

**REPORT OF SURVEY VISIT**  
**VERNON COLLEGE IN VERNON, TEXAS**  
**ASSOCIATE DEGREE NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider the report of the routine six-year survey visit of the Vernon College in Vernon Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Educational Program conducted on September 16-17, 2008.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

Program	Year	Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate	Number of First-Time Candidates Passed/Total
<b>Vernon College ADN Program</b>	2008 Preliminary Results	Full	94.67%	71/75
	2007	Full	89.55%	60/67
	2006	Full	70.00%	63/90
	2005	Full	81.25%	52/64
	2004	Full	83.87%	52/62

- The Vernon College ADN Educational Program began operation in August 1992.
- The current program director was appointed to the director position in August 1991. Prior to that time the director was a faculty member in the ADN program.
- 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. Once again the implemented corrective actions were evidently effective as the program's pass rate for 2007 was 89.55% and the preliminary pass rate for 2008 is 94.67%.
- On September 16-17, 2008, Board staff conducted a routine six-year survey visit of the program, in conjunction with a routine six-year survey visit of the Vernon College in Wichita Falls, Vocational Nursing Educational Program (See Agenda Item, 3.2.4.f.), to evaluate the program's status regarding compliance with the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) rules and regulations. A report of the survey visit findings is attached (See Attachment One).

**PROS AND CONS:**

Pros-

- The September 16-17, 2008 routine six-year survey visit revealed that the nursing program director and nursing faculty are dedicated to the success of the program and the success of the students and are innovative in their approach of incorporating creative ideas into the program of study (See Attachment One).
- The program has implemented faculty tutoring for all students with mandatory remediation for students failing any examination, a partnership with a hospital in Altus, Oklahoma resulting in a paid faculty member, sign on bonus for new faculty, and recruitment advertisement for the program, and the development and implementation of an inter-rater reliability policy (See Attachment One).

- Preliminary results for the program's 2008 pass rate show a 94.67% pass rate.

Cons-

The September 16-17, 2008 routine six-year survey visit revealed negative findings (See Attachment One), including:

- The program's current student policies related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to program do not clearly reflect the intent of Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations;
- The program's current usage of the state-of-the-art Simulation (SIMS) lab located in Wichita Falls for the majority of basic nursing skills teaching, practice, and evaluation activities in the program does not appear to be the most efficient approach for students and does not allow students sufficient time to practice these nursing skills;
- Decisions made by the faculty regarding the operation of the program do not appear to be based on review of pertinent data;
- Sufficient beds and manikins are not available in the nursing skills lab located in Vernon at the program's main campus for student learning and practice;
- Students are not evaluating the SIMS lab experience in Wichita Falls;
- Clinical evaluation tools lack critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors and clinical evaluations are not conducted a minimum of two times during each clinical course and are not signed by both the student and the faculty member;
- Specific grading criteria for all assignments that make up part of the course grade and a complete breakdown of the value of grading components are not in place; and
- Evaluation instruments were not present and utilized for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks, i.e., graduate and employer surveys as required by the rule in the program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to accept the report of the routine six-year survey visit of the Vernon College in Vernon ADN Educational Program and issue the commendations, recommendations, and requirements to be met based on staff recommendation, as indicated in the attached letter (See Attachment Two).

**SURVEY VISIT  
SUMMARY REPORT**

**NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM:** Vernon College in Vernon, Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Educational Program

**NURSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR:** Cathy Bolton, MSN, RN, Director

**REASON FOR SURVEY VISIT:** Routine six-year survey visit to evaluate the program's compliance with Texas BON rules and regulations.

