

Consideration of Summary of Self-Study Reports for Vocational Nursing Education Programs for 2015

Background:

Seven (7) vocational nursing (VN) education programs were required to submit Self-Study Reports to Texas Board of Nursing (Board) Staff in 2015 after their 2014 NCLEX examination pass rates fell below 80%. The group includes three (3) VN programs in community colleges and four (4) VN programs in career schools and colleges. Rule 214.4(c)(2)(B) *Ongoing Approval Procedures* requires that “When the passing score of first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates is less than 80% on the examination during the examination year, the nursing program shall submit a Self-Study Report that evaluates factors that may have contributed to the graduates’ performance on the examination and a description of the corrective measures to be implemented. . . .”

Board Staff invited individual program directors and their respective nursing faculty groups to participate in hour-long conference calls to discuss program issues and to provide guidance for developing the Self-Study Reports. All of the Education Consultants participated in most of the calls to all of the programs. This was an unexpectedly valuable experience for Board Staff since it provided an opportunity to talk with administrators, program directors, and many faculty members throughout the state. Every effort was made by the Consultants to extend assistance to the programs.

This report captures information from all of the Self-Study Reports and focuses on common factors that may have contributed to the lowered pass rates for 2014. Pass rates among the seven (7) programs ranged from 20% to 78.16%, with five (5) programs experiencing pass rates between 28.57% and 77.22%. The largest candidate pool from a single nursing education program was two hundred thirty-seven (237) first-time test-takers while the smallest candidate group was five (5) first-time test-takers.

Of the ninety-five (95) Board approved vocational nursing education programs, eighty-eight (88) programs had acceptable pass rates during the 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination year, January 1 through December 31. Further, eighteen (18) of the ninety-five (95) programs achieved an NCLEX-PN® pass rate of 100% for the 2014 examination year.

Data presented in the Self-Study Reports were catalogued into sections following the format in the Education Guideline 3.2.1.a. *Writing a Self-Study Report on Evaluation of Factors that Contributed to the Graduates’ Performance on the NCLEX-PN® or NCLEX-RN® Examination*. Factors have been categorized under headings in the Self-Study Report and are arranged from high to low frequency as described in the reports.

Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Students	Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Students
<p><u>Admission Criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of qualified applicant pool • Weak applicant pool • Ineffective admission standards <p><u>Remediation Strategies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for remediation • Need for early recognition of weak students • Remediation plan not effective, as attendance is not mandatory • Inconsistent remediation policies <p><u>Readmission Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weak readmission policies • Multiple readmissions allowed <p><u>At-Risk Students:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Large number of high-risk students <p><u>Progression Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students allowed to repeat courses • Standards not rigorous 	<p><u>Admission Criteria:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase marketing and recruitment efforts • Evaluate and strengthen admission standards • Increase scores for admission <p><u>Remediation Strategies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate current remediation strategies and add or strengthen remediation plan • Identify weak students early • Implement remediation program • Mandate student attendance at remediation activities • Utilize standardized remediation program • Require comprehensive remediation plan following standardized exit examination • Require evidence of student completion of mandated remediation <p><u>Readmission Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, revise, and strengthen readmission policies • Establish plan for adherence to policies <p><u>At-Risk Students:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop criteria to timely identify at-risk students • Provide immediate remediation to at-risk students <p><u>Progression Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, revise, and strengthen progression policies • Increase passing standard
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Policies</p> <p><u>Inadequate admission and selection, readmission, and progression policies:</u></p>	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Policies</p> <p><u>Inadequate admission and selection, readmission, and progression policies:</u></p>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate current policies to determine effectiveness <p><u>Inconsistent use of student policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and monitor attendance policies Exit exam policy in place, but not enforced <p><u>Lack of Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No entrance test for transfer students No baseline assessment for transfer students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct regular faculty meetings to consider effectiveness of current policies <p><u>Inconsistent use of student policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Revise and implement attendance policies Enforce policies for exit exams <p><u>Lack of Policies:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and enforce policies for transfer students
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Faculty</p> <p><u>Inadequate faculty orientation and mentoring:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hiring of new inexperienced faculty Lack of sufficient formal orientation and mentoring <p><u>Insufficient number of faculty to effectively carry out teaching, clinical instruction, and other responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> High faculty turnover Not all faculty consistently utilizing technology to the student’s advantage Simulation lab underutilized by faculty members Faculty inexperienced in writing NCLEX style questions 	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Faculty</p> <p><u>Inadequate faculty orientation and mentoring:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate and strengthen faculty orientation Ensure consistency in implementing faculty orientation policies Continue ongoing faculty development <p><u>Insufficient number of faculty to effectively carry out teaching, clinical instruction, and other responsibilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitate faculty participation in program policies Offer opportunities for faculty development and leadership for increased faculty satisfaction Professional Development Day to be held bi-annually and periodically, as needed, to assist faculty Offer faculty Test Development and Item Writing Workshop through NCSBN Online Campus
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Curriculum</p> <p><u>Need for major curriculum revision:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Issues with curriculum organization Change in teaching methodologies to 	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Curriculum</p> <p><u>Need for major curriculum revision:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and revise curriculum organization and sequencing

