

**REPORT OF SURVEY VISIT**

**VERNON COLLEGE IN WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS  
 VOCATIONAL NURSING EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider the report of the routine six-year survey visit of the Vernon College in Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Educational Program conducted on September 16-17, 2008.

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

Program	Year	Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
<b>Vernon College at Wichita Falls (Consolidated) VN Program</b>	2008 Preliminary Results through 09/30/08	Full	85.33%	64/75
	2007	Full	91.95%	80/87
<b>Vernon College at Vernon Day and Evening VN Program</b>	2006	Full	70.27%	26/37
	2005	Full	94.44%	34/36
	2004	Full	95%	19/20
<b>Vernon College at Wichita Falls Day VN Program</b>	2006	Full	86.25%	69/80
	2005	Full	88.89%	64/72
	2004	Full	97%	68/70
<b>Vernon College at Wichita Falls Evening VN Program</b>	2006	Full	91.67%	22/24
	2005	Full	82.35%	14/17
	2004	Full	NA	No Graduates

- Records show that Vernon College (VC) has successfully operated a vocational nursing (VN) education program at Vernon and various other locations since 1972.
- The current program director was appointed to the director position in 1999. Prior to that time the director was a faculty member in the VN program.
- The VN Evening Program at Vernon was required to complete a Self Study to address the 2006 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 70.27%. The Self-Study Report was accepted by the Board at the October 18-19, 2007 Board Meeting and the Board issued two requirements to be met related to implementation and continuing evaluation of ongoing corrective measures identified in the self study and needed revision to the program's Total Program Improvement Plan.

- The corrective measures have evidently been successful as the program's pass rate for 2007 was 91.95%.
- At the program's request, the four programs were consolidated into one program effective October 1, 2007 with the campus at Century City in Wichita Falls designated as the main campus for the program.
- 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 Vernon, Associate Degree Nursing Educational Program (See Agenda Item, 3.2.4.e.), 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 (See Attachment One).
- The nursing program director is innovative in his approach to improving communication between the VN faculty and facilitating more frequent faculty meetings/briefings by utilizing WIMBA, Inc., a computerized application for sharing information (See Attachment One).
- Preliminary results for the program's 2008 pass rate show an 85.33% pass rate with one (1) quarter remaining in the testing period for 2008.

Cons-

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

- The VN program is not utilizing the state-of-the-art Simulation (SIMS) lab located in Wichita Falls;
- 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;
- A challenge policy for students in regard to examinations and quizzes is not in place;
- Decisions made by the faculty regarding the operation of the program do not appear to be based on review of pertinent data;
- The process for distributing Texas BON eligibility information to students does not meet the requirements of the rule;
- Several of the VN Educational Program syllabi revealed required student activities/assignments, e.g., development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses;
- An inter-rater reliability policy or activities designed to provide consistency between the faculty in areas involving subjective student evaluation and grading are not present;
- 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;
- The clinical evaluation tools lack critical criteria/behaviors, measurable behaviors and a minimum of two evaluation during each clinical that are signed by the student and the faculty member;
- Sufficient manikins are not available for student learning and practice and students do not have sufficient access to computer software and technology to meet their learning needs; and
- Indicators (numerical benchmarks) of program and institutional effectiveness, were not present for all the required ten broad areas in a program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes, and decisions and major changes in the program do not appear to be evidenced-based on the analysis of data from the TPE and supported by rationale.

**STAFF RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to accept the report of the routine six-year survey visit of Vernon College in Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing 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 Wichita Falls, Vocational Nursing (VN) Educational Program

**NURSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR:** Lynn Kalski, ADN, 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:** August 2001

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

**ACTIVITIES DURING SURVEY VISIT:**

Board staff:

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

**SURVEY VISIT FINDINGS:**

Positive findings revealed during the survey visit include:

- The VN program director and VN faculty are dedicated to the success of the program and the success of the VN students.
- The VN program director is innovative in his approach to improving communication between the VN faculty and facilitating more frequent faculty meetings/briefings by utilizing WIMBA, Inc., a computerized application for sharing information.

Areas of concern revealed during the survey visit include:

- The VN program is not utilizing the state-of-the-art Simulation (SIMS) lab located in Wichita Falls;
- The programs 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;
- A challenge policy for students in regard to examinations and quizzes is not in place;
- Decisions made by the faculty regarding the operation of the program do not appear to be based on review of pertinent data;
- The process for distributing Texas BON eligibility information to students does not meet the requirements of the rule;
- Several of the VN Educational Program syllabi revealed required student activities/assignments, e.g., development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses;
- An inter-rater reliability policy or activities designed to provide consistency between the faculty in areas involving subjective student evaluation and grading are not present;

- 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;
- The 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;
- Sufficient manikins are not available for student learning and practice and students do not have sufficient access to computer software and technology to meet their learning needs; and
- Indicators (numerical benchmarks) of program and institutional effectiveness, were not present for all the required ten broad areas in a program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes, and decisions and major changes in the program do not appear to be evidenced-based on the analysis of data from the TPE and supported by rationale.

#### **PROPOSED COMMENDATIONS:**

1. Commend the VN program director and VN faculty for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the VN students.
2. Commend the VN program director for the innovative approach to improving communication between the VN faculty and facilitating more frequent faculty meetings/briefings by utilizing WIMBA, Inc., a computerized application for sharing information.

#### **PROPOSED RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The college administration and the VN program director, in cooperation with the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing educational program director, are strongly encouraged to explore the feasibility of utilizing the state-of-the-art Simulation (SIMS) lab located in Wichita Falls for the VN students.
2. The VN program director and the VN 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.
3. The VN program director and the VN faculty are strongly encouraged to consider the feasibility of developing and implementing a challenge policy for students in regard to quizzes and examinations.

#### **PROPOSED REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 214.7(d) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization: The Faculty Organization and committee minutes do not reflect that the faculty make decisions regarding the operation of the program based on review and analysis of pertinent data. **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.
4. Rule 214.8(b) related to Students: A review of student records and the Student and Faculty handbooks revealed that the eligibility information as required by the rule is not provided to the students in verbal and written form and a signed student form indicating receipt of this information is not present in students' records. **Therefore**, the program shall revise current processes to ensure that all students are provided the eligibility information in verbal and written form and a signed student form indicating receipt of this information is retained in the students' records.
5. Rule 214.9(a)(5 & 6) related to Program of Study and Rule 214.10(a) related to Management of Clinical Learning Experiences and Resources: A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed:
  - lack of an inter-rater reliability policy or activities designed to provide consistency between the faculty in areas involving subjective student evaluation and grading;
  - required student activities/assignments, e.g., development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses; and
  - 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.

4. Rule 214.11(b) & (d) related to Facilities, Resources, and Services: The tour of nursing skills lab and the library, and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed sufficient manikins are not available for student learning and practice and students do not have sufficient access to computer software and technology to meet their learning needs. **Therefore**, additional manikins, at least two infant manikins and four adult manikins, shall be purchased to assist students in meeting learning needs and accommodate the number of students enrolled in the program. Additionally, sufficient computer software and technology shall be purchased and made readily available for the students' use.
5. Rule 214.13(a)(5) and (g) related to Total Program Evaluation Plan: A review of the current Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan revealed that indicators (numerical benchmarks) of program and institutional effectiveness, were not present for all the required ten broad areas in a program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes, and decisions and major changes in the program do not appear to be evidenced-based on the analysis of data from the TPE and supported by rationale.

**DRAFT LETTER**

October 30, 2008

Lynn Kalski, RN, Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Vernon College at Vernon  
4400 College Drive  
Vernon, Texas 76384

Dear Mr. Kalski:

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 Wichita Falls, Texas Vocational Nursing (VN) 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 VN program director and VN faculty for their dedication to the success of the program and the success of the VN students.
2. Commend the VN program director for the innovative approach to improving communication between the VN faculty and facilitating more frequent faculty meetings/briefings by utilizing WIMBA, Inc., a computerized application for sharing information.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

1. The college administration and the VN program director, in cooperation with the Vernon College Associate Degree Nursing educational program director, are strongly encouraged to explore the feasibility of utilizing the SIMS Lab in Wichita Falls for the VN students.
2. The VN program director and the VN 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.
3. The VN program director and the VN faculty are strongly encouraged to consider the feasibility of developing and implementing a challenge policy for students in regard to quizzes and examinations.