**DATE(S) OF SURVEY VISIT:** September 16-17, 2008

**SURVEY VISITOR(S):** Robbin Wilson, MSN, RN and Virginia Holmes, MSN, RN

**TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING (BON) APPROVAL STATUS:** Full

**DATE OF LAST BON SURVEY VISIT:** March 2003

**NAME OF ACCREDITING AGENCIES:** SACS, THECB

**ACTIVITIES DURING SURVEY VISIT:**

Board staff:

- Met with the College Administrators;
- Interviewed Cathy Bolton, MSN, RN, ADN Program Director;
- Interviewed ADN students and ADN faculty;
- Reviewed records and documents;
- Conducted a summary conference with the College Administrators, the ADN Program Director, and the ADN faculty.

**SURVEY VISIT FINDINGS:**

Positive findings revealed during the survey visit include:

- The September 16-17, 2008 routine six-year survey visit revealed that the nursing program director and nursing faculty are dedicated to the success of the program and the success of the students and are innovative in their approach of incorporating creative ideas into the program of study.
- The program has implemented faculty tutoring for all students with mandatory remediation for students failing any examination, a partnership with a hospital in Altus, Oklahoma resulting in a paid faculty member, sign on bonus for new faculty, and recruitment advertisement for the program, and the development and implementation of an inter-rater reliability policy.

Areas of concern revealed during the survey visit include:

- The program's current student policies related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission to program do not clearly reflect the intent of Texas Nursing Practice Act and the Texas BON rules and regulations;
- The program's current usage of the state-of-the-art Simulation (SIMS) lab located in Wichita Falls for the majority of basic nursing skills teaching, practice, and evaluation activities in the program does not appear to be the most efficient approach for students and does not allow students sufficient time to practice these nursing skills;
- Decisions made by the faculty regarding the operation of the program do not appear to be based on review of pertinent data;
- Sufficient beds and manikins are not available in the nursing skills lab located in Vernon at the program's main campus for student learning and practice;
- Students are not evaluating the SIMS lab experience in Wichita Falls;

- Clinical evaluation tools lack critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors and clinical evaluations are not conducted a minimum of two times during each clinical course and are not signed by both the student and the faculty member;
- Specific grading criteria for all assignments that make up part of the course grade and a complete breakdown of the value of grading components are not in place;
- Evaluation instruments were not present and utilized for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks, i.e., graduate and employer surveys as required by the rule in the program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes.

#### **PROPOSED COMMENDATIONS:**

1. Commend the ADN program director and ADN faculty for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the students and their innovation in the approach of incorporating creative ideas into the program of study.
2. Commend the program for implementing faculty tutoring for all students with mandatory remediation for students failing any examination, for obtaining a partnership with a hospital in Altus, Oklahoma resulting in a paid faculty member, sign on bonus for new faculty, and recruitment advertisement for the program, and for the development and implementation of an inter-rater reliability policy for the faculty.

#### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The ADN program director and the ADN faculty are strongly encouraged to consider incorporating the language in the four (4) Texas Board of Nursing Disciplinary Sanction Policies into the nursing student policies and the behavioral and performance expectations for students that are outlined in the Nursing Student and Nursing Faculty Handbooks related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission taking into consideration the requirements in Texas Nursing Practice Act, Sec. 301.452-301.4535 and the Texas Board of Nursing Rules 213.27-213.30.
2. The ADN program director and the ADN faculty are strongly encouraged to review the SIMS Lab schedule and consider the feasibility of moving all basic nursing skills teaching, practice, and evaluation activities from the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls to the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon.

#### **PROPOSED REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 215.7(f)(2) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization: A review of the Faculty Organization and committee minutes revealed that the minutes do not reflect that the ADN standing committees meet regularly and the minutes do not reflect that decisions made by faculty and changes in the program are based on analysis of data from the Total Program Evaluation Plan (TPE) as appropriate. **Therefore**, the nursing faculty shall include review and analysis of pertinent data from the Total Program Evaluation Plan when making decisions regarding the operation of the program, including curricula decisions, and ensure that this information is documented in the minutes.
2. Rule 215.8(b) related to Students, Rule 215.9(f)(3) related to Program of Study, and Rule 215.11©) related to Facilities, Resources, and Services: A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, the ADN Educational Program syllabi, interviews with the ADN program director, ADN faculty, and ADN students, and tours of the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon revealed lack of sufficient opportunities for the students to learn, practice, and demonstrate manual technical skills, a lack of sufficient equipment available for their use at the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon, and lack of opportunities for the students to evaluate both the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon. **Therefore**, the ADN program director and ADN faculty shall:
  - purchase sufficient additional beds and additional manikins for the number of students that are present in the lab at any given time;
  - ensure that prior to utilizing the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls, students have sufficient time to learn and practice the nursing skills that will be evaluated in the SIMS Lab and be informed as to what is expected of the student; and
  - provide student sufficient opportunities for the students to evaluate both the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon.

