

**Consideration for Change in Approval Status from Full with Warning to Full
 Valley Grande Institute in Weslaco, Texas
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider a proposed change in the program approval status of Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Weslaco, Texas, from full with warning to full approval based upon the review of the 2012 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, the 2012 Nursing Education Information Survey (NEPIS), compliance with Rule 214, and the survey visit report of April 4-5, 2012.

Historical Perspective:

Exam Year	NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status	Date of Last Change in Approval Status
2012	85.25%	52/61	Pending	
2011	83.08%	54/65	Full with Warning	January 2012
2010	78.95%	75/95	Conditional	April 2011
2009	78.64%	81/103	Full with Warning	
2008	74.45%	102/137	Full with Warning	July 2009
2007	59.65%	34/57	Full	
2006	82.93%	34/41	Full	
2005	66.67%	2/3 (not a full class)	Full	
2004	87.50%	14/16 (Boards merged)	Full	

- Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program has been in operation since 1992.
- Valley Grande submitted a Self-Study report in 2008 and Board Staff conducted survey visit on March 17-18, 2010.
- The program was placed on conditional approval status at the April 2011 Board meeting related to four (4) consecutive years of NCLEX examination pass rates below 80%. When programs are placed on conditional approval, they are restricted from enrolling new students.
- The program implemented a number of corrective measures to improve student success. The NCLEX-PN examination pass rate for 2011 (January 1, 2011 through December 31, 2011) was 83.58% (56/67).
- Rather than change the approval status back to full approval, the Board changed the approval status from conditional to full with warning at the January 29, 2012 meeting and allowed the program to admit a cohort of 50 students in March 2012.
- Approval status of full with warning represented a cautionary approach to allow the program more time for stability in the program. The full with warning status also related to issues with their accreditation organization, the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES).
- Board Staff collaborated with representative from ABHES in conducting a joint survey visit on April 4-5, 2012.
- The survey visit report is presented in Attachment #1, and documents findings for that date.

- The program has responded to all recommendations following the survey visit and reported hiring three (3) additional RN faculty; supporting four (4) instructors enrolled in advanced education; purchasing additional skills and simulation lab equipment; contracting with four (4) additional hospitals to provide clinical learning experiences; and implementing strategies to improve communication, management, education, and success of the program.
- The program has demonstrated success in their compliance with Rule 214 and in the 2012 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 85.25%.
- There are presently one hundred one (101) students in the program with plans to continue to enroll not more than fifty (50) students per cohort. They admitted three (3) cohorts during 2012.
- Leo Galvan, RN, is the program director at the present time.

Pros and Cons:

Pros:

- The program has responded to all recommendations made following the April 2012 survey visit and report that these measures have improved the success of the students.
- Four (4) faculty are engaged in further education and new faculty have strong credentials.
- Four new clinical sites have been contracted, all located in hospital settings.

Cons:

- None noted at this time.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the reports of the joint survey visit with ABHES to Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Weslaco, Texas, in April 2012 and of the program's responses to recommendations made following the survey visit, and change the approval status of the program from full with warning to full approval, as is stated in the attached order. (See Attachment #2.)

**Summary of Survey Visit
Valley Grande Institute (VGI) in Weslaco, Texas
Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: Follow-up visit related to the change in approval status at the January 2012 meeting from conditional to full approval.

Date of Visit: April 3-5, 2012

Board Staff Conducting Visit: Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, Education Consultant

Joint Survey visit with representatives from the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES)

Board Staff met with:

- Dr. Andrew Leonie, Director
- Annabell Cardona, President, CEO
- Mari Aviles, Vice President
- Ted Llasos, RN, MAN, VN Director
- Leo Galvan, RN, Assistant Director
- Nursing Faculty
- Nursing Students
- VGI Staff

Board Staff toured the VGI facilities and participated in a clinical visit to KNAPP Medical Center in Weslaco.

Board Staff reviewed the following program materials:

- syllabi
- clinical evaluation tools
- evaluation plan
- class lists
- schedules for current cohorts
- faculty files
- clinical contracts
- textbooks
- faculty handbook
- student handbook
- faculty minutes
- school catalog

ABHES program evaluators involved with a regular accreditation visit:

- Karen McGrath, Pima Medical Institute, Colorado Springs, CO, Team Leader
- Julie Orloff, Pembroke Pines, FL, Program Specialist
- Randy Nikola, Healing Mountain Massage School, Salt Lake City, UT, Program Specialist
- Mary Urbaski, Orlando, FL, Program Specialist
- Amanda Ludwa, Accreditation Coordinator from ABHES

Findings:

Administration and Organization:

- VGI has been awarded Texas Workforce Commission approval and ABHES accreditation.
- The ABHES program evaluators examined program documents from all programs at VGI:
 - Home Health Aide/Nurse Assistant
 - Patient Care Technician
 - Limited Medical Radiologic Tech/Phlebotomy Tech
 - Medical Insurance Coder & Billing Technician

- Massage Therapy
 - Medical Assistant
 - Vocational Nursing
- ABHES accreditation activities focused on the overall administrative organization and compliance with ABHES standards for all programs.
 - Though ABHES representatives consider the overall VN program, their review of the curriculum is not as thorough as the Board review and their standards are more general than BON standards. BON rules have been designed to ensure that all elements are present in a nursing program to produce graduates who are competent and safe practitioners under the Texas NPA and Rules. Accreditation standards ensure quality in education and an overall educational environment that allows students to meet the educational objectives.
 - Ted Llasos, RN, MAN was approved as VN director by Board Staff in 2011, with the previous director, Leo Galvan, serving as assistant director and faculty.
 - Mr. Llasos has assessed the program and identified goals and strategies to reach the goals. His recommendations for program improvement include:
 - open communications to facilitate positive relationships between administration and faculty
 - faculty development to maintain educational standards
 - strengthening clinical supervision of LVN faculty through organizational structure and policies
 - consideration of a 12-month VN curriculum plan
 - Upgrading skills lab with new equipment
 - The administration has discussed these program goals with Mr. Llasos and is open to their consideration.
 - The VN program has an active advisory committee.