**REQUIREMENTS:**

1. Rule 214.7(d) related to Faculty Qualifications and Faculty Organization, states that "The faculty shall meet regularly and function in such a manner that all members participate in planning, implementing and evaluating the nursing program. Such participation includes, but is not limited to, the initiation and/or change of academic policies, personnel policies, curriculum, utilization of affiliating agencies, and program evaluation." The Faculty Organization and committee minutes do not reflect that the faculty make decisions regarding the operation of the program based on review and analysis of pertinent data. **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.
2. Rule 214.8(b) related to Students, requires that "Individuals enrolled in approved vocational nursing education programs preparing students for licensure shall be provided verbal and written information regarding conditions that may disqualify graduates from licensure and of their rights to petition the Board for a Declaratory Order of Eligibility. Required eligibility information includes: (1) Texas Occupations Code §§301.252, 301.257, and 301.452-.469; and (2) Sections §§213.27 - 213.30 of the Texas Administration Code (relating to Good Professional Character, Licensure of Persons with Criminal Convictions, Criteria and

Procedure Regarding Intemperate Use and Lack of Fitness in Eligibility and Disciplinary Matters, and Declaratory Order of Eligibility for Licensure). A review of student records and the Student and Faculty handbooks revealed that the eligibility information as required by the rule is not provided to the students in verbal and written form and a signed student form indicating receipt of this information is not present in students' records. **Therefore**, the program shall revise current processes to ensure that all students are provided the eligibility information in verbal and written form and a signed student form indicating receipt of this information is retained in the students' records.

3. Rule 214.9(a)(5 & 6) related to Program of Study, requires in pertinent part that "The program of study shall be . . . based on sound educational principles . . . designed to prepare graduates to practice according to the Nursing Practice Act, Standards of Nursing Practice, Unprofessional Conduct Rules, and other laws and regulations which pertain to various practice settings." Rule 214.10(a) related to Management of Clinical Learning Experiences and Resources, requires that "Faculty shall be responsible for student clinical practice evaluations. Clinical practice evaluations shall be correlated with level and/or course objectives including formative and summative evaluation. Students shall receive a minimum of three clinical evaluations during the program year." A review of the Faculty Handbook, the Student Handbook, and the VN Educational Program syllabi and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed:
  - lack of an inter-rater reliability policy or activities designed to provide consistency between the faculty in areas involving subjective student evaluation and grading;
  - required student activities/assignments, e.g., development of nursing care plans, that are outside the scope of practice for licensed vocational nurses; and
  - clinical evaluation tools do not have indicated critical criteria/behaviors and measurable behaviors, and clinical evaluations are not conducted a minimum of two evaluations during each clinical course and are not signed by both 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.
4. Rule 214.11(b) & (d) related to Facilities, Resources, and Services, requires in pertinent part that "An appropriately equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate maximum number of students allowed for the program . . . The learning resources, library, and departmental holdings shall be current, use contemporary technology appropriate for the level of the curriculum, and be sufficient for the size of the student body and the needs of the faculty." The tour of nursing skills lab and the library, and interviews with the VN program director, VN faculty, and students revealed insufficient manikins are available for student learning and practice and students do not have sufficient access to computer software and technology to meet their learning needs. Therefore, additional manikins, at least two infant manikins and four adult manikins, shall be purchased to assist students in meeting learning needs and accommodate the number of students enrolled in the program. Additionally, sufficient computer software and technology shall be purchased and made readily available for the students' use.
5. Rule 214.13(a)(5) and (g) related to Total Program Evaluation Plan, requires that "There shall be a written plan for the systematic evaluation of the total program. The plan shall include evaluative criteria, methodology, frequency of evaluation, assignment of responsibility, and indicators (benchmarks) of program and instructional effectiveness. The following broad areas shall be periodically evaluated: (1) organization and administration of the program; (2) philosophy/mission and objectives/outcomes; (3) program of study, curriculum, and instructional techniques; (4) education facilities, resources, and services; (5) affiliating agencies and clinical learning activities; (6) students' achievement; (7) graduates' performance on the licensing examination; (8) graduates' nursing competence; (9) faculty members' performance; and (10) extension programs." A review of the current Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and the faculty organization and committee minutes revealed that indicators (numerical benchmarks) of program and institutional effectiveness, were not present for all the required ten broad areas in a program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, implementation of the program's current TPE is not reflected in the faculty organization and committee minutes, and decisions and major changes in the program do not appear to be evidenced-based on the analysis of data from the TPE and supported by rationale. **Therefore**, the program director and the nursing faculty shall revise the TPE plan to include indicators (numerical benchmarks) of

program and institutional effectiveness for all the required ten broad areas in a program's Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, include an analysis of the data from the current TPE Plan in the decision making occurring in faculty organization and committee meetings, and ensure the analysis of the TPE Plan and decisions based on the analysis of this data is reflected in the 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