

**Consideration of Change of Approval Status from Initial with Warning to Conditional
 University of Houston-Victoria in Sugar Land, Texas
 Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider a proposed change in the program approval status of the University of Houston-Victoria (UH-V) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Sugar Land, Texas, based upon the review of the 2011 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, the 2010 NEPIS, Rule 215, and report of survey visit.

Historical Perspective:

- The Baccalaureate Degree Nursing 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 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	Pending	63.89%	23/36
2010	Initial with Warning	28.57%	2/7
2009	Initial	77.78%	7/9

- UH-V was required to complete a Self-Study report because of the 2009 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate falling below the required 80%
- An analysis of the self-study report indicated that major problems included inadequate admission criteria for the first cohort, nursing faculty who were new to BSN education and unprepared for the technological requirements, and the logistics of teaching a compressed curriculum.
- Even though the program implemented corrective measures to improve graduates' success on the NCLEX-RN® examination, the 2010 NCLEX was 28.57%.
- The 2011 NCLEX pass rate was 63.89%.
- A survey visit to UH-V (See Attachment #1) was conducted on May 5-6, 2011, by Janice Hooper, PhD, RN, and Marilyn Davis, RN, Board Member.

Relevant Findings from the Survey Visit:

- The university administration expressed strong support and confidence in the nursing program.
- The physical spaces, labs, simulation equipment, classrooms offer an educational environment conducive to a successful nursing program.
- The director, coordinator, and faculty are committed to student success.
- The program has taken measures to increase the credibility of the nursing program by attaining national nursing accreditation and establishing an honor society.

PROS AND CONS:Pros:

- The program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Education (CCNE).
- The program has a group of fully qualified faculty and teaching resources to facilitate success with the program.
- The program has implemented a rigorous admission process to improve the quality of the students.

Cons:

- Some graduates delayed taking the NCLEX-RN® examination after completing the program.
- The effects of the stronger admission criteria and other corrective measures have not yet made a difference in the NCLEX examination pass rate.

Background for Recommendation:

Rule 215.4(a)(4) sets forth the parameters of conditional approval status as follows:

(4) Conditional approval is issued by the Board for a specified time to provide the program the opportunity to correct deficiencies.

(A) The program shall not admit students while on conditional status.

(B) The Board may establish specific criteria to be met in order for the program's conditional approval status to be removed.

Therefore, the purposes of conditional approval status are to allow faculty additional time to correct deficiencies which include improving the performance of graduates on the licensing examination and to protect additional students from the risk of receiving educational preparation that does not meet Board standards.

Staff Recommendation:

Staff recommend the following as indicated in the attached letter (Attachment #2):

1. Change the approval status of the University of Houston-Victoria at Sugar Land Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program from initial with warning to conditional.
2. The program shall remain on conditional approval until the program demonstrates a pass rate for first time test takers of at least 80% on the 2012 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate. The NCLEX-RN examination year is October 1, 2011 through September 30, 2012.

Survey Visit Summary Report

Name of Nursing Program: University of Houston-Victoria in Sugar Land, Texas, Second Degree Baccalaureate Nursing Program

Nursing Program Director: Kathryn Tart, EdD, RN, CNE, Dean

Second Degree BSN Program Coordinator: Linda Dune, PhD, RN

Reason for Survey Visit: Program Placed on Warning at January 2011 Board Meeting

Date(s) of Survey Visit: May 5-6, 2011

Survey Visitor(s): Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, Nursing Consultant for Education, and Marilyn Davis, RN, Board Member

Texas Board of Nursing (BON) Approval Status: Full with Warning

Date of Last BON Survey Visits: Initial visit prior to Board approval: June 23, 2008;
Combined visit with CCNE: March 2-4, 2009

Names of Accrediting Agencies: SACS; CCNE

Activities During Survey Visit:

Board staff:

- Met with the Program Administrators and Admissions Coordinator;
- Interviewed nursing students and nursing faculty;
- Participated in UHV Nursing Forum on May 5 on "The Impact of Changes in Health Care on Health Care on Nursing Education & Practice;"
- Toured nursing facilities at Victoria;
- Toured new nursing facility at Sugar Land;
- Conducted a summary conference with the Program Director and the Second Degree Program Coordinator.

Survey Visit Findings:

Administration and Organization:

- The Provost expressed strong support for the nursing programs at UHV which include the second degree baccalaureate degree program, an RN to BSN program, and master's degree in nursing tracks in Education and Administration.
- UH-V also has university support to begin a family nurse practitioner program.
- The present programs all hold accreditation from CCNE.
- Dr. Tart is a highly respected dean at UHV and is recognized in the Sugar Land area as a spokesperson for nursing.
- All nursing faculty are employed under a nine-month contract, even though the programs are in session for twelve months.

Faculty:

- Ten qualified nursing faculty serve the second degree baccalaureate program. Their teaching assignments may include teaching in the other nursing programs.
- The faculty represent a diverse population and educational and experiential background.
- Nursing faculty meetings are held regularly and involve the Victoria faculty through direct line TV.
- The heavy faculty workload has been relieved somewhat by the use of skills lab instructors.

- Adjunct faculty are used in clinical supervision, but full time faculty supervise most of the clinical experiences.
- The faculty are encouraged to be engaged in research, scholarship, and publication.

Students:

- The present cohort of 60 students is completing their first semester of the program.
- Board staff and Board member interviewed the entire class.
- Students were very articulate and discussed the difficulty and intensity of the program, since it is a one year program of study to prepare post-baccalaureate degree students to be eligible for professional nursing practice.
- Even though students are advised of the stress of the program in their orientation, they admit it seems overwhelming at times.
- Their positive comments about the program included their impressions that this nursing program is superior to others in the area and that the faculty used successful admission strategies to enroll a cohesive class.
- An alumni was present to encourage the students stating that when she completed the program, she had many job offers and was well-prepared to enter nursing practice.
- Strategies in place to assist students succeed in the program include an orientation, ATI-testing throughout the program with review of areas of weakness, early intervention for at-risk students, communication among faculty about students at-risk, a mentoring program, and scholarships. In addition, an elective course in clinical decision-making is available for student who demonstrate a need for this content.

Note: Through the process of self study and continuing evaluation, the director and faculty have identified that the admission process for the first cohort in the program was not effective in selecting students who would be successful in such an intense program. They have rapidly created a very thorough process for screening applicants and selecting those most likely to succeed in the program. The improved admission process (including an information session, extensive and focused online interview, pre-testing scores, and GPA) was used for selection of the current cohort. The admissions officer discussed the new process at length with Board staff.

Program of Study:

- The BSN program at UH-V is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE).
- The curriculum is sound and teaching methods include web enhanced courses.
- Board staff reviewed the syllabus for a course in session, NURS 3631 Nursing Process for Symptom Management.
- The program has an active advisory committee of community leaders.
- UH-V recently established an honor society of nursing, the first step in forming a chapter for Sigma Theta Tau International at UH-V.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- Several modern, high fidelity simulation labs and skills provide an arena for students to become familiar with nursing skills and common illness scenarios before they encounter real life patients in the clinical area.
- Sugar Land is a growing community with continued expansion of health care facilities in the area which provide clinical opportunities.
- The clinical faculty with diverse clinical backgrounds provide supervision and instruction in a variety of practice areas.
- The director and faculty continue to seek new settings for clinical experiences.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- Facilities at Victoria and Sugar Land are spacious and well-equipped, providing a comfortable atmosphere for the work of educating nurses.

DRAFT LETTER

January 23, 2012

Kathryn Tart, EdD, RN, CNE, Dean and Director
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program
University of Houston-Victoria School of Nursing
3007 N. Ben Wilson, West #272
Victoria, TX 77901

Dear Dr. Tart:

At the January 19-20, 2012 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed the approval status of the Second Degree Baccalaureate Nursing Education Program at the University of Houston-Victoria in Sugar Land, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2011, review of the Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS), compliance with Rule 215, and the report of the survey visit. Members of the Board wish to thank you and,,, for being present at the meeting to answer questions.

Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the University of Houston-Victoria Second Degree Baccalaureate Nursing Education Program in Sugar Land, Texas, from initial with warning to conditional approval status. The program may not admit students while on conditional status and will remain on conditional status until the program's pass rate for first-time candidates during the examination year is at least 80%. In addition, the program shall demonstrate compliance with Rule 215 prior to a change in approval status. The 2012 examination year for professional programs begins October 1, 2011 and ends September 30, 2012.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Kristin K. Benton, MSN, RN
President

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

copy: THECB
CCNE