

**Consideration of Petition for an Exception to Board Rules  
 University of Houston-Victoria in Sugar Land, Texas  
 Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the petition from the University of Houston-Victoria (UH-V) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program in Sugar Land, Texas, for an exception to Board Rule 215.4(c)(3)(D) that allows a program on conditional status to request a change in approval status at the end of the examination year if the pass rate is above 80%. The annual pass rate is determined by the number of first-time test takers who tested during the examination year, rather than the pass rate of a specific cohort. The end of the examination year is September 30, 2012. UH-V is petitioning for a change in approval status prior to the end of the examination year because their 2012 NCLEX pass rate has been determined to be above 80%.

**Historical Perspective:**

- The Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program at the UH-V campus in Sugar Land was approved by the Board at the July 2008 meeting.
- The program is a second degree professional nursing program designed for students who have a bachelor's degree in another discipline.
- The program's approval status was changed from initial to initial with warning at the January 2011 Board meeting.
- The program's approval status was changed to conditional at the January 2012 Board meeting.
- The program is currently restricted from admitting students.
  
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past three years:

Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2011	Conditional	63.89%	23/36
2010	Initial with Warning	28.57%	2/7
2009	Initial	77.78%	7/9

- Forty-two (42) of the forty-five (45) December 2011 graduates have taken the NCLEX-RN examination and passed.
- Based upon this information, the 2012 examination year pass rate will reflect a result of at least 93.33% in the Board report for October 2012.
- A requirement of the conditional status is that the program may not enroll students until the pass rate for the examination year (October 1, 2011 - September 30, 2012) is at least 80%.
- Since possible variances in annual pass rates could occur during the examination year due to student delays in taking the licensure examination, Board policy is to consider changes in approval status based upon the annual pass rate at the end of the examination year.
- UH-V is asking for an earlier consideration of approval status due to the unique situation that the 2012 NCLEX pass rate is above 80%.
- The annual NCLEX-RN pass rate is not based upon cohort success, rather the annual pass rate is based on the outcomes of first-time test takers who tested during the examination year, October 1 through September 30.
- The program admits one cohort each year and would like to begin the admission process in May 2012.

**Pros and Cons:**

## Cons:

- In order to provide consistency with all programs, Board policy is to determine approval status based on annual NCLEX-RN pass rate data.
- Determining pass rates for individual cohorts of graduates requires increased Board resources. This could be problematic with over 200 nursing programs in Texas.

## Pros:

- Since there are no outliers that could impact the final pass rate for 2012, Board Staff are assured that the pass rate will be at least 80%.

**Recommendation Note:**

The program is seeking an exception to Rule 215.4(c)(3)(D) and as such, Board Staff defer to the Board's deliberation.

March 23, 2012

Texas Board of Nursing  
333 Guadalupe Street, Suite 3-460  
Austin, TX 78701-3942

Dear Texas Board of Nursing

On behalf of the University of Houston-Victoria School of Nursing the Board is asked to consider a petition for an exception to the Board Rule 215.4(c )(20 (D): "...a program's pass rate of first-time candidate during one examination year is at least 80%..."

We would like to Board to give full approval status for the program.

We have graduated three classes. The initial class pass rate was 56.25%. The initial class had 17 graduates and the graduates tested in two testing years. Consequently the Board report for the first year was 77.78% and 28.57% respectively.

We admit only one class a year. We admit in January with a graduation of December. The second class pass rate was 63.89%.

The third class, graduated in December of 2011 is at least 91.11% passing rate. Our issue is timing. We do not admit in the traditional fall and the Board reports are based on fall admissions. One thing is very clear, we know our students and when they graduate. We do not have multiple enrollments so our graduations are very clean. Consequently, we know the results of our student's pass rates.

Our deadline for application is October 1 each year.  
We admit each January.

We want to allow prospective students to begin applying May 1 of this year for the October 1 deadline.

We have met the requirements for full approval from the Board.

To have time to recruit and admit a qualified class in January, 2012 we need to have full approval.

The implications of waiting for students to apply for October 1, 2013 would cripple our program:



1. Fewer new nurses for the state of Texas
2. Break in a strong baccalaureate curriculum
3. Break in strong relationships with clinical affiliations
4. Loss of jobs for qualified faculty, only to recruit more faculty later on, thus fracturing the curriculum once again.
5. Loss of student scholarship funding
6. Inability to apply for grants
7. Potential loss of accreditation from the Commission for Collegiate Nursing (CCNE).

As a new program we have always been assured that when we meet 80% pass rate we will achieve full approval. We have met that now and will continue to do so with the implementation from our self-study, a more experienced faculty, more accountability with benchmarking exams, established clinical sites and dedicated high fidelity simulation center, support of the University Administration, and strong community support.

Thank you for your consideration of our request and the incredible support you provide to nursing education.

Sincerely,

Kathryn Tart, EdD, RN  
Founding Dean and Professor

CC: Philip Castille, President  
Jeffrey Cass, Provost and Vice President of Academic Affairs