REPORT ON STRATEGIES UTILIZED
BY TEXAS NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS
TO IMPROVE CANDIDATES' PERFORMANCE ON THE NCLEX EXAMINATION

SUMMARY:
In response to the Board's request to review successful strategies of nursing educational programs to improve their NCLEX pass rates to meet the standard of 80%, staff have developed this report to provide information about strategies implemented during a two year period by Texas vocational and professional nursing educational programs. Board staff reviewed self-study reports prepared by 16 VN and 8 RN nursing educational programs that experienced a lower than 80% pass rate on the 2005 and 2006 NCLEX examination. Board staff classified strategies under headings identified as "contributing factors" in the education guideline provided for programs writing a self-study report.

A total of 178 individual strategies were proposed by the programs (See Table C). The highest frequency of individual program strategies were reported in the areas of (1) Faculty (24.72% of responses) and (2) Policies (23.60% of responses).

Programs identified needs for faculty orientation, development, training, teaching resources, and incentives for recruitment and retention. The also recognized a strong need to review all student policies and revise policies related to admission, progression, graduation, standardized testing and remediation. These findings are consistent with findings from the October 2006 report from The Task Force to Increase RN Graduates in Texas entitled "Strategies to Increase the Number of Graduates from Initial RN Licensure Programs."

This report will provide:

• background information related to the requirement for programs to write a self-study report
• an outline of self-study reports
• list of schools that prepared self-study reports during the two year period
• frequency rates of strategies
• individual strategies with specific areas identified by programs
• limitation of information in the report

For more detailed information about the programs please See Attachment One.

BACKGROUND:
Rule 214.4(c)(2)(B) and Rule 215.4(c)(2)(B) related to *Approval* require that when the passing score of first-time candidates who complete the nursing educational program is less than 80% on the NCLEX examination during the examination year, the nursing program shall submit a self-study report that evaluates factors which contributed to the graduates' performance on the NCLEX examination and a description of the corrective measures to be implemented. The self-study report is prepared following Board guidelines.

Education Guideline 3.2.1.a. *Writing a Self-Study Report on Evaluation of Factors which Contributed to the Graduates' Performance on the NCLEX-PN® or NCLEX-RN® Examination* provides an outline for the self-study report based upon analysis of the following contributing factors:

• Students
• Policies
• Faculty
• Curriculum
• Testing and Evaluation
• Evaluation Methods for Class and Clinical
• Total Program Evaluation

1

From their analysis, the program develops:

- Summary of Findings
- Conclusions
- Corrective Measures to be implemented

The corrective measures are presented as strategies to improve the success of graduates on the NCLEX examination.

This report examines strategies which have been planned and implemented by twenty-four (24) programs experiencing a low NCLEX examination pass rate for the 2005 and 2006 examination years. Most programs begin implementation of strategies as soon as they realize their pass rate will be lower than 80%. The pass rate for 91.6% of the programs increased to above 80% for the examination year following their self-study analysis.

The programs included in this report are:

Table A

RN Programs - 2005 (4 programs)	RN Programs - 2006 (4 programs)
Patty Hanks Shelton SON - BSN - 74.14%	Cisco Junior College - ADN - 75.76%
St. Philip's College - ADN - 69.57% (based on 2004 self- study)	Kilgore College - ADN - 79.59%
Tarleton State University - BSN - 78.57%	Navarro College - ADN - 78.57%
Tyler Junior College - ADN - 78.08%	Vernon College - ADN - 70.00%

Table B

VN Programs - 2005 (9 programs)	VN Programs - 2006 (7 programs)
Angelina College at Crockett - 75.00%	Clarendon College - 68.00%
Angelina College at Lufkin Traditional - 77.77%	Cy Fair College - 66.67%
Coastal Bend at Kingsville - 72.73%	Southwest Texas Junior College at Uvalde - 77.27%
Computer Career Center - 70.00%	Sul Ross University - 62.50%
Midland College at Ft. Stockton - 41.67%	Texas Careers Incorporated - 78.69%
Odessa College at Monahans - 76.47%	Vernon College at Vernon - 70.27%
South Plains College at Levelland - 73.68%	Western Texas College - 75.00%
South Texas College at McAllen - Day - 76.32%	
Victoria College at Cuero - 73.68%	

Strategies:

Self-study reports from these 24 VN and RN programs suggested a combined 178 individually-named strategies which have been categorized under the 7 factors in the self-study reports or under a separate category related to structural changes in the program.

