® examination, the program was required to submit a self-study report that evaluated factors which contributed to graduates' performance and a description of corrective measures to be implemented.
- The Self-Study Report was received in the Board office on March 31, 2007.

PROS AND CONS:

Pros-

- The program conducted a comprehensive self-study and identified factors which may have contributed to the low pass rate:
 - Increased enrollment by 37% in the last three years.
 - Low GPA of students.
 - Low passing standard of 75% for the program.
 - Personal problems that impacted students, including work schedules.
 - Overall low passing grades and previous course failures of students.
 - HESI failures by students failing the NCLEX-RN examination.
 - Failed students not participating in tutoring.
- Corrective measures were identified in five general categories:
 - Students
 - Develop a list of tutors from previous students or currently enrolled students and provide the list to the PASS Center.
 - Increase student satisfaction and improve learning by creating smaller classes and offering the classes at the Wichita Falls campus.
 - Develop a matrix that shows pertinent information on the students who were unsuccessful on the NCLEX-RN.
 - Investigate increasing the admission requirements for entry into the ADN program by surveying other schools regarding their admission requirements.

- Policies
 - Increase the passing standard from 75 to 78 in all nursing courses.
 - Require 850 on the HESI exit exam as a capstone experience for graduation. The student will have three attempts prior to graduation.
 - Increase the passing NET score for admission:
 - Reading - from 43 to 59
 - Math - from 52 to 69.
- Faculty
 - Increase the number of faculty to meet the demands of the increased enrollment.
 - Encourage faculty to attend workshops in the area of their expertise.
 - Improve faculty orientation and mentoring. Develop an online faculty orientation course.
 - Reduce faculty overload.
- Curriculum
 - Investigate offering a pathophysiology course in the nursing curriculum.
 - Evaluate the nursing curriculum using WECM guidelines.
- Testing and Evaluation
 - Offer a test construction workshop on campus for all nursing faculty.
 - Develop Testing Committee to evaluate the testing and evaluations of all nursing courses focusing on the following.
 - Developing a blueprinting structure for all courses which will include the client needs and cognitive level of the test items as organizing dimensions to be consistent with the NCLEX-RN test plan.
 - Comparing and contrasting test item analysis results on exams from previous years.
 - Grading and weighting exams in each course.
 - Analyzing any outside assignments that might inflate the course grade.
 - Evaluate if testing items are consistent with curriculum needs and course manual information.
 - Select faculty members to attend the NCSBN item-writer workshop.
- A Total Program Evaluation Plan was included with the Self-Study Report. Numerical benchmarks and achievement of benchmarks are provided for most items, the dates for data collection and specific decisions based on data, projected corrective measures, and use of results for improvements are also included.

Cons-

- Enrollment increased by 37% over the last three years without the program ensuring that sufficient faculty were in place to meet student needs prior to the enrollment increases. Although employing sufficient faculty to meet demands of the increased enrollment is included in the corrective actions, analysis of the number of faculty that will be needed for any future enrollment increases needs to occur prior to the enrollment of increased cohorts of students.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:

Move to continue full approval status for the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program, accept the Self-Study Report, and issue the requirements to be met as indicated in the attached letter (See Attachment).

DRAFT LETTER

July 24, 2007

Cathy J. Bolton, MSN, RN, Director
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
Vernon College
4400 College Drive
Vernon, Texas 76384

Dear Ms. Bolton:

At the July 19-20, 2007 meeting, members of the Board of Nurse Examiners reviewed the approval status of the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program based on the Board staff's report regarding review of the 2006 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate, the 2006 Annual Report, and the March 2007 self-study report.

Based upon the review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to continue the full approval status of the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program, accept the self-study report and issue the following requirements to be met.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. Rule 215.6(f) related to Administration and Organization, requires in pertinent part that "Each professional nursing education program shall be administered by a qualified individual who is accountable for the planning, implementation and evaluation of the professional nursing education program." A review of the 2007 self-study report revealed that the report contains ongoing corrective measures. **Therefore**, the nursing program director shall be responsible for the implementation and continuing evaluation of ongoing corrective measures identified in the March 2007 self study and shall submit documentation in the 2007 and 2008 Annual Reports as appropriate.
2. Rule 215.7(b) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization, requires that "A professional nursing education program shall employ sufficient faculty members with graduate preparation and expertise necessary to enable the students to meet the program goals. The number of faculty members shall be determined by such factors as: (1) The number and level of students enrolled; (2) The curriculum plan; (3) Activities and responsibilities required of faculty; (4) The number and geographic locations of affiliating agencies and clinical practice settings; and (5) The level of care and acuity of clients. A review of the 2007 self-study report revealed that enrollment increased by 37% over the last three years without the program ensuring that sufficient faculty were in place to meet student needs prior to the enrollment increases. Although employing sufficient faculty to meet demands of the increased enrollment is included in the corrective actions, analysis of the number of faculty that will be needed for any future enrollment increases needs to occur prior to the enrollment of increased cohorts of students. **Therefore**, the program director will ensure that analysis of the number of faculty that will be needed for any future enrollment increases occurs prior to the actual enrollment of increased cohorts of students.

Requirements are mandatory criterion based on program assessment directly related to the rule that shall be addressed in the manner prescribed. If you have any questions, or if we may be of any assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6815 or by email at robbin.wilson@bne.state.tx.us.

Sincerely,

Linda R. Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP, President

Robbin Wilson, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant for Education

xc: Steve Thomas, PhD, President Vernon College