

**Report of a Survey Visit  
 The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas  
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request**

Consider the report of the July 15, 2014, survey visit to The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program. The survey visit was conducted by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator.

**Historical Perspective:**

- The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas, was approved at the January 2011 Board meeting as the Academy of Health Care Professions.
- The name changed to The College of Health Care Professions in December 2012.
- The College of Health Care Professions is accredited by the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools (ABHES) and is licensed by The Texas Workforce Commission.
- The program admitted twelve (12) students in July 2011 and six (6) completed the program in August 2012. The attrition was reported to be related to academic failures and health issues.
- The six (6) graduates took the NCLEX-PN® examination during the 2012 examination year and all passed, yielding a 100% pass rate.
- The program admitted twenty-three (23) students in August 2012. The thirteen (13) graduates from this class tested in examination year 2013 with seven (7) passing, yielding a 53.85% pass rate.
- The program admitted: twenty-eight (28) students in May, 2013 and nineteen (19) students in September 2013. The examination results for the thirty-five (35) graduates will not be reflected until examination year 2014.
- Twenty-seven (27) students were admitted in January 2014 and fifteen (15) students in May 2014.
- There are currently six (6) full-time faculty besides the program director. The Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) program director serves as adjunct until new faculty are hired.
- Wanda Spratt, MSN, RN, MA was approved as director in February 2014.
- There have been three (3) changes in program director since inception of the program.
- The NCLEX-PN® pass rates for the past two (2) years are reflected in the table below:

<b>Examination Year</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>
2013	53.85%	7/13	Full
2012	100%	6/6	Initial
2011	Program began this year		

**Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):**

- Contract Program Evaluator identified many strengths in the program (See Pros below).
- Areas of concern identified:
  - High faculty turnover with many new faculty who have practice experience but not teaching experience;
  - Heavy director and faculty workload making it difficult to schedule new faculty orientation and faculty development;
  - The process of testing students and analyzing test outcomes is not adequate and current technologically.
  - Overcrowding in classrooms.
- Areas of noncompliance with Rule 214 identified:
  - Implementation of adequate faculty orientation and ongoing faculty development;

- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies for Graduates of Nursing Education Programs in Texas* (DECs) have not been fully incorporated into the program and are not reflected in the clinical evaluation tools;
- Current use of clinical evaluation tools does not reflect formative evaluation nor do they measure progression of student behaviors across levels in the program.

### **Pros and Cons:**

#### **Pros:**

- The VN Program Director is an experienced educator with thirty-four (34) years in nursing education having taught in VN and ADN programs. She is respected by administration, faculty, students, and the professional community.
- The NCLEX-PN® for the first small class was 100%.
- Administration expressed support for the VN program and it fulfills a continued need for nurses in the communities served.
- The Program Director feels fully supported by administration.
- Students expressed satisfaction with the program.
- The program of study incorporates creative methods for course delivery, including frequent communication with faculty, face-to-face instruction, student centered learning activities and utilization of simulation.
- All clinical learning experiences are faculty supervised with hands on direct-patient care and use of preceptors in clinical settings. The program utilizes simulation to prepare students for clinical practice and for remediation.
- The program utilizes a full-time clinical coordinator to assist with clinical learning experiences and to liaison with clinical sites.
- The program has an adequate number of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide a variety of clinical learning experiences.
- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the long term care agencies, clinics and some acute care hospitals.
- The Program Director and staff are in the process of finalizing a Self-Study Report for Board Staff based upon the 2013 examination pass rate.
- There has been recent hiring of faculty experienced in nursing practice. Two faculty have been hired since the survey visit.

#### **Cons:**

- Decrease in pass rate is attributed to faculty and Director turnover.
- The program has been able to recruit new faculty members with strong clinical skills, but minimal teaching experience.
- The faculty and Director teaching loads do not allow adequate time for new faculty orientation and mentoring.
- Classroom are very crowded, not conducive to learning.

### **Rationales for staff recommendation:**

Rule 214.7(a)(4) related to *Faculty* require that "Written policies for nursing faculty workload shall allow sufficient time for faculty to accomplish those activities related to the teaching-learning process." Section (6) states that "Written policies for nursing faculty shall include: plans for faculty orientation to the institution and the nursing program, faculty development, and evaluation of faculty." Program Evaluator determined that the process for testing does not utilize automated testing and analyses systems, nor are faculty knowledgeable about test analysis and evaluation.