Frequency Rate of Strategies Within Categories:
Table C

Category Strategies Related to:	Number of Individual Strategies Named	Percent of Total Strategies
Students	27	15.16%
Policies	42	23.60%
Faculty	44	24.72%
Curriculum	24	13.48%
Testing & Evaluation	22	12.36%
Evaluation Methods for Class and Clinical	12	06.74%
Total Program Evaluation	5	02.80%
Structural Changes	2	01.12%

Classification of Strategies:

Individual strategies were classified based upon similarity of suggested activities:

Students:
Table D

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified:
Provide student support	counseling services, advising preparation in test-taking skills and critical thinking practice with computer testing tutorial services test review and feedback peer mentoring stress reduction seminars
Develop more rigorous student orientation program	
Identify at-risk students	track students from admission to graduation remediation plan involving student faculty involvement in remediation referral to counseling and learning resources follow-up
Provide access to faculty assistance	communication opportunities (email, groups) faculty review of student progress individual faculty assistance
Decrease admission quotas	fewer students and more student attention decrease attrition - increase retention
Increase admission pool	more advertisement and recruitment

Policies:
Table E

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Review and revise admission policies	pre-admission testing requirements ranking of students pre-requisites requirements pre-admission GPA screening for at-risk students interview of potential students
Review and revise graduation requirements	capstone experience exit exams
Revise policies for transfer students and readmissions	
Revise grading policies	require higher scores
Strengthen or establish policies on progression, advisement and remediation	scores on standardized tests policies for at-risk students
Improve processes for policy development and adherence	new committees improved communication enrollment management plan review faculty and student handbooks

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Improve new faculty orientation	formal orientation plan online faculty orientation areas to include in orientation: item analysis, clinical evaluation, Web CT faculty mentors
Provide faculty training	test item analysis, test blueprinting test construction clinical evaluation tool effective teaching strategies exam review NCSBN item-writing workshop technology in classroom faculty role PAR score test analysis workshops in areas of expertise
Track faculty development	
Implement measures for faculty recruitment and retention	salary increase for part time faculty use of mentors reduced workload experienced faculty scheduled with inexperienced faculty in clinical sites option for calendar year appointment increased number of faculty increased salaries increased faculty benefits stabilization of faculty and staff more faculty preparation time
Evaluate teaching methods	faculty peer review feedback provided to faculty from evaluations regular evaluation of faculty clinical observations of faculty
Improve administration of program	hiring of VN coordinator to support teaching improved communications mentor for program director more presence of program director to faculty monthly faculty meetings
Provide additional teaching resources	
Change VN faculty requirement to RN licensure	

Curriculum:
Table G

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Utilize consultant in improvements	
Update teaching methods	WebCT simulation mastery of software various media
Include students on curriculum committee	
Plan faculty review of curriculum	evaluation and revision of curriculum content analysis evaluation of web-based courses plan for maintaining currency requiring capstone course monitor course objectives and test items WECM update ethics across the curriculum update of syllabi and clinical evaluation tools DELC
Seek new clinical sites	review of clinical hours addition of clinical site faculty as liaison to clinical settings
Change class format	smaller classes shorter courses to early part of program

Testing & Evaluation:
Table H

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Utilize NCLEX test plan and test item blueprint	test construction reflection of NCLEX test plan test blueprinting test item analysis Kaplan Q bank plan for test revision
Utilize standardized testing and remediation plan	ERI HESI competency testing at various points in program PAR score system ATI structured remediation total testing and remediation package
Ensure test security	
Review and revise testing calendar	
Implement test-taking strategies	

Evaluation Methods for Class and Clinical:
Table I

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Provide faculty with tools for analysis and revision of exams	improved exam analysis
Revise grading scale	review of course grades increase passing standard progression in testing through program
Develop testing committee to evaluate testing and evaluation methods	
Evaluate consistency of test items and curriculum	
Eliminate possibility of grade inflation	review and revision of clinical evaluation tools modification of capstone course

