

**REPORT OF COLLABORATIVE SURVEY VISIT  
WITH THE NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR NURSING ACCREDITING COMMISSION  
TEXAS A&M INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY IN LAREDO, TEXAS  
CANSECO SCHOOL OF NURSING**

**SUMMARY OF REQUEST:**

Consider the report of the March 2-4, 2010 collaborative survey visit to the Canseco School of Nursing (CSON) at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) in Laredo, Texas, and the staff recommendation concerning the commendations and continuing approval status based on the outcome of the survey visit (Attachment #1).

**HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE:**

- TAMIU CSON opened its baccalaureate degree nursing (BSN) educational program in 1994 and became accredited by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) in 1997.
- In 1999 Board staff began working with nursing faculty at TAMIU in developing a master's degree program to prepare advanced practice nurses.
- In 2004 TAMIU received Board of Nursing (BON or Board) approval to begin a family nurse practitioner (FNP) program.
- Board staff conducted survey visits in 2004, 2005, and 2006.
- At the April 2007 meeting, the Board changed the approval status of the FNP program from initial to full and issued a recommendation that the program seek national nursing accreditation.
- CSON sought candidacy for NLNAC accreditation for the FNP program and requested the regularly scheduled accreditation visit for the BSN program include a visit for the FNP program.
- A site visit was scheduled for March 2-4, 2010 and CSON invited Board staff to participate in the visit.

**COMMENTS RELATED TO THE COLLABORATIVE SURVEY VISIT:**

The collaborative survey visit provided a positive experience by providing the opportunity for:

- Board staff to observe the NLNAC accreditation process.
- Board staff to gain a better insight into criteria/methods used by NLNAC program evaluators to determine that standards are met.
- Board staff to provide to the NLNAC evaluators information about the history of the FNP program and to answer questions they might have about Texas law and rules.
- Enhanced collaboration and communication with NLNAC.
- Board staff to evaluate the status of the FNP program in 2010.

**OUTCOME OF THE SURVEY VISIT:**

- The findings of the NLNAC program evaluators were very positive and they stated that their recommendation will be that the BSN program will receive continuing accreditation and the FNP will receive initial accreditation.
- The accreditation decisions will not be final until after the Board of Review (May 2010) and the Commission (June 2010) have reviewed the report.
- Board staff found that the FNP program remains in compliance with Board rules.
- Board staff identified many strengths in both the BSN and FNP programs.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Move to accept the report of the collaborative survey visit conducted with program evaluators from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission, continue full approval of the FNP program, and issue the commendations as indicated in the attached letter (Attachment #2).

### **SURVEY VISIT SUMMARY REPORT**

**NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM:** Texas A&M International University Canseco School of Nursing in Laredo, Texas

**NURSING PROGRAM DIRECTOR:** Regina C. Aune, PhD, RN, CLNC, FAAN  
Dean and Professor

**REASON FOR SURVEY VISIT:** To participate in collaborative survey visit conducted with program evaluators from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC). The BSN program was evaluated for continuing NLNAC accreditation and the FNP program was evaluated for initial NLNAC accreditation.

**SURVEY VISITORS:** Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, Education Consultant, BON  
Four NLNAC visitors

**TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING APPROVAL STATUS:** Full

**DATE OF LAST SURVEY VISIT:** March 2006

**NAME OF ACCREDITING AGENCIES:** Southern Association of Colleges and Schools  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

#### **ACTIVITIES DURING SURVEY VISIT:**

- A tour of campus and nursing facilities at TAMU
- Meetings with:
  - Dean of CSON
  - University administration (President, Provost, Financial Officer)
  - Staff of student services
  - Community partners
  - Librarian
  - General education faculty
  - Undergraduate and graduate students
  - Nursing faculty
- Visits to clinical sites
- Review of records and documents
- Observation of classes in session

#### **SURVEY VISIT FINDINGS:**

- There have been 38 graduates from the FNP program since it began.
- All graduates who have taken the certification examination have passed.
- Previous graduates from the program working as FNPs in the community serve as preceptors for the program.
- There are presently 12 FNP students enrolled.
- Both BSN and MSN courses use web-enhanced formats. Two MSN courses are totally online.

Pros:

- Students were very positive about the faculty in both BSN and MSN programs and praised the faculty commitment, caring, knowledge, and availability to students.
- The administration and the community are very supportive of the program.
- BSN students consistently perform well on the NCLEX-RN® examination.
- Resources are adequate to support both programs.
- The flexible clinical scheduling which includes evening and weekend clinical experiences is advantageous to students and clinical facilities.
- The administration and faculty expressed vision for future programs at TAMIU including possible MSN tracks in administration and education.
- Nursing faculty are very involved in university governance.
- The university has a strong writing component for all students and find that the program contributes to student success.

Cons:

- Because of the rapid growth in the university, adequate space is an issue. Specifically more space is needed for skills and simulation labs, and for faculty offices. (Administration is aware of this issue and additional space for a nursing lab has been designated and a future building will provide more classroom and office space.)

**PROPOSED COMMENDATIONS:**

- The administration is commended for the strong support to the nursing programs at TAMIU.
- The nursing faculty are commended for their dedication and personal commitment to the nursing students.
- The School of Nursing is commended for the effective partnerships with the community.
- The program is commended for utilizing a flexible clinical schedule including evenings and weekends.

DRAFT LETTER

April 25, 2010

Regina C. Aune, PhD, RN, CLNC, FAAN  
Dean and Professor  
College of Nursing and Health Sciences  
Texas A&M International University  
5201 University Blvd.  
Laredo, Texas 78041-1900

Dear Dr. Aune:

At the April 22-23, 2010 meeting, the Texas Board of Nursing (BON or Board) discussed the report of the collaborative survey visit conducted by the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission and board staff on March 2-4, 2010 to the Canseco School of Nursing at Texas A&M International University (TAMIU) in Laredo, Texas. The Board wishes to thank you for being present to answer questions.

Based on the discussion and review of the documents, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the March 2-4, 2010 survey visit of the TAMIU nursing educational programs, continue the full approval of the FNP program until the NLNAC accreditation is official, and issue the following commendations:

Commendations:

1. The administration is commended for the strong support to the nursing programs at TAMIU.
2. The nursing faculty are commended for their dedication and personal commitment to the nursing students.
3. The School of Nursing is commended for the effective partnerships with the community.
4. The program is commended for utilizing a flexible clinical schedule including evenings and weekends

Thank you for your help in making possible this collaborative visit with the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission (NLNAC) accreditation team. The experience was very beneficial in our understanding of NLNAC's approach to accreditation as well as to provide the BON an update on the FNP program. Collaborative visits between the national nursing accreditation organizations and the BON facilitate the interface between accreditation and regulation. Congratulations on the positive outcome of the survey visit.

If you have any questions or if we may assist you in any way, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6814 or [janice.hooper@bon.state.tx.us](mailto:janice.hooper@bon.state.tx.us).

Sincerely,

Linda R. Rounds, PhD, RN, FNP  
President

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: NLNAC