Faculty:

- The faculty handbook includes the required faculty policies required in Rule 214 and a description of the faculty organizational structure and functioning.
- The director plans to clarify faculty workload policies and job descriptions to provide equity and consistency among faculty.
- Currently there are six (6) faculty who are licensed as registered nurses and seven (7) faculty licensed as vocational nurses.
- In order to increase the number of faculty licensed as registered nurses, LVN faculty are encouraged to pursue further education. Three (3) LVN faculty are currently enrolled in professional nursing programs.
- The director has proposed the use of a registered nurse to serve as clinical supervisor to oversee all clinical learning activities and clinical faculty, as well as provide didactic content.
- Board Staff reviewed minutes of faculty meetings.

Program of Study:

- The VN program is designed to be completed in fifteen (15) months.
- The faculty are engaged in developing a plan to implement the Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs).
- Clinical evaluation tools indicate progression in expected student behaviors across the program.
- The curriculum is logically organized with labs and clinical learning experiences offered concurrently with didactic content.
- Standardized examinations are used across the program as a part of course grades and with remediation.
- At the end of the program, a comprehensive examination is given with a three-day review.
- A new computer lab will seat seventy (70) students for test-taking.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program maintains the required 1:10 faculty to student ratios in clinical learning experiences and does not use preceptors.
- The program is experiencing more challenges in providing pediatric and obstetric clinical experiences in hospitals.
- The director has determined that there is a possibility of establishing new clinical agreements with hospitals for clinical experiences during evening and weekend shifts. Pursuing these opportunities would allow additional clinical learning in hospital settings and would offer enhancement of the clinical learning activities.
- The skills lab is adequate but could be improved with new equipment.
- A skills lab coordinator manages the skills lab for all VN students.
- The director has discussed a possible new simulation lab that could be used by several VGI programs.
- The director stated that he is encouraging faculty to document and evaluate students' clinical learning experiences more frequently to provide continuous feedback to students and documentation of their performance.

Total Program Evaluation:

- All required aspects of the program are included in the Master Evaluation Plan that meets the accreditation standards.

Pros and Cons:

Pros:

- The curriculum is logically organized, based on sound educational principles, and includes clinical evaluation tools that measure progression of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievements in course and clinical objectives.
- The director has identified areas for program improvement and has designed strategies for change.
- Three (3) of the current faculty licensed as vocational nurses are enrolled in professional nursing education programs.

Cons:

- Clinical learning experiences could be improved by updating the skills lab, adding a simulation lab, and adding additional clinical contracts with hospitals.

Recommendations:

- The administration is encouraged to consider restructuring the faculty roles to include a position of a registered nurse faculty to supervise clinical experiences.
- The administration is encouraged to continue to support faculty enrolled in programs to advance their education.
- The administration is encouraged to provide the resources to update the nursing skills lab by adding new equipment and supplies. The skills lab coordinator should be included in the planning to improve the skills lab.
- The director should proceed with plans to contract additional clinical learning experiences in hospital settings and should work with the nursing faculty to determine the most effective clinical schedule to meet program objectives.
- The administration, director, and faculty are encouraged to meet and communicate frequently and work together to implement strategies for the success of the program.

DRAFT LETTER

April 18, 2013

Leo Galvan, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies
345 S. Texas
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Dear Mr. Galvan:

At the April 18-19, 2013 meeting, members of the Board of Nursing discussed the approval status of the Valley Grande Institute for Academic Studies Vocational Nursing Education Program based on the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2012, findings from the survey visit of April 4-5, 2012, review of the 2012 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS), and compliance with Rule 214.

Based upon the discussion and review of documents, and as noted in the Board Order, it was the decision of the Board to:

1. Change the approval status of Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program from full approval with warning to full approval.
2. Allow the program to admit cohorts of up to fifty (50) students/per admission.

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

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
President of the Board

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

copy: Mari Aviles, Vice President, Valley Grande Institute
Betty Sims, PhD, MSN, RN, FRE, VGI
Texas Workforce Commission
ABHES

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of:
Valley Grande Institute
Vocational Nursing Education Program
in Weslaco, Texas

ORDER OF THE BOARD

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on April 18, 2013, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of the Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education in Weslaco, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2012, review of the 2012 NEPIS, and findings from the survey visit report, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214.

Board members in attendance were: Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP; Nina Almasy, MSN, RN; Deborah Hughes Bell, CLU, ChFC; Patti Clapp, BA; Tamara Cowen, MN, RN; Sheri Denise Crosby, JD, SPHR; Marilyn J. Davis, RN, BSN, MPA; Richard Robert Gibbs, LVN; Josefina Lujan, PhD, RN; Kathy Leader-Horn, LVN; Mary LeBeck, MSN, RN; and Beverly Jean Nutall, LVN.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the written responses from Valley Grande Institute following Board Staff's survey visit, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status of the Valley Grande Institute Vocational Nursing Education Program in Weslaco, Texas, from FULL WITH WARNING to FULL APPROVAL and hereby imposes the following conditions/requirements:

1. Valley Grande Institute may enroll up to fifty (50) students per admission.

Entered this 18th day of April, 2013

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
President of the Board