-clinical evaluation tools without indicated critical criteria/behaviors, measurable behaviors, and a minimum of two evaluations during each clinical course that are signed by the student and the faculty member. **Therefore**, the VN faculty shall:

-develop and implement a faculty policy to ensure inter-rater reliability in all areas involving subjective student evaluation and grading in order to provide consistency among the VN faculty;

- develop specific grading criteria for all assignment that make up part of the course grade and indicate the specific value of all grading components;
- revise course requirements/assignments to eliminate these activities/assignments that are not part of the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses; and
- revise the clinical evaluation tools to reflect critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors, and ensure that clinical evaluations shall be conducted a minimum of two evaluations during each clinical course and signed by both the student and the faculty member.

3. Rule 215.9(a)(5) related to Program of Study: Review of the Faculty and Student Handbooks, review of the ADN program syllabi, and interviews with ADN faculty and students revealed that clinical evaluation tools do not indicate critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors, a minimum of two evaluations are not conducted during each clinical course, the clinical evaluation is not signed by both the student and the faculty member, and a breakdown of the grade for each course is not present in course syllabi indicating the value of each examination.

**Therefore**, the ADN faculty shall:

- Revise the clinical evaluation tools to indicate critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors and ensure that a minimum of two clinical evaluations are conducted for each clinical course with the tool signed by both the student and the faculty member; and
- Include the breakdown of the grade for each course indicating the value of each examination.

4. Rule 215.13(b)&(c) related to Total Program Evaluation Plan: A review of the current Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and the Faculty Organization and committee minutes revealed that evaluation instruments were not present and utilized for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks, i.e., graduate and employer surveys as required by the rule in the program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes. **Therefore**, the ADN faculty shall develop and utilize evaluation instruments for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks and ensure that implementation of the TPE Plan is documented in the Faculty Organization and committee minutes.

## DRAFT LETTER

October 30, 2008

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

Dear Ms. Bolton:

At the October 23-24, 2008 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) reviewed the Board staff's report of routine survey visit of the Vernon College in Vernon, Texas Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Educational Program conducted on September 16-17, 2008. Based upon the review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to accept the survey visit report and issue the following commendations, recommendations, and requirements to be met.

### **COMMENDATIONS:**

1. Commend the ADN program director and ADN faculty for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the students and their innovation in the approach of incorporating creative ideas into the program of study.
2. Commend the program for implementing faculty tutoring for all students with mandatory remediation for students failing any examination, for obtaining a partnership with a hospital in Altus, Oklahoma resulting in a paid faculty member, sign on bonus for new faculty, and recruitment advertisement for the program, and for the development and implementation of an inter-rater reliability policy for the faculty.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The ADN program director and the ADN faculty are strongly encouraged to consider incorporating the language in the four (4) Texas Board of Nursing Disciplinary Sanction Policies into the nursing student policies and the behavioral and performance expectations for students that are outlined in the Nursing Student and Nursing Faculty Handbooks related to unprofessional conduct, dismissal from the program, and readmission taking into consideration the requirements in Texas Nursing Practice Act, Sec. 301.452-301.4535 and the Texas Board of Nursing Rules 213.27-213.30.
2. The ADN program director and the ADN faculty are strongly encouraged to review the SIMS Lab schedule and consider the feasibility of moving all basic nursing skills teaching, practice, and evaluation activities from the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls to the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon.

