

**Report of a Survey Visit  
Blinn College in Bryan, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request**

Consider the report of the November 20, 2012, routine six-year survey visit to Blinn College in Bryan, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program.

**Historical Perspective:**

- Blinn College was established in 1883. The college currently has four (4) campuses located in Bryan, Brenham, Sealy, and Schulenburg. Although the main campus is in Brenham, more than 70% of students attend the Bryan campus.
- Blinn College is accredited by the Southern Association on Colleges and Schools (SACs).The most reaffirmation was in 2005, with the next reaffirmation in 2015.
- The Blinn College in Bryan, Texas Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program began in 1960.
- In addition to the VN program the following allied health programs are offered on the Bryan campus: physical therapist assistant; radiologic technology; dental hygiene; information management; therapeutic manufacturing; veterinarian technology; emergency medical services; fire science; and, associate degree nursing (ADN).
- IN 2011, the Allied Health Programs at Blinn College in Bryan relocated to the new Texas A&M Health Science Center in Bryan.
- The VN program has experienced three (3) changes in the director position since 2010. The current director, Tammye Anderson, BSN, RN, was approved for appointment in August 2012.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the following table:

<b>Exam Year</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First-Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>
2012	100%	22/22	Full
2011	80.77%	21/26	Full
2010	100%	20/20	Full
2009	72.00%	18/25	Full
2008	96.55%	28/29	Full

**Survey Visit Findings:**

In addition to the Blinn College Allied Health Programs, the 130,000 square foot Health Science Center provides programs for Texas A&M Health Sciences, the Texas Brain and Spine Institute, and Mary Crowley Cancer Research Centers. The state of the art facility includes a 26,000 square foot simulation center. The simulation center creates a shared learning space where students can gain an appreciation for all members of the health care team and develop effective interdisciplinary teamwork.

**Pros:**

- The program's 2012 NCLEX-PN® pass rate was 100%.
- New administrators at Blinn College are supportive of the director and committed to the success of the VN program.
- The director and faculty are innovative and creative in their approach to nursing education and are dedicated to the success of the students.
- The program of study incorporates creative methods of using a hybrid design for course delivery, including online format, face-to-face instruction, student centered learning activities, and utilization of simulation.

- The director is proactive in seeking out professional development opportunities including additional simulation training for herself and the faculty.
- The director is receiving strong support and mentoring from the Brenham VN Program Director and Bryan ADN Director as she transitions into her new role.
- The curriculum is developed according to BON rules and *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* objectives.
- The program meets a need in the community for a vocational nursing education program and receives strong support from clinical affiliates.
- The program has a number of contracts with clinical affiliating agencies which provide a variety of clinical experiences for the curriculum.
- The students who were interviewed were an engaging group who value the education they are receiving.

**Cons:**

- The director carries a full teaching assignment in addition to her administrative duties and responsibilities in the VN program.
- Faculty report they routinely take work home with them because current teaching assignments do not allow sufficient time for grading assignments and preparing lesson plans.

Findings from the survey visit indicate that the program is in compliance with Rule 214. (See *Attachment #1*).

**Rationale for Staff Recommendation:**

The following recommendation is made in an effort to ensure that the director has adequate time to fulfill the administrative duties of the program, facilitate effective faculty instruction, and ensure faculty workloads allow time for completion of all aspects of work involved in educating nurses.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of findings of the routine six-year survey visit to Blinn College in Bryan, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program, and issue one (1) recommendation.

**Recommendation #1:**

It is recommended that administration begin the process to secure additional faculty for the VN program in order to free the director for administrative duties, and ensure reasonable faculty workloads. (See *draft letter in Attachment #2.*)

**Summary of Survey Visit  
Blinn College in Bryan, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Purpose of Survey Visit:** routine six-year survey visit.

**Date of Visit:** November 20, 2012

**Board Representative Conducting Visit:** Robin Caldwell, PhD, RN, CLNC, Program Evaluator

**Program Evaluator met with:**

- Tammye Anderson, BSN, RN, Director, VN Program
- Robert W. Brick, PhD, Vice President of Applied Sciences and Workforce Education
- M.Elia Flores, MEd, RT , Interim Division Chair of Allied Health
- Nancy Onge, BSN, RN, VN Program Faculty
- Elaine Vanderbilt, RN, VN Program Faculty
- Sami Rahman, MEd MSN, RN, Director of Simulation and Clinical Labs
- Ginger Brown, Allied Health Lab Coordinator
- Tim Hardy, Allied Health Simulation Lab Coordinator
- Twenty-two (22) Vocational Nursing Students

**Activities Carried Out by Program Evaluator During Survey Visit:**

- conducted initial meeting with director and administration
- interviewed faculty
- interviewed students
- observed classroom teaching
- toured the facilities housing the nursing program
- reviewed records and documents (student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, examinations, and other program documents)
- conducted exit meeting with director and administration

Findings Related to Administration:

- Tammye Anderson, BSN, RN, served as faculty in the VN program prior to her appointment as director. Ms. Anderson has twenty-seven (27) years experience in nursing and has an extensive background in medical-surgical nursing and administration.
- Blinn College Administration expressed support for the VN program and stated that the nursing program adds value to the college and fulfills a need in local communities.
- The director and faculty voiced appreciation for the strong support they receive from new college administration.
- Ms. Anderson noted that she receives support and mentoring from the Brenham VN Program Director and Bryan ADN Director as she transitions into her new role.
- The director reports that graduates have no difficulty finding employment and often have employment offers prior to graduation.
- The director carries a full teaching assignment (classroom, skills lab, and clinical) in addition to her administrative duties and responsibilities in the VN program.