Total Program Evaluation:
Table J

General Strategy	Specific Areas Identified
Revise TPE to reflect BON and accreditation standards	
Revise Institutional Effectiveness Plan	
Implement TPE	
Use data from TPE for revisions	

Limitations of Report:

- Information provided is self reported in self-study reports.
- Other strategies may have been implemented that were not mentioned in the self-study reports.
- The degree of effectiveness of strategies has not been determined.
- The extra attention given to students and curriculum because of the low NCLEX pass rate may have affected the performance of faculty and students.
- Differences in student demographics may have affected their motivation and performance.
- Self-study reports tend to be subjective in nature.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION:
This is an information report. No action is recommended.

Attachment One

Strategies Implemented by Nursing Educational Programs Following Low NCLEX Pass Rates: From Self Studies 2005 and 2006

RN Programs 2005:   4 RN programs

St. Philip's College ADN
Tyler Junior College ADN
Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing BSN
Tarleton State University BSN

RN Programs 2006:   4 RN programs
Cisco Junior College ADN
Kilgore College ADN
Navarro College ADN
St. Philip's College AND (second low pass rate) - survey visit
Vernon College ADN
Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing BSN (second low pass rate) - survey visit

VN Programs 2005:   9 VN programs
Angelina College at Crockett VN
Angelina College at Lufkin Traditional VN
Coastal Bend at Kingsville VN
Computer Career Center VN
Midland College at Ft. Stockton VN
Odessa College at Monahans VN
South Plains College at Levelland VN
South Texas College at McAllen - Day VN
Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies VN - exception allowed
Victoria College at Cuero VN

VN Programs 2006:   7 VN programs
Clarendon College VN
Cy Fair College VN
Southwest Texas Junior College at Uvalde VN
Sul Ross University VN
Texas Careers Incorporated VN
Vernon College at Vernon - Day and Evening VN
Victoria College at Victoria - Evening VN - exception allowed
Western Texas College - VN

St. Philip's College ADN - Self Study - March 2005

- Using NCLEX-RN test plan and test item blue print
- New faculty orientation and development tracking
- assignment of seasoned faculty mentor to new faculty
- faculty training in PAR score test analysis procedures
- review and revision of admission process
- utilize consultant for guidance in implementation of critical program components such as NCLEX-RN test plan; NCLEX-RN test item blue print; PAR Score for test item analysis, interrator reliability and validity; and total program evaluation.
- consideration of implementing HESI Admissions Assessment
- exploration of development of formal instructor orientation plan

Tyler Junior College ADN - Self Study - February 2006

- revision of the policy on transfer and readmissions to require that 50% of course work be completed at Tyler Junior College, increase of the math placement score from 63 to 82, and satisfactory completion of remediation as identified on the LVN GAP examination
- implementation of the Education Resources, Inc. Testing and Remediation program
- Implementation of faculty retention and recruitment plan to include an increase in the part time hourly rate, assignment of mentors, limiting of lecture assignments, and alignment of experienced with inexperienced faculty assignments at the clinical site.
- Enhancement of theory presentations with WebCT
- development of a tool to assist faculty with analysis and revision of examinations and provisions of a test writing faculty development program
- Construction of tests using the NCLEX test blueprint while continuing to use Bloom's Taxonomy of Cognitive Domain
- Formation of two committees: a policy committee to develop and revise program policies and a quality improvement committee, which is designed to improve communication between students, faculty and clinical facilities.
- Inclusion of students on the curriculum committee. The committee's charge is to review course content, student assignments and clinical requirements.

Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing BSN - Self Study - February 2006

- Changes in grading scale
- Requirement for students to maintain a test exam average of 75%
- Changes in vendor for total testing program
- Requirement for students to achieve a minimum score of 60 the NET admission exam
- Requirement for students in final clinical courses to demonstrate a successful score of 61 or better on exit exam of ERI Total Testing Program
- Changes in ranking students in the admission process
- Faculty review of curriculum
- Review of required scores on science courses in pre-requisite admission requirement

Tarleton State University BSN - Self Study - March 2006
- Initiated Success in Nursing Program-active advising and a three semester credit hour course designed to improve study, test taking, and critical reasoning.
- Expand the Nursing Success Program- add Success Course I for student early in program & Success Course II for students later in program.
- Increase the NUR 120 Survey of Nursing Science pre-admission course passing average from 75.00 to 80.00.
- Require transfer students who have "failed out" of other nursing program to enter through our transition program.
- Increase minimum admission GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.75.
- Change prerequisites courses for program entry(34 to 41 hours)- added microbiology, human

development and sociology and deleted the wellness course.
- Develop a written comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan that reflects guidelines and practices.
- Develop policies & procedures to place at risk students in the Success Program.
- Formalize the readmission process into a written policy.
- Revise the Admission, Progression and Graduation Policies and update advising materials & website.
- Continue to use the comprehensive Advisor's Guide with the form developed to assess program eligibility and fulfillment of graduation requirements at two checkpoints.
- Implement Calendar Year Appointment for interested faculty to improve enrollment and faculty workload issues (Proposal submitted).
- Utilize Faculty Grant monies and other funds to increase use of active teaching strategies and enhance knowledge of the educator role.
- Continue to faculty training provided by Center for Instructional Technology and Distance Learning for technology utilization in the classroom, videoconferencing, and web course management.
- Revise the Faculty Orientation Plan to emphasize information on test construction, item analysis, clinical evaluation techniques, and WebCT course management.
- Continue to formally assign faculty mentors to new faculty
- Explore peer review evaluation of faculty.
- Revise curriculum (pending approval)
- Ensure test security and reduce incidences of academic dishonesty using various methods.
- Provide students with NCLEX-RN test taking strategies and skills and computerized test taking practice.
- Implement competency testing at the end of each program level.
- Purchase the Par Test / Par Score System with grant funds and hire a computer lab specialist.
- Continue to seek out and nurture relationships with current/potential clinical learning sites.
- Designate one faculty member for each area hospital to act as liaison between the agency and school.
- Continue the development of simulated student learning experiences in the Learning Resource Center.
- Complete revision to the Systematic Evaluation Plan to reflect BNE and CCNE requirements.
- Revise the Institutional Effectiveness Plan
- The faculty have implemented many of the above corrective measures.

Cisco Junior College ADN - Self Study - May 2007

- Developed and initiated a more rigorous orientation session for students to acquaint them with the program's requirements and challenges of the program
- Reviewed all unit and competency exams to incorporate higher level test items which reflect all components of the NCLEX-RN test plan
- Continue ATI testing as part of the evaluative process for student progression
- Reviewed course grade in relation to ATI testing
- Increased the emphasis on GPA scores as an admission factor

Kilgore College ADN - Self Study - March 2007

- Specific Nursing Tutorial Program has been developed to supplement the Adult Resource Center by assisting students with the unique problems associated with nursing courses, including test taking and study skills, providing test reviews and referrals for counseling.
- A tracking spreadsheet has been developed to track every student entering the program, including, GPA, science support course grades, NET scores, grades in each nursing course, support courses repeated, nursing courses repeated, number of ERI testing attempts at the end of a semester and NCLEX results. Data will be analyzed at the end of each semester and recommendations made to appropriate committees for changes in the program of study.

Navarro College ADN - Self Study - April 2007

- Providing structured remediation for students with scores less than 80 on course exams rather than the current 70% criteria.
- Requiring a score of 75 to pass theory exams and courses.
- Initiating an admission test policy.
- Strengthening the ability of the admission process to screen for at-risk students.
- Requiring a passing score on standardized exams for progression in theory courses.
- Continuing and expanding the use of data plans and data collection tools.
- Monitoring course objectives and test items to assure consistency in curriculum.
- Increasing faculty benefits and recruitment and mentoring activities.

Vernon College ADN - Self Study - March 2007

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 AND 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.