Rule 214.9(a)(8) related to *Program of Study* states that "The program of study shall include both didactic and clinical learning experiences and shall be designed and implemented to prepare students to demonstrate the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs* (DECs). Section (h) states that "Faculty shall develop and implement evaluation methods and tools to measure progression of students' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievements..." The faculty are currently revising the clinical evaluation tools to include the DECs and to measure progression of student behaviors across the clinical levels.

Rule 214.11(d)(5) related to *Facilities, Resources, and Services* requires that "Classrooms, laboratories, and conference rooms shall be conducive to learning and adequate in number, size, and type for the number of students and the educational purposes for which the rooms are used." The CHCP is planning for expansion of educational space in the building which would alleviate crowding.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of the survey visit to The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas and issue three (3) requirements and one (1) recommendation in the Board Order (See Letter and Board Order in Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit  
The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Purpose of Survey visit:** Board Order

**Date of Visit:** July 15, 2014

**Board Representative Conducting Visit:** Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator

**Program Evaluator met with:**

- Terri Lowery, MBA, President
- Kellie Herrin, BS, RMA, Director of Education
- Julie Zelenak, BBA, Director of Academic Affairs
- Wanda Spratt, RN, MSN, MA, VN Program Director
- Valencia Beu, RN, MS, Faculty
- Anna Marie Johnson, LVN, Faculty
- Loxi Cama, RN, MSN
- Wendy Cockron, RN, MSN, PhDC, Associate Degree Nursing Program Director, Faculty
- Four (4) VN students

**Program Evaluator:**

- Reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- Reviewed the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook;
- Reviewed exams, assignments, and clinical evaluation tools;
- Reviewed clinical affiliation agreements;
- Interviewed four (4) students;
- Toured facilities housing the nursing program;
- Held initial conference with director and administration;
- Met with faculty members;
- Reviewed records and documents including: student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan;
- Conducted exit interview with director and administration.

**Summary of Findings:**

Administration

- Administration indicated the nursing program fulfills a need in the local community and has comparable status to other education units in the college.
- Wanda Spratt, RN, MSN, MA has been the Program Director since February 2014 with thirty-four (34) years of teaching experience in ADN, VN, and Allied Health programs.
- Ms. Spratt expressed she feels supported by administration to direct the program in all aspects.
- Ms. Spratt currently teaches five (5) hours and indicates this will increase in September.
- Program Director workload does not allow sufficient time for mentoring and orienting new faculty.
- Clear channels of communication between the director and administration were evident.

Program of Study:

- The twelve (12) month program of study is designed to be completed in three (3), sixteen (16) week levels.
- The program is comprised of 1436 clock hours: 592 didactic hours and 844 clinical hours.

- The program of study is well organized and includes all Board required content.
- The organization of the curriculum is based upon simple to complex and designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting. This was accomplished by moving Medical Surgical Nursing II to the last semester.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* have been partially incorporated into the curriculum. Clinical evaluation tools do not reflect the DECs.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for admission, progression, remediation, and readiness for the NCLEX-PN examination.
- An effective process for testing and testing analysis is not being used.
- New lesson plans are being developed with implementation planned for October 2014.
- New syllabi are in place and are consistent in content and format across the curriculum.
- The Program Director and staff are in the process of finalizing a self-study report for Board staff.

#### Faculty:

- Six (6) full-time faculty teach in the VN program. Faculty members are dedicated and possess strong experience in nursing practice, but do not have teaching experience.
- The ADN program director currently fills the role of an adjunct faculty member in the VN program.
- Faculty reported they feel supported by each other, the program director and administration.
- Faculty workload for theory/skills courses ranges from three (3) to four (4) semester credit hours per week and three (3) semester credit hours per week for clinical/simulations instruction.
- Faculty members plan to be engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Faculty express satisfaction with having a clinical coordinator for lab and clinical sites.
- Faculty policies are well-written and in place per BON requirement.
- Faculty currently has regular meetings with minutes available from February 2014 to present.
- A faculty development plan is in place with the need for inclusion of nursing CNEs related to teaching development, test writing skills and content areas.
- Faculty indicates the lack of non-teaching time to be mentored by the program director.
- There has been a high faculty turnover rate with difficulty recruiting staff with nursing education experience. Two (2) vacancies exist with a plan to hire.

