

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status
From Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning
Vernon College at Wichita Falls in Wichita Falls, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the proposed change in approval status for Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, findings in the Self-Study Report dated July 2016, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214.

Historical Perspective:

- Vernon College was established in 1970 as Victoria Regional Junior College.
- Vernon College has campuses in Wichita Falls, Vernon, and Seymour, Texas.
- The VN Program combined with Bethania School of Vocational Nursing in Wichita Falls in 1976.
- Vernon College is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.
- Sherrie Denham, RN, MSN is the Program Director for the VN program and was appointed in 2015.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are included in the table below:

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2016	Full	74.49%	73/98
2015	Full	73.81%	93/126
2014	Full	80.15%	105/131
2013	Full	86.60%	84/97
2012	Full	88.19%	112/127

- Due to the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 73.81%, the Program Director and faculty were required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) that evaluated factors that contributed to the graduates' performance on the NCLEX-PN® examination and offering descriptions of corrective measures to be implemented.
- The faculty identified factors in the SSR that may have contributed to the decline in the pass rate and designed corrective measures to be implemented that included:
 - increasing the minimum passing score from 75 to 78%;
 - reassessing and revising re-entry policy for failures/withdrawals;
 - making attendance policy more rigorous;
 - increasing usage of simulation; and

- encouraging faculty to develop exams rather than relying on test banks.
- The program has provided a response to the Board with updates of their corrective measures (See Attachment #1).

Rationale for Recommendations:

Rule 214.4(c)(3)(A) states: “A warning may be issued to a program when the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates ... is less than 80% for two consecutive 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 Recommendation:

Move to change the approval status for the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing (VN) Program in Wichita Falls, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, findings in the 2016 Self-Study Report, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214, and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (See Attachment #2).



www.vernoncollege.edu

Vernon Campus 4400 College Drive Vernon, TX 76384 940.552.6291	Century City Center 4105 Maplewood Ave. Wichita Falls, TX 76308 940.696.8752	Skills Training Center 2813 Central Expressway E Wichita Falls, TX 76302 940.766.3369	Sheppard Learning Center 426 5th Avenue, Suite 8 Sheppard AFB, TX 76311 940.855.2203	Seymour Learning Center 200 Stadium Drive Seymour, TX 76380 940.889.3133
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March 30, 2017

Texas Board of Nursing

333 Guadalupe, Suite 333-460

Austin, Texas 78701-3944

To Whom It May Concern:

The Vocational Nursing program at Vernon College appreciates this opportunity to address the Board relating to the motion to change the Vocational Nursing program status from full accreditation to full accreditation with warning based upon the 2015 NCLEX pass rate of 74%. Program faculty completed a self-study in July of 2016 to identify the factors that adversely impacted the program pass rate.

During the self-study several mitigating factors were noted including: ease of re-entry of students, ease of course substitution, and lax extenuating circumstances and attendance policies. Historically students who failed a course were allowed to re-take the failed course. If the student passed the course upon the second attempt they were allowed to re-enter the program and progress to the next program level with no ramifications.

Additionally, students who violated the attendance policy were allowed to re-enter the program if they claimed extenuating circumstances. However, the extenuating circumstance policy required the student to provide proof of adversity such as medical issues (hospitalization). We were not requiring the students to adhere to the policy as anyone who claimed extenuating circumstances were allowed to re-enter without appropriate documentation. Program administration were participating in policy violation. During the self-study it was noted that the majority of re-entry students failed the NCLEX upon the first attempt regardless of reason for re-entry.

The ease of course substitution was another factor identified during the self-study. Students were allowed to transfer the following courses into the program Anatomy and Physiology, Growth and Development, Psychology, Nutrition, and Microbiology. These courses were allowed to transfer regardless of length of time elapsed from the time the course was taken in relation to program start date. Vernon College allows course transfer with no time limit imposed upon course transfer and we operated upon the same policy. This ease of course transfer has been detrimental to the pass rate.

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The following corrective measures have been implemented to improve the pass rate. The attendance policy has been strengthened. Previously students were allowed to miss 60 hours per year. This was problematic as students would miss one class to study for another one. In order to mitigate this the program changed the attendance policy. Students are now allowed to miss two days in the fall, spring and one day in the summer semesters. This has stopped the leaving one class in order to study for another one.

The program changed the grading policy in order to increase the rigor of the program. Historically the pass rate was 75%. It has been increased to 78%.

The program has changed the course substitution policy. The policy now states that courses may only be transferred into the program if they have been taken within 3 years of program start date. This policy takes precedence over Vernon College's policy of accepting courses without time constraint.

The extenuating circumstance policy has been reviewed by faculty and program administration. Program administration and all staff and students are in compliance with the policy. Students who provide documentation of extenuating circumstances and are passing all courses with a 78 or greater are allowed re-entry. The extenuating circumstance policy is allowed only once during program duration regardless of cause. We have ceased re-entry for any student due to course failure.

The faculty are implementing all policy changes and will continue to implement corrective measures in order to improve student success on NCLEX. We anticipate that these changes will positively impact the 2016-2017 cohort. Faculty staff, program administration and the administration of Vernon College are committed to enhancing student success. We welcome all input that the Texas Board of Nursing can provide and are confident that we can improve NCLEX pass rates.

Sincerely,

Sherrie Denham, RN, MSN, Director of Vocational Nursing

Sherrie Denham, RN, MSN Director of Vocational Nursing

Vernon College

sdenham@vernoncollege.edu

Draft Letter

April 24, 2017

Sherrie Denham, RN, MSN, Director
Vocational Education Program
Vernon College at Wichita Falls
4105 Maplewood Avenue
Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

Dear Ms. Denham:

At the April 20-21, 2017 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) discussed the approval status for the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas, based upon the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, findings in the 2016 Self-Study Report, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214.

Recommendation #1:

Move to change the approval status for the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing (VN) Program in Wichita Falls, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, findings in the 2016 Self-Study Report, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214, and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status for the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order.

If you have any questions or if we may be of any assistance, please contact Board Staff at susan.lee@bon.texas.gov or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dusty R. Johnston, President

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Vernon College at Wichita Falls
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In Wichita Falls, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on April 20, 2017, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 214, based upon the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for 2016, findings in the Self-Study Report, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214.

After review and due consideration of the materials presented by Staff and filed by the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status for the Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas from FULL APPROVAL to FULL APPROVAL WITH WARNING and imposes the following conditions/requirements:

1. In accordance with Rule 214.4(a)(3)(A), a program survey visit shall be conducted by Board Staff during 2017.
2. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective measures outlined in the 2016 Self-Study Report is to be submitted by the program to Board Staff no later than August 31, 2017, per Education Guideline 3.2.1.a.

Entered this 20th day of April, 2017

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