Angelina College at Crockett VN - Self Study - May 2006

- Hiring a VN Program Coordinator to support teaching and administration for all VN programs
- Consolidating all Angelina VN programs
- Revising the Total Program Evaluation Plan to include all sites and utilizing data for program revision at all sites
- Providing consistent blue prints for tests
- Improving test analysis at all sites

Angelina College at Lufkin VN - Self Study - May 2006

- Hiring a VN Program Coordinator to support teaching and administration for all VN programs
- Consolidating all Angelina VN programs
- Revising the Total Program Evaluation Plan to include all sites and utilizing data for program revision at all sites
- Providing consistent blue prints for tests
- Improving test analysis at all sites

Coastal Bend College at Kingsville VN - Self Study - June 2006

- Net score increased to 55 (reflected in 2005-2006 class)
- Net score increased to 60 (reflected in 2006-2007 class)
- Requiring students to attain a final grade of 78%
- Requiring students with a HESI score of 70% or less to participate in remediation for 3-4 weeks and then retesting with a HESI-like test requiring a score of 70%.
- Requiring students to master each component of MEDS software

Computer Career Center VN - Self Study - May 2006

Corrective measures:

- The program director sought and acquired a mentor
- Salaries for faculty have been increased to promote retention
- The program director has implemented an Orientation plan for newly employed faculty
- A documented Professional Development plan has been implemented for faculty
- The admissions test was replaced by the TABE Version "A" which measures a higher ability. The program is evaluating the addition of the Nurse Entrance Test for future use.
- The Program Director and Lead Nursing Instructor will be included in all pre admissions interviews
- Adherence to policies, such as attendance will be documented in writing by the Lead Instructor and evaluated by the Program Director. Documentation will appear in the student file.
- Remediation policies have been implemented. A Remedial Action Plan will be devised, implemented, and documented for all students with GPA below 3.0.
- Students have been given direct access via email with faculty
- Various media has been incorporated into the curriculum delivery strategy.
- The Program Director has implemented monthly meetings with faculty to review the program and student's academic progress.
- Student evaluation of faculty and courses will be conducted every six weeks. Student evaluations will be reviewed and analyzed by the Program Director. Results will be distributed to faculty. The Program Director will review areas rated less than 5 with relevant faculty.
- Clinical evaluation tools have been reviewed and revised.
- A communication process involving the instructor and Lead Instructor has been established. Tests are stored under lock and key with limited access.
- Instructors have taken a course on item writing. The processes learned from the course have been implemented. Faculty have standardized tests given to vocational nursing students.
- Peer mentoring has been implemented for the vocational nursing students and a weekly communications system has been established between clinical and theory instructors.

Midland College at Ft. Stockton VN - Self Study - May 2006

- Modification of capstone course to eliminate grade inflation
- Hiring of new program director
- Stabilization of faculty and staff
- Opportunity for students to take science courses before admission to program
- Inclusion of ethics issues throughout the program
- Provision of additional teaching resources
- Exit exams and remediation
- TPE updated
- Plan for curriculum evaluation

Odessa College at Monahans VN - Self Study - July 2006

- Monitor admission process for possible negative indicators
- At risk students will be required to complete formalized remediation plans
- Faculty provided preparation time for instructional activities, and additional mentoring and monitoring of faculty by program director
- Inservice education for faculty regarding exam review
- Remove any opportunity for grade inflation from course grades
- More presence of program director at Monahans campus
- Faculty inservice on effective teaching strategies by program director
- Analysis of curriculum for content areas
- Evaluation of teaching methods
- Evaluation of three web-based courses
- Development of exams which better reflect NCLEX-PN blueprint

South Plains College at Levelland VN - Self Study - May 2006

- Refer at risk students to counseling center and learning center prior to entering the program or at the time the problem is identified
- Institute total testing of achievement exams for the student throughout the program with required remediation to progress to the next level and graduate from the program
- Student referrals to the counseling center and/or the learning center who is at risk due to personal issues and no prior college experience

South Texas College at McAllen VN - Self Study - May 2006

- Faculty will meet with students who do not meet the passing standard of the assessment exam within one week of the exam.
- Faculty will assure that students follow up on indicated areas of weakness on assessment. Students will be required to sow written proof of remediation. Faculty will review for accuracy and completeness. Students will be advised of inaccuracies and areas that require more in depth study.
- Faculty will be assigned to assist students to prepare a remediation plan.
- The remediation plan will include time frames, timed comprehensive exam requirements to acquire test taking skills and assistance with anxiety management.
- Faculty will report student progress to the program director on a daily basis.