#### Students:

- The program admits two (2) cohorts annually each January and May with a maximum of thirty (30) per cohort. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants.
- At the time of the survey visit, fifty-five (55) students were in the program.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of the desire to become a nurse, recommendations by graduates, and availability of enrollment slots.
- Students agreed the program of study is preparing them well for clinical practice and they cited hands-on learning experiences as being the most rewarding part of the program.
- Students verbalized the challenge of time management between home responsibilities and school.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students.
- Student expressed the desire to have student representatives for input into program policies.
- Four (4) students were available for interview and all expressed the desire to become a Registered Nurse (RN).

#### Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with a number of affiliating agencies that provide adequate clinical opportunities for the curriculum.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are also utilized.
- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintains BON required ratios.
- Clinical preceptors are utilized and guidelines are well written.
- Clinical learning experiences are scheduled to correlate with didactic content.
- Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined.

- The clinical evaluation tools are based upon course content. These tools are undergoing revisions to include the DEC's and to indicate progression in the level of expectations.
- Clinical tools are used throughout the program, but formative and summative evaluation is not always carried out.
- Student expectations are detailed and clear.

#### Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services is offered on site.
- Two (2) computer labs are available in the nursing building and students have twenty-four hour access to online resources.
- There is ample, open parking available adjacent to the program building.
- One classroom, where program evaluator observed teaching, was not conducive to learning due to lack of space.
- Skills and simulation labs are adequately equipped.
- Media equipment is available for every classroom.
- The program director is provided with a fully furnished private office. Faculty share a large office with each one having a cubicle.
- The program has part-time clerical and secretarial support.
- The program director and faculty agreed that resources are adequate to meet all teaching needs.
- The facilities include restrooms, faculty and student lounges, break areas, and study areas.

#### Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, responsibilities, and faculty evaluations.
- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan that is used for decision making.
- Meeting minutes do not consistently reflect implementation of the TPE since minutes were only available from February 2014 when the new director was appointed to the present.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are up to date.
- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

October 27, 2014

Wanda Spratt, RN, MSN, MA, Program Director  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
The College of Health Care Professions  
240 Northwest Mall Blvd  
Houston, TX 77092

Dear Ms. Spratt,

At the October 23-24, 2014 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the July 15, 2014 survey visit to The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas, Vocational Nursing Education Program. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue three (3) requirements and one (1) recommendation in the attached Board Order.

Requirements are based upon program assessment directly related to the rules that must be addressed in the manner prescribed. 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 [Janice.hooper@bon.texas.gov](mailto:Janice.hooper@bon.texas.gov) or (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director

Copy: Terri Lowery, MBA, President, CHCP

# BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

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## **In the Matter of:**

The College of Health Care Professions  
Vocational Nursing Education Program  
In Houston, Texas

## **ORDER OF THE BOARD**

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on October 23, 2014, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the report of the survey visit to The College of Health Care Professions Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 214.

After review and due consideration of the findings from the survey visit, as well as the presentation by representatives from The College of Health Care Professions in Houston, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the survey visit report and imposes the following requirements and recommendation:

### Requirements:

1. Administration and the program director shall collaborate and develop a plan to ensure that faculty and Director workload allow sufficient time for new faculty orientation and mentoring, and for ongoing faculty development. The plan shall be submitted to the designated Board Staff no later than January 1, 2015.
2. The program shall provide copies of the revised clinical evaluation tools indicating inclusion of the DEC's and providing for formative and summative evaluation of student progression in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor achievements across levels in the program. The clinical evaluation tools shall be provided to Board Staff no later than January 1, 2015.
3. The administration shall ensure that the VN program has adequate classroom space to accommodate the students and provide evidence of the expanded space to Board Staff by January 1, 2015.

### Recommendation:

1. Administration and the program director are encouraged to implement the use of software for grading and generation of an exam item analysis for faculty use. The program shall respond to this recommendation by January 1, 2014.

Entered this 23rd day of October, 2014

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Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director on behalf of the  
Texas Board of Nursing