<p>reduce the amount of classroom lecture time</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Change in textbooks and other resources to provide increased rigor • Insufficient content for Medical/Surgical Nursing course • Lack of articulated student learning outcomes • Lab activities not sufficiently correlated with didactic content <p><u>Ineffective clinical evaluation tools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current clinical evaluation tools not effective <p><u>Growing scarcity of clinical practice sites:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clinical sites may not be appropriate to meet program objectives 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitor changes implemented • Monitor impact of change in textbooks and resources • Use HESI standardized remediation package as appropriate to program • Develop and define student learning outcomes throughout curriculum • Strengthen Medical/Surgical nursing course content and instruction • Continually review clinical facilities to determine appropriateness • Need to integrate lab activities with didactic • Need to increase focus on skills and correlate with content <p><u>Ineffective clinical evaluation tools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct faculty meetings to critically evaluate current clinical evaluation tools and design new tools <p><u>Growing scarcity of clinical practice sites:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to evaluate current clinical sites • Continue to seek new clinical learning opportunities to meet program/course objectives
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Teaching and Evaluation</p> <p><u>Inconsistencies in Exam Processes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grading policies allowed too much weight awarded to homework assignments • Faculty not grading assignments consistently <p><u>Insufficient Test Security:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues identified by any of the seven programs <p><u>Use of Standardized Examinations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ineffective use of data from standardized exam results • Incorporate more standardized exam content in lecture or clinical learning experience • Standardized specialty tests not 	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Testing and Evaluation</p> <p><u>Inconsistencies in Exam Processes:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critically evaluate and change grading policies • Offer faculty education regarding Interrater reliability standards and application <p><u>Insufficient Test Security:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues identified <p><u>Use of Standardized Examinations:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide faculty training in the use of results from standardized exams • Utilize standardized exam proctored assessments throughout the curriculum • Schedule faculty training in use of specialty exams

<p>utilized effectively</p> <p><u>Need for Student Preparation to take the NCLEX:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of student participation in standardized exams as preparation for NCLEX • Lack of student skills in taking standardized exams on computers <p><u>Inadequacy of Total Program Evaluation Plan and Use:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total Program Evaluation Plan not properly utilized 	<p><u>Need for Student Preparation to take the NCLEX:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Link course grades to results on standardized exams • Seek other resources for NCLEX preparation • Consider methods to increase student proficiency with computerized exams <p><u>Inadequacy of Total Program Evaluation Plan and Use:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assess current utilization process to determine how to more effectively utilize Total Program Evaluation Plan
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Evaluation Methods for Class and Clinical</p> <p><u>Grading Issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistencies in grading and grading criteria • Incorporate more test items written at the application and analysis levels <p><u>Lack of Possibility for Computerized Testing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues identified <p><u>Need for Revision of Clinical Evaluation Tools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determined need to revise • Need for faculty development in clinical teaching and evaluation strategies 	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Evaluation Methods for Class and Clinical</p> <p><u>Grading Issues:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review grading policies on a regular basis <p><u>Lack of Possibility for Computerized Testing:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No issues identified <p><u>Need for Revision of Clinical Evaluation Tools:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review clinical evaluation tools and add rubrics measuring progression and performance • Offer workshop to faculty to assist in development of clinical teaching and evaluation strategies
<p>Factors That May Have Contributed to NCLEX Examination Pass Rates – Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Diverse student population and learner needs • Ineffective evaluation methods for student evaluation of class and clinical learning experiences 	<p>Suggested Corrective Measures to Improve Success – Other</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Offer educational opportunities to faculty to assist them to better understand diverse learner population and needs • Develop online surveys to gather

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for faculty development in item analysis 	<p>anonymous feedback about all learning experiences so areas for improvement can be identified, assessed, and plans developed for improvement activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide workshops in test development and analysis • Faculty to continue development of new tests, item analysis, and development of blueprints • Purchase new software to assist faculty in item-analysis
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Summary of Commonly-Cited Areas of Concern in Self-Study Reports in Order of Frequency:

1. Lack of rigor in admission criteria
2. Need to timely identify and remediate at-risk students
3. Lack of rigor in progression policies
4. High faculty turnover
5. Faculty not proficient in test item-writing or analysis
6. Need for more effective faculty orientation and additional mentoring due to the hiring of inexperienced faculty members
7. Ineffective use of standardized examination data
8. Lack of student participation in standardized examinations as preparation for NCLEX
9. Need for revision of clinical evaluation tools
10. Students allowed to repeat nursing courses

This report is for information only. No Board action is required.