Victoria College at Cuero VN - Self Study - May 2006

- identify students with personal stress factors on admission to the program and provide referral to student support services immediately.
- provide tutoring sessions in at least two convenient time slots for students and require all students who are in jeopardy to attend
- determine the courses that must be repeated by each re-entry student based on in depth evaluation.
- raise the level of testing in the last two semesters of the program by continuing the analysis of the level of all test questions.

- counsel students regarding predictability of NCLEX-PN success based on achievement exam scores and offer a variety of exam preparation strategies including enrollment in the review course
- plan a VN faculty workshop on the continued implementation of the clinical evaluation tool

Clarendon College VN - Self Study - August 2007

- Cease admission of students who fail to meet the standards.
- Decrease admission from sixty (60) students to forty (40) students to focus on improving student outcomes, decreasing attrition and improving program efficacy
- Revise faculty and student handbooks for increased clarity.
- Initiate Professional Development Plan for faculty to include test item analysis, test blueprinting and development.
- Update syllabi and clinical evaluation tools to include the DELC.
- Implement revised Total Program Evaluation.

CyFair College at Cypress VN - Self Study - September 2007

- collective and trending of data to identify student factors that could negatively impact student success on the NCLEX-PN examination;
- implement test blueprinting for all tests throughout the curriculum;
- promote test writing and test time writing thorough faculty professional development opportunities;
- recommend purchase of a total remediation/testing package for the nursing programs;
- review and revise testing calendar; and
- review and revise summer semester clinical hours.

Southwest Texas Junior College at Uvalde VN - Self Study - September 2007

- provided more group sessions for students with instructor present
- implemented test taking strategies
- moved short courses to the early part of the semester
- provided immediate feedback and test review to students following exams
- Added ATI testing at the end of the NCLEX-PN review
- added one additional clinical site

Sul Ross University VN - Self Study - September 2007

- implementation of remediation program
- capstone requirement now in place
- student counseling and stress reduction seminars for nursing students

Texas Careers Incorporated at San Antonio VN - Self Study - August 2007

- during faculty orientation, new instructor class and clinical observations will be completed during the entire 90 day initial hire period
- develop test blueprints for all courses using the NCLEX-PN test plan and cognitive domain
- implement test item analysis at a more detailed level. The detailed test analysis forms will be purchased and all teachers will be instructed on their use.
- revise instructor job description to include requirement of registered nurse licensure. As LVN faculty leave employment, replacements will be with RNs only.
- raise the minimum entrance examination score requirement
- use the Kaplan Q bank for NCLEX-PN review

Vernon College at Vernon Day and Evening VN - Self Study - September 2007

- raise the GPA of minimally performing students through assessment and remediation
- establish a cohesive plan for maintaining currency in the curriculum, including implementing the ATI

standardized tests throughout the curriculum and utilizing ATI reference books to update program curriculum
- establish a reliable plan for blueprinting and revising program exams

Western Texas College VN - Self Study - August 2007

- increasing advertising and recruitment for students
- new student orientation
- identification of at-risk students and remediation activities
- changes in standardized tests and processes

Compilation of All Strategies Outlined in Reports

RN programs in regular font
VN programs in italics

Strategies Related to Students:
Provide student support including active advising and a 3 credit course to improve study habits, test-taking abilities and critical reasoning
Provide students with NCLEX-RN test taking strategies and skills and computerized test-taking practice
Develop a more rigorous orientation session for students to acquaint them with program requirements and challenges
Develop a nursing tutorial program to assist students with nursing program including test taking and study skills, providing test reviews and referrals for counseling
Develop a tracking system to track every student throughout the program from admission to graduation
Develop a list of student tutors
Develop a matrix to study personal and academic factors of students unsuccessful on the NCLEX-RN