Findings Related to Program of Study:

- The twelve (12) month VN program is designed to be completed in three (3) semesters.
- There are a total of 1465 contact hours in the program of study: 623 didactic hours; 163 skills lab

hours; 8 simulation lab hours; and, 671 patient care clinical hours.

- The organization of the curriculum is based upon sequential learning, with the first semester laying the foundation for the program.
- The program of study includes all required content and the curriculum is sound and logically organized. The program of study is designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting. The majority of skills are front loaded in the first semester.
- The curriculum includes IV therapy.
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum.
- The teaching model is based upon face-to-face classes combined with online experiences. Two (2) classes, Nutrition, and Growth and Development, are taught completely online.
- Faculty and students receive training in distance education and IT support is available.
- The director has planned for further simulation training for herself and the faculty. The future goal is to provide VN students with opportunities to participate in simulated experiences with the other allied health programs, and develop the skills needed for interdisciplinary teamwork.
- Standardized testing is used for admission, progression, and remediation purposes.
- Students expressed that the syllabi and instruction are effective.

#### Findings Related to Faculty:

- The director and two (2) full-time RN faculty carry out the VN instruction. Current faculty have been employed from a period of two (2) to three (3) years.
- According to the director, the program previously experienced high faculty turnover rates, and now has a very stable and cohesive faculty.
- Faculty confirmed they receive strong support from one another as well as the program director.
- Faculty discussed their teaching assignments and methods of instruction. Faculty expressed excitement about teaching the students and helping change their lives through higher education.
- The faculty meet BON requirements and offer a rich diversity in their experiential backgrounds. One faculty is enrolled in a masters program.
- Faculty stated that funding and release time are available for professional development opportunities, and reported they attend the annual Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) conference.
- Faculty indicated that current teaching assignments do not allow sufficient time for grading papers and preparing lesson plans, and reported they routinely find it necessary to take work home with them.
- Faculty have regular meetings and decision- making is collaborative.
- Review of faculty meeting minutes reveal documentation regarding faculty actions and rationale was evident.
- BON required faculty policies are in place, and files provide evidence that policies related to faculty qualifications and faculty evaluations are followed.

#### Findings Related to Students:

- The program admits one (1) cohort of students in August each year. According to the director, the program has the capacity to admit thirty (30) students annually. In August 2012, thirty (30) students were admitted from an applicant pool of 120 qualified candidates.
- The director reported that attrition rates are historically low, usually no more than 10%-20%.
- Twenty-eight (28) students are currently enrolled in the program and are scheduled to graduate in August 2013. Twenty-two (22) students were available for interview.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of location, the state of the art facilities, NCLEX-PN® pass rates, and the reputation of the program.
- Students articulated appreciation for the opportunity to attend a VN program in their local community as well as the employment opportunities available to new graduates in local hospitals and other health care settings.

- Students cited clinical experiences and the skills/simulation labs as being the highlight of the program.
- Students agreed that the program of study and methods of instruction are effective. Students comments about the online classes were positive.
- Student policies are in place.
- Students receive required information in their handbook and verbally. Students indicated they received declaratory order information.
- Students agreed that all faculty are caring and committed to their success.
- The majority of students reported they plan to seek further education to become registered nurses.

#### Findings Related to Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with twenty-nine (29) affiliating agencies which provide exemplary clinical opportunities for the curriculum.
- Faculty provide responsible supervision in all clinical experiences.
- The clinical experiences are scheduled to match related didactic content in the classroom.
- The clinical evaluation tools demonstrate progression across the program and are used for formative and summative evaluation.
- The Simulation Center is staffed with a full-time simulation director and staff.
- The program utilizes simulation to prepare students for clinical and for remediation purposes.
- The director and faculty are scheduled for further training in the use of high-fidelity simulation in January 2013.

#### Findings Related to Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The VN program is located in the Texas A&M Health Science Center in Bryan which is approximately 10 miles away from the main college campus in Bryan.
- A full array of student services is offered on the main Blinn College campus. There is a large library on the campus and it is used regularly by students. Students have access to online holdings from campus or home.
- Ample computer resources, a student retention coordinator, and a full-service cafeteria are available at the Health Science Center campus.
- The director has a spacious private office that is conveniently located to conference rooms and the program assistant's office.
- Faculty are provided with large, fully equipped private offices.
- Numerous restrooms are located throughout the facility as well as faculty and student lounges and break areas with fully equipped kitchens.
- The VN classroom is spacious, comfortable, and modernly equipped.
- The 26,000 square foot simulation center includes seven (7) simulation labs with sixteen (16) mid-fidelity private hospital rooms, six (6) low-fidelity private hospital rooms, six (6) hi-fidelity intensive care units, and a virtual IV training room.
- The VN program shares one (1) full-time administrative assistant with the physical therapist assistant program.
- Files are locked and located in a secure area.

#### Findings Related to Records and Reports:

- The program has an adequate Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan.
- Minutes indicate when decisions are made.
- Student and faculty files reviewed contained all documents required by Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

January 23, 2013

Tammye Anderson, BSN, RN, Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
Blinn College in Bryan  
Texas A&M health Science Center Clinical Building 1  
8441 State Highway 47, Suite 2500  
Bryan, Texas 77807

Dear Ms. Anderson:

At the January 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the November 20, 2012 routine six-year survey visit to the Blinn College in Bryan, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit (see *Attachment #1*) and issue the following recommendation:

Recommendation:

It is recommended that administration begin the process to secure additional faculty for the VN program in order to free the director for administrative duties, and ensure reasonable faculty workloads. A response to the recommendation is to be submitted to Board Staff by March 1, 2013.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which a program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 463-4631.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP  
President

Sandi Emerson, MSN, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy:  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
Harold Nolte, EdD, President of Blinn College  
M. Elia Flores, MEd, RT, Interim Division Chair of Allied Health