

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status  
 From Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning  
 Northeast Texas Community College in Mt. Pleasant, Texas  
 Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the proposed change in approval status for the Northeast Texas Community College (NTCC) Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2015 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate, findings in the Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215.

**Historical Perspective:**

- The ADN program began in 1988 in cooperation with Paris Junior College and admitted ten (10) second year students. In fall 1989, the NTCC began their own ADN program, admitting twelve (12) students.
- In fall 1989, the VN and ADN programs were joined under one single program director.
- The Mobility LVN-RN track began in 1992.
- A new University and Allied Health Building was built in 2006 and the Division of Allied Health was revised to include a Dean of Allied Health.
- A 2010 Title III grant enabled expansion of simulation equipment and capabilities. The VN mobility track moved to an online and hybrid format.
- In October 2012, Kathleen Ethridge, EdD, MSN, RN, was appointed the Director of the NTCC nursing education programs.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the table below:

<b>NCLEX Examination Year</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>	<b>NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>
2015	Full	70.59%	24/34
2014	Full	68.75%	22/32
2013	Full	83.87%	26/31
2012	Full	91.30%	21/23
2011	Full	100.0%	17/17
2010	Full	85.50%	21/24

- Due to the 2014 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 68.75%, the Program Director and faculty were required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2015 that would evaluate factors that may have contributed to the graduates' performance on the NCLEX-RN® examination and a description of the corrective measures to be implemented.

- The Education Consultants conducted a conference call with the Program Director and faculty members on February 11, 2015, to discuss the process of developing the SSR. A comprehensive, in-depth SSR was received in the Board office on April 14, 2015.
- The Program Director and faculty members identified factors in the SSR that may have contributed to the decline in the pass rate and designed the following corrective measures:
  - Revise admission requirements, including standardized testing criteria and grades on selected prerequisite courses;
  - Strengthen student policies related to remediation and use of university-provided success services; ATI and Kaplan resources;
  - Early identification of English as a Second Language (ESL) students at risk;
  - Strengthen progression policies to eliminate bonus points and rounding of passing grade to 75;
  - Implement concept-based curriculum;
  - Implement all exams through electronic format and increase test security;
  - Increase the use of simulation by providing formal simulation training of faculty and implementing a dedicated educator to assist in the lab;
  - Improve use of summative evaluation data (HESI summaries, NCLEX performance data) to foster program improvement;
  - Improve new faculty orientation and mentoring; and
  - Improve use of item analysis data by faculty to foster improvement in testing and classroom instruction by providing faculty workshops on test writing.
- On December 10, 2015, the Education Consultants conducted a telephone conference with the Program Director concerning changing the program's approval status from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning at the Board meeting on January 21, 2016. The conference call provided an opportunity for Board Staff to discuss the process and implications of the warning status.
- The NTCC ADN Program has provided a response letter to be included with the Board report (See Attachment #1).

**Rationale for Recommendations:**

Rule 215.4(c)(3)(A) states: "A warning may be issued to a program when the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-RN® candidates .... is less than 80% for two (2) consecutive examination years..."

The Education Guideline for writing a Self-Study Report requires that "The effects of the corrective measures should be evaluated as a part of the Total Program Evaluation Plan".

**Staff Recommendations:**

Move to change the approval status for the Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2015 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate, findings in the 2015 Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215, and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (Attachment #2).

## Additional Information for Northeast Texas Community College Self Study Related to Board Rates December 2015

The Nursing Faculty and Department of Health Science have actively been involved in the implementation of the Self Study presented to the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) in April, 2015. Additionally, there have been features which have been identified and adjusted to meet the needs of the students for positive NCLEX RN outcomes in 2016. The Self Study presented included *teach out* of the current curriculum.

- After further review of the current curriculum, there were identified elements needed, for example to educate more contextually versus the traditional medical model.
- Furthermore information was added to the education elements where appropriate, this was completed to meet the rigor of the New Graduate entry level knowledge.
- Adjustments were also made to the ESL support and represent more of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students and their challenges to the nursing content and NCLEX RN success.
- Supportive systems of ATI and Kaplan have been the source to assess the standardization of knowledge with opportunity for remediation and growth of the student's critical thinking.
- Safety in clinical practice as well as in the critical thinking elements are one the features used to ensure that the students are meeting the minimum level of understanding with these educational strategies.
- Ongoing faculty development and evaluation continued with simulation, item writing, and content progression. These additional features were included to support the objectives and *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs Evidenced by Knowledge, Clinical Judgment and Behaviors* (DECs).

There have been faculty challenges and changes within the department along with a variety of student/candidate details. There is the opportunity for growth for each faculty member and this Associate Degree Nursing Program. There are several items which have been implemented and will take the remainder of the year to begin to measure the outcomes. This faculty team may be new and not long term educators however they are eager and quality nurses who have proven tracks in the professional sector. They are also willing to educate this area's students into the best professional nurses and use the most innovative ideas to achieve these goals. The 2015 NCLEX RN rates have increased from 68.75 percent in 2014 to 70.5 percent without the full weight of the plan implemented. The Nursing Faculty support this is progress towards a full recovery for the 2016 NCLEX RN rates. Thank you for your time and support.

**DRAFT LETTER**

January 22, 2016

Kathleen Ethridge, RN, MSN, EdD  
Director, Associate Degree Nursing Education Program  
Northeast Texas Community College  
P.O.Box 1307  
Mt. Pleasant, TX 75456

Dear Dr. Ethridge:

At the January 21-22, 2016 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status of the Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2015, findings in the 2015 Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order.

If you have any questions or if we may be of any assistance, please contact Board Staff at [gayle.varnell@bon.texas.gov](mailto:gayle.varnell@bon.texas.gov) or 512-621-5179.

Sincerely,

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director

Copy: Dr. Brad Johnson, President

**BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING**

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**ORDER OF THE BOARD**

In the Matter of  
Northeast Texas Community College  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program  
Mt. Pleasant, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on January 21, 2016, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of the Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2015, findings in the Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215.

Representatives from Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas discussed the change in approval status during a conference call with Board Staff and was offered the opportunity to provide a written response for the Board's consideration. After review and due consideration of the materials presented by Staff and filed by Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status of Northeast Texas Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Mt. Pleasant, Texas from FULL APPROVAL to FULL APPROVAL WITH WARNING and imposes the following conditions and requirements:

1. In accordance with Rule 215.4(a)(3)(A), a program survey visit will be conducted by Board Staff during 2016.
2. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective measures outlined in the 2015 Self-Study Report is to be submitted to Board Staff no later than June 1, 2016, per Education Guideline 3.2.1.a.

Entered this 21<sup>st</sup> day of January, 2016

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Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN  
Executive Director  
On Behalf of the Texas Board of Nursing