Provide faculty email addresses to students
Plan for faculty to review student academic progress in months faculty meetings
Establish peer mentoring with students
Refer at-risk students to counseling center and learning center prior to entering program or when problem is identified
Plan for faculty to meet with students who do not meet the passing standard of the assessment exam within one week of exam
Assure that students will follow up on indicated areas of weakness on assessment
Assign faculty to assist students in preparing a remediation plan
Report student progress in the remediation plan
Decrease admission from 60 to 40 students to focus on improving student outcomes, decreasing attrition and improving program efficacy
Collect and trend data to identify student factors that could negatively impact student success on the NCLEX-PN exam
Provide more group sessions for students with instructor present
Provide immediate feedback and test review to students following exams
Provide student counseling and stress reduction seminars
Raise the GPA of minimally performing students through assessment and remediation
Increase advertising and recruitment for students
Provide new student orientation
Identify at-risk students and provide remediation activities

Strategies Related to Policies:
Review and revise the admission process
Consider using HESI admission assessment
Revise policies on transfer and readmissions, math placement score, and remediation
Form two new committees to set policies and improve communications internally and externally
Revise admission policy to require students to achieve a minimum score of 60 on the NET
Require students to maintain a test exam average of 75%
Change policy for ranking students in admission process
Review required scores on science courses in pre-requisite admission requirement
Require higher score on nursing pre-admission course
Require transfer students with past failing record to enter through transition program
increase minimum admission GPA requirement from 2.5 to 2.75
Increase the number of required prerequisite courses
Develop a written comprehensive Enrollment Management Plan that reflects guidelines and practices
Develop policies and procedures to place at risk students in the "Success Program"
Formalize the readmission process into a written policy
Revise admission, progression and graduation policies and update advising materials on website

Use the comprehensive Advisor's Guide to assess program eligibility and progression toward graduation at two points
Increase the emphasis on GPA scores as an admission factor
Initiate an admission test policy
Strengthen the admission process to screen for at-risk students
Require a score of 75 to pass theory exams and courses
Require a passing score on standardized exams for progression in theory courses
Investigate increasing admission requirements
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
Increase the passing NET score for admission

Increase NET score
Require students to attain a final grade of 78%
Require students with a HESI score of 70% or less to participate in remediation for 3-4 weeks and then retest
Change admission tests
Include program director and lead instructor in all admission interviews
Adhere to all policies
Institute total testing of achievement exams for students throughout the program with required remediation

Implement a remediation plan
Provide opportunity for students to take science courses before admission to program
Provide exit exams and remediation
Monitor admission process for possible negative indicators
Require at-risk students to complete formalized remediation plans
Identify students with personal stress on admission for referral to student support services
Provide tutoring sessions for students with required attendance for at-risk students
Determine courses that must be repeated by each re-entry student
Counsel students regarding predictability of NCLEX-PN success based on achievement exam scores and offer strategies for improving their scores
Cease admission of students who fail to meet the standards
Revise faculty and student handbooks for increased clarity
Raise minimum entrance exam score requirement

Strategies Related to Faculty: (Development)
Improve new faculty orientation
Establish a system of tracking faculty development
Assign seasoned faculty mentor to new faculty
Provide faculty training in PAR score test analysis procedures
Explore developing formal instructor orientation plan
Implement faculty retention and recruitment plan to include increase in hourly rate for part time faculty, assignment of mentors, limiting lecture assignments, and alignment of experienced with inexperienced faculty at clinical sites
Provide faculty with a test-writing development program
Implement a calendar year appointment for interested faculty to improve enrollment and faculty workload issues
Increase the number of faculty
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
Utilize faculty grant monies and other funding to increase use of active teaching strategies and enhance knowledge of faculty role
Continue faculty training for technology utilization in the classroom
Revise faculty orientation plan to emphasize test construction, item analysis, clinical evaluation techniques, and WebCT course management

Increase faculty benefits and recruitment and mentoring activities
Continue to formally assign faculty mentors to new faculty
Explore peer review evaluation of faculty
Offer a test construction workshop for all nursing faculty
Select faculty members to attend the NCSBN item-writer workshop

