

**Report of Routine Survey Visit
 San Jacinto College South in Houston, Texas
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the December 5-7, 2013, routine survey visit to San Jacinto College South Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas (See Attachment #1.) The previous survey visit was conducted in 2003.

Historical Perspective:

- San Jacinto College South VN Program was established in 1980 and shares physical spaces with the ADN Program.
- The college is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five (5) years are included in the table:

Exam Year	NCLEX-PN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status
2011	98.63%	72/73	Full
2010	97.87%	46/47	Full
2009	85.33%	64/75	Full
2008	83.82%	57/68	Full
2007	83.52%	76/91	Full

- Cynthia Fletcher, BSN, RN, has been serving as program director since 2010 when she returned to San Jacinto College South from the practice setting. She had been faculty in the program in previous years.
- The program has a history of success on the NCLEX-PN® examination.

Pros and Cons from the Survey Visit:

Pros:

- The nursing programs will be moving into a spacious, newly-constructed academic building in August 2013 that will provide new learning opportunities for the students and space for growth.
- It is anticipated that the enrollment in the VN program may increase by thirty (30) students per year with an increase in nursing faculty to accommodate the growth.
- The Dean of Allied Health and Science and the Chair of the department are supportive in providing assistance to the program for success.
- The group of VN faculty interviewed are seasoned and highly-credentialed. One faculty just completed a doctorate and several either hold a Master's degree or are enrolled in MSN programs. The faculty present as a cohesive group committed to the students and following policies to ensure consistency.
- The director is seeking ways to improve the program and suggested that they need a strong orientation plan for new nursing faculty. She also plans to engage the faculty in developing a revised faculty handbook.
- The director also stated that the faculty will be revising the clinical evaluation tools to include the DEC's and to provide details for evaluating clinical performance with a point system for grading.
- Faculty agreed that the work environment and working with colleagues is very valuable.

Cons:

- Faculty agreed that a good orientation for new nursing faculty is lacking.
- Faculty commented that their workload is heavy and some of this is related to paperwork.
- It might be advantageous to the students if the prerequisites were reviewed to see if any could be offered at a higher level and more transferrable toward advanced degrees.

Rationale for Recommendations:

The VN program at San Jacinto College South was found to be in compliance with Rule 214. The program director made positive suggestions for changes to enhance the program and was eager to receive any feedback from Board Staff for quality improvement. The recommendations are based upon the following rationale:

- Though there is a broad policy about providing faculty orientation to new nursing faculty, the director and faculty agree that an organized, detailed plan for orientation to the nursing program would be extremely beneficial for new faculty.
- With the move to the new building and projected growth in admissions, and since faculty find the workload heavy, it is an excellent time to consider the optimal number of nursing faculty to continue to have a successful VN program as well as to reassess all work activities (such as paperwork) and workload for the VN faculty.
- Staff also encourage the program to review the prerequisites to determine whether higher level courses might benefit the student in future educational pursuits.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of findings from the routine survey visit to San Jacinto College South Vocational Nursing Program in Houston, Texas, and to issue the following recommendations: (See draft letter in Attachment #2).

1. The director and faculty are encouraged to proceed to develop a detailed nursing faculty orientation package for new nursing faculty.
2. The administration and director are encouraged to review current workload policies and actual work responsibilities (such as paperwork) to determine the optimal number of nursing faculty and faculty workload to continue to have a successful VN program in the future.
3. The administration and director are encouraged to review the prerequisites to determine whether higher level courses might benefit the student in future educational pursuits.

**Summary of Survey Visit
San Jacinto College South
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: routine survey visit

Date of Visit: December 5-7, 2012

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

Board Staff met with:

- Laurel V. Williamson, PhD, Interim South Campus President, Vice Chancellor for Learning and Student Success
- Brenda J. Jones, PhD, Vice President for Learning
- Barbara Ake, RN, BSN, MS, EdD, Dean of Allied Health and Science
- Alexander Okwonna, PharmD, Department Chair of Natural Sciences and Health Sciences
- Karen E. Alexander, RN, PhD, CNOR, Program Director for LVN/Paramedic to ADN Mobility Program
- Cynthia Fletcher, BSN, RN, Vocational Nursing Program Director
- VN Students
- VN Faculty

Board Staff:

- reviewed the curriculum materials including all syllabi;
- reviewed the Student and Faculty Handbooks;
- reviewed the clinical evaluation tools;
- reviewed the total program evaluation plan and minutes;
- reviewed student assignments and tests;
- observed one VN class in session;
- toured a clinical facility used for both VN and ADN programs: Memorial Hermann Southeast Hospital conducted by Heather Wallace, RN, MSN, Manager of Education and Informatics;
- toured San Jacinto College South campus focusing on student services;
- toured the nursing offices, classrooms, skills labs, and simulation lab; and
- conducted exit interview.

Summary of Findings:

Philosophy/Mission and Objectives/Outcomes

- The director and faculty have been engaged in integrating the *Differentiated Essential Competencies for Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs* (DECs) into all aspects of the curriculum.
- The total program evaluation includes a plan for faculty to regularly review the program's philosophy and objectives and to revise as needed.