### **REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 215.7(f)(2) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization, requires that "Minutes of faculty organization and committee meetings shall document the reasons for actions and the decisions of the faculty and shall be available for reference." A review of the Faculty Organization and committee minutes revealed that the minutes do not reflect that the ADN standing committees meet regularly and the minutes do not reflect that decisions made by faculty and changes in the program are based on analysis of data from the Total Program Evaluation Plan (TPE) as appropriate. **Therefore**, the nursing faculty shall include review and analysis of pertinent data from the Total Program Evaluation Plan when making decisions regarding the operation of the program, including curricula decisions, and ensure that this information is documented in the minutes.
2. Rule 215.8(b) related to Students, requires that "The number of students admitted to the program shall be determined by the number of qualified faculty, adequate educational facilities and resources, and the availability of appropriate clinical learning experiences for students." Rule 215.9(f)(3) related to Program of Study, requires that "Students shall have sufficient opportunities in simulated or clinical settings to develop manual technical skills, using contemporary technologies, essential for safe, effective nursing practice."

Rule 215.11(c) related to Facilities, Resources, and Services, requires that “The physical facilities shall be adequate to meet the needs of the program in relation to the size of the faculty and the student body.” A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, the ADN Educational Program syllabi, interviews with the ADN program director, ADN faculty, and ADN students, and tours of the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon revealed lack of sufficient opportunities for the students to learn, practice, and demonstrate manual technical skills, a lack of sufficient equipment available for their use at the Nursing Sills Lab in Vernon, and lack of opportunities for the students to evaluate both the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon. **Therefore**, the ADN program director and ADN faculty shall:

- purchase sufficient additional beds and additional manikins for the number of students that are present in the lab at any given time;
- ensure that prior to utilizing the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls, students have sufficient time to learn and practice the nursing skills that will be evaluated in the SIMS Lab and be informed as to what is expected of the student; and
- provide student sufficient opportunities for the students to evaluate both the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls and the Nursing Skills Lab in Vernon.

3. Rule 215.9(a)(5) related to Program of Study, requires that “The program of study shall be: . . . based on sound educational principles.” Review of the Faculty and Student Handbooks, review of the ADN program syllabi, and interviews with ADN faculty and students revealed that clinical evaluation tools do not indicate critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors, a minimum of two evaluations are not conducted during each clinical course, the clinical evaluation is not signed by both the student and the faculty member, and a breakdown of the grade for each course is not present in course syllabi indicating the value of each examination.

**Therefore**, the ADN faculty shall:

- Revise the clinical evaluation tools to indicate critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors and ensure that a minimum of two clinical evaluations are conducted for each clinical course with the tool signed by both the student and the faculty member; and
- Include the breakdown of the grade for each course indicating the value of each examination.

4. Rule 215.13(b)&(c) related to Total Program Evaluation Plan, requires that “All evaluation methods and instruments shall be periodically reviewed for appropriateness” and “Implementation of the plan for total program evaluation shall be documented in the minutes.” A review of the current Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and the Faculty Organization and committee minutes revealed that evaluation instruments were not present and utilized for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks, i.e., graduate and employer surveys as required by the rule in the program’s Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and implementation of the program’s current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes. **Therefore**, the ADN faculty shall develop and utilize evaluation instruments for all the appropriate numerical benchmarks and ensure that implementation of the TPE Plan is documented in the Faculty Organization and committee minutes.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rule. The program must respond, but in a method of the program’s choice. Requirements are mandatory criterion based on program assessment directly related to the rule that shall be addressed in the manner prescribed.

Documentation of the address of the above recommendations and requirements to be met shall be submitted to the Board office at the same time the 2008 and 2009 NEPIS and CANEP are submitted, as appropriate. 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@bon.state.tx.us](mailto:robbin.wilson@bon.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