Hire a VN Program Coordinator to support teaching and administration for all VN programs
Seek a mentor for program director
Increase faculty salaries
Implement an orientation plan for new faculty
Implement a faculty development plan for faculty
Implement monthly faculty meetings to review program
Evaluate faculty in regular course evaluations with feedback to faculty
Improve communications between director and faculty
Provide faculty with a course on test item writing
Hire new program director
Stabilize faculty and staff
Provide additional teaching resources
Provide faculty with preparation time and mentoring and monitoring by program director
Inservice education for faculty regarding exam review
Provide more presence of program director at extended site
Provide faculty inservice on effective teaching strategies
Evaluate teaching methods
Plan a VN faculty workshop on the continued implementation of the clinical evaluation tool
Initiate a faculty development plan to include test item analysis, test blueprinting and test development
Promote test writing and test item writing through faculty professional development opportunities
Evaluate new instructors by class and clinical observations during first 90 days after hire
Raise level of VN faculty to all RN

Strategies Related to Curriculum:
Utilize consultant in implementation of critical program components such as using NCLEX-RN test plan, blueprinting, interrator reliability and validity, and TPE
Enhance theory presentations using WebCT
Include students on the curriculum committee
Plan faculty review of curriculum
Revise curriculum as appropriate
Continue to seek out and nurture relationships with current/potential clinical learning sites
Designate one faculty member for each area hospital to act as liaison between the agency and school
Continue the development of simulated student learning experiences in the LRC
Monitor course objectives and test items to assure consistency in curriculum
Offer smaller classes
Investigate offering a pathophysiology course in the nursing curriculum
Evaluate the nursing curriculum using WECM guidelines

Require students to master each component of MEDS software
Incorporate various media into curriculum
Include ethics throughout the curriculum
Evaluate curriculum
Analysis of curriculum for content areas
Evaluate web-based courses
Update syllabi and clinical evaluation tools to include DELC
Review and revise summer semester clinical hours.
Move short courses to early part of program
Add one additional clinical site
Require capstone course
Establish a cohesive plan for maintaining currency in the curriculum

Strategies Related to Testing & Evaluation:
Utilize NCLEX-RN test plan and test item blueprint
Implement the ERI testing and remediation program
Construction of tests using NCLEX test blueprint and Bloom's taxonomy
Ensure test security and reduce incidences of academic dishonesty
Implement competency testing at the end of each program level
Purchase PAR test/PAR score system and hire computer lab specialist
Review all unit and competency exams to incorporate higher level test items to reflect the NCLEX-RN test plan
Continue ATI testing as part of the evaluative process for student progression
Provide structured remediation for students with scores less than 80 on course exams

Promote test security
Develop exams which better reflect NCLEX-PN blueprint
Implement test blueprinting for all tests throughout the curriculum
Consider purchasing a total remediation/testing package for the nursing program.
Review and revise testing calendar.
Implement test taking strategies
Add ATI testing to the end of the NCLEX-PN review
Implement a remediation program
Develop test blueprints for all courses using the NCLEX-PN test plan
Implement test item analysis at a more detailed level
Use Kaplan Q bank for NCLEX-PN review
Establish a reliable plan for blueprinting and revising program exams
Change standardized tests and processes

Strategies Related to Evaluation Methods for Class & Clinical:
Provide faculty with a tool to assist with analysis and revision of exams
Revise grading scale
Review course grades in relation to ATI testing
Require a score of 75 to pass theory exams and courses
Develop a Testing Committee to evaluate the testing and evaluations of all nursing courses
Evaluate if testing items are consistent with curriculum needs and course manual information

Provide consistent blue prints for all tests
Improve test analysis at all sites
Review and revise clinical evaluation tools
Modify capstone course to eliminate grade inflation
Remove any opportunity for grade inflation
Raise the level of testing as students progress through the program

Strategies Related to Total Program Evaluation:
Complete revision to the Systematic Evaluation Plan to reflect BNE and CCNE requirements
Revise the Institutional Effectiveness Plan

Revise the TPE to include all sites and utilize data for program revision at all sites
Update TPE
Implement the TPE