Administration and Organization

- The organizational chart demonstrates lines of communication, responsibility, and authority between the nursing program and administration, and within the nursing program.
- The nursing programs are housed in the Department of Natural Sciences and Health Sciences, and collaboration among the faculty are evident. Interactions between students of different disciplines are included in classroom and laboratory experiences to promote interdisciplinary practice.
- Administration (Dr. Barbara Ake and Dr. Alexander Okwonna) are involved through their support and assistance in promoting success of the nursing programs.
- Board Staff had the opportunity to view the new academic building now under construction that will house the Natural Sciences and Health Sciences. The building will provide additional spaces, larger classes, and larger, more modern labs. Directors and faculty have been included in the planning of the new building and its spaces.
- Cynthia Fletcher, BSN, RN, was appointed program director for the VN program in 2010. She had previously served as nursing faculty at San Jacinto College South.
- There seems to be a move toward standardization of nursing programs across the San Jacinto College District, which limits the opportunity for individualization of programs and initiation of innovative ideas on the separate campuses.

Faculty

- Eight faculty were interviewed during the visit. A new candidate for a faculty position has been offered employment. There are also a Clinical Liaison who schedules clinical experiences and a Simulation Lab Coordinator.
- Though there is a written policy for orientation of new nursing faculty, a detailed process for the orientation is lacking. Faculty, director, and administration all agreed that an effective orientation for new nursing faculty is needed. New faculty to San Jacinto College South are required to attend a college orientation in regular sessions across the first year of employment. The orientation to the nursing program is different from a college orientation because of the nature of nursing education, the individuality of each nursing program, and the often lack of preparation among nursing faculty in the art of teaching nursing and evaluating students.
- Nursing faculty abide by the faculty workload policy at San Jacinto College South. Because of responsibilities of faculty in nursing education programs, it is difficult to equate workload of nursing faculty with faculty in other disciplines. Nursing faculty in both VN and ADN programs commented about workload issues.
- In anticipation of moving to a new academic building with spaces that can accommodate more students, the VN and ADN programs both plan to increase enrollments. Administration is aware that an increase in students will require additional faculty.
- The Faculty Handbook was reviewed and since it has not been updated in several years, the director plans for a future revision.

Students

- Board Staff met with two available VN students, one from Level I and one from Level III.
- The students positively discussed their recent experiences in the clinical area. Students expressed that they value hands-on clinical experiences.
- The number of graduates expected in December 2012 was thirty-six (36) students. The program usually admits forty (50) students at two admission points during the academic year (Fall, Spring).
- The VN program has student representatives.
- Board Staff reviewed the Student Handbook and found that all required student policies are included.

Program of Study

- The curriculum is logically organized with sound educational principles.
- Board Staff reviewed all syllabi and additional course information.
- Faculty have received training in test construction and analysis, and are currently developing their own test pool based upon the curriculum and teaching. They plan to seek a better test analysis plan.
- Board Staff attended class time led by Ms. Shuttlesworth. She engaged the students in the content and made the didactic applicable to their clinical experiences.
- The director and administration are reviewing the prerequisites to ensure that they are at the optimal level to help the students advance into advanced education without duplication of requirements.

Clinical Learning Experiences

- Contracts with clinical affiliating agencies are current. Because of a history of good relationships with clinical agencies, the VN students have access to a wide range of clinical experiences.
- Board Staff toured Memorial Hermann Southeast adjacent to the college. Heather Wallace, MSN, RNC, CPN, Education Manager, provided the tour and explanations about the experiences for both VN and ADN students. This hospital welcomes students and assists in their education.
- The director also plans for new clinical evaluation tools to be developed that include more detailed evaluation of students' performances in the clinical areas and a point grading system.
- A lab coordinator facilitates lab scheduling, maintenance, and monitoring for both VN and ADN programs. The labs are shared by both programs and are available for student practice.
- The new building will include space and equipment for higher levels of simulation for the students.

Facilities, Resources, and Services

- The current physical facilities are adequate, but the administration and faculty are anticipating moving to a new building with new furnishings and equipment.
- The library on campus provides assistance to students with searches and projects.
- A complete array of student services is available on campus for the nursing students.
- The nursing programs follow the records and retention policies of the college.

Total Program Evaluation

- The program uses the evaluation format from the National League for Nursing Accrediting Commission. Evidence is provided that decisions are made based upon evaluation data.

DRAFT LETTER

January 21, 2013

Cynthia Fletcher, BSN, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
San Jacinto College South
13735 Beamer Road
Houston, Texas 77089

Dear Ms. Fletcher:

At the January 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed the approval status of the San Jacinto College South Vocational Nursing Education Program based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2011, review of the 2011 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS), findings from the December 5-7, 2012 survey visit, and compliance with Board Rule 214.

Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to accept the findings from the survey visit, congratulate the program on its performance, and to issue the following recommendations:

1. The director and faculty are encouraged to proceed to develop a detailed nursing faculty orientation package for new nursing faculty.
2. The administration and director are encouraged to review current workload policies and actual work responsibilities (such as paperwork) to determine the optimal number of nursing faculty and faculty workload to continue to have a successful VN program in the future.
3. The administration and director are encouraged to review the prerequisites to determine whether higher level courses might benefit the student in future educational pursuits.

A recommendation is a specific suggestion based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which the program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

Please provide a written response to these recommendations to Board Staff by July 1, 2013.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact Board staff at (512) 305-7660.

Sincerely,

Kristin K. Benton, MSN, RN
President

Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE
Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN
Nursing Consultants for Education

copy: Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board
Laurel V. Williamson, PhD, Interim President, San Jacinto College South