

**Proposal to Establish a New Nursing Education Program
Texas State Technical College Harlingen in Harlingen,
Texas Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the Texas State Technical College Harlingen proposal to establish a new Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Harlingen, Texas. The proposed program is a licensed vocational nursing-to-associate degree nursing (LVN-to-ADN) mobility program. The final revised proposal was provided electronically to members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board).

Historical Perspective:

- TSTC was created in 1967 as the James Connally Technical Institute of Texas A&M and in 1969, it became an independent state system with a new name, Texas State Technical Institute (TSTI), and its own Board of Regents.
- Beginning in 1970 as the demand for technical education continued, campuses have been established in Abilene, Breckenridge, Brownwood, Fort Bend County, Harlingen, Marshall, North Texas, Sweetwater, Waco, and Williamson County.
- TSTC is the only college in Texas to adopt a funding model based entirely on student employment outcomes – aligning with its purpose of strengthening Texas with a highly skilled, technical competent workforce. TSTC is currently celebrating 50 years of service to the state of Texas.
- In 2016 the decision was made to integrate all 10 TSTC campuses in order to standardize operations and programs to better serve the state.
- The only other nursing program in the TSTC system is located at TSTC West Texas with the main campus in Sweetwater. Though the nursing curricula will be similar at both sites, the delivery will be different, mainly in consideration of the needs of the separate student groups. The two programs will remain separate entities.
- The TSTC system is governed by a nine-member Board of Regents, who are appointed by the governor and provide a statewide perspective.
- TSTC Harlingen is a two-year state college offering courses of study in vocational and technical areas. TSTC offers seven Associate of Science degree programs in four Fields of Study and an Academic Core Curriculum. Twenty-nine Associate of Applied Science degree programs and 31 Certificates of Completion are offered to students.
- Approximately 6,192 undergraduate students attend TSTC Harlingen, most of whom live in Cameron County. Over half of the students are part-time students and many plan to transfer to senior colleges to complete their educational goals.
- TSTC Harlingen previously offered an ADN program that was approved by the Board in July 2012 but voluntarily closed in 2015 due to poor performance. The program was on Conditional Approval when it closed. All students who were enrolled completed the program through a teach-out.

- TSTC Harlingen has offered a vocational nursing (VN) educational program since April 2009.
- Shirley Byrd, MSN, RN was employed by TSTC on May 1, 2016, to develop a proposal for a new program and she is the proposed director. She has been in communication with Board Staff as she has prepared the proposal.
- A first submission of the proposal was received in Board Office on December 12, 2016. A written review was provided to the program and a second submission of the proposal was received on February 27, 2017.
- Board Staff held a lengthy conference call with Ms. Byrd, Jean Lashbrook, and a faculty member on March 20, 2017, for a consultation visit.
- A survey visit was conducted by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator, on June 1, 2017, to determine the readiness of the physical site (See Attachment #1).

Summary of Proposal:

Overview of the Proposal:

- The proposed program of study will be delivered in face-to-face classes and enhanced using online resources, and in nursing skills and simulation laboratories. The program is designed for completion in a 12-month time frame to students who have already completed pre-requisite courses.
- The program is requesting to enroll 30 students in the Fall 2017 semester with a first graduation in August 2018.
- The program offers a smooth transition for LVNs to advance their education for eligibility to take the NCLEX-RN® examination.
- TSTC will partner with other academic programs and healthcare organizations in the Rio Grande Valley by requiring common prerequisite courses as other programs and following a blocked nursing curriculum plan, facilitating easy articulation for students.

Rationale and Need for the Program:

- There is a known need for nurses and nursing programs in the Rio Grande Valley since several programs have closed and there are limited nursing programs in South Texas.
- During a TSTC LVN/RN Board Meeting on October 28, 2016, representatives from Harlingen, McAllen, and Brownsville expressed a concern over the lack of traditional and transition RN nursing programs.
- Many potential nursing program applicants who are not able to enroll in a four-year program have expressed a desire for an ADN program in the area.
- A survey of hospitals in the valley indicated there are 953 RN positions with 161 of them currently vacant. Seven of the hospitals offered to provide preceptors, 14 voiced support for the program, 18 stated they would provide clinical experiences, and 18 will provide opportunities for employment upon graduation and licensure.
- There is currently one ADN nursing program in McAllen which is 45 miles away from Harlingen. There are three VN programs in Harlingen and many of their graduates will be seeking an advanced degree. There is one BSN program in Brownsville at the University of Texas Rio Grande Valley (UTRGV).

- Hospitals in the Rio Grande Valley are growing and will be recruiting over 1,000 new nurses within a year.
- Ms. Byrd has actively engaged program directors of RN programs in meetings and discussions of collaboration during the development of the proposal.
- Letters of support are provided from nine health care settings and three from community leaders.
- An active Advisory Committee is made up of 25 members who are nurses, health care administrators, and nursing education faculty.

Administration and Organization:

- TSTC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. Michael L. Reeser is Chancellor and Corporate Executive Officer.
- The TSTC system mission is defined by the Texas State Legislature and published in Vernon's Texas Education Code Section 135.01.
- A memorandum of approval from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board dated December 22, 2016 is included in the proposal.
- A letter of support from Stella E. Garcia PhD, Provost of TSTC states the commitment for resources including financial budgeting adequate for the development and success of the program.
- The projected budget for the first three years is \$996,208. Sources of funding for the program include tuition, state reimbursement, grants, and college budget allocations from appropriated and local accounts.
- A two-year nursing program budget is included in the proposal.
- Organizational charts for all levels of administration are included in the proposal.
- Jean Lashbrook, RN, is the Statewide Division Director for Nursing.
- Shirley Byrd, MSN, RN is qualified to serve as Program Director and is committed to launching a successful program. Ms. Byrd has prior experience in nursing education and in nursing practice administration.

Faculty:

- In addition to the Program Director, two full-time nursing faculty will be employed with at least one adjunct faculty member.
- TSTC has recently increased the salary levels for MSN-prepared qualified faculty to assist in recruiting and retaining nursing faculty
- TSTC has received calls from potential nursing faculty interested in a faculty role, indicating potential faculty are available.
- The Faculty Handbook includes policies for faculty workload, orientation, evaluation, and faculty development as required in Rule 215.7. In addition, numerous policies and processes are provided in the Handbook to assist faculty in their role as faculty and to ensure consistency in practices.
- A plan for faculty organization and committee functioning is outlined in the Handbook.
- The program plans to use preceptors in the final portion of the clinical learning process.

Students:

- The program will recruit students from graduates of the TSTC Vocational Program as well as other vocational programs in the area and from employment settings where LVNs are employed.
- The program will use a point system for the selection of students in the admission process.
- Surveys to VN students and LVNs indicate there is a sufficient potential pool of applicants available to maintain the program.
- Admission, readmission, progression, and graduation criteria are designed to maintain high standards in the program.
- Eligibility information is included in the Student Handbook and students are required to verify their receipt of this information through their signature on a form in the Handbook.

Program of Study:

- The philosophy of the program supports a process of mobility in nursing education which may begin with certification as a nurse aide and progress to VN and RN education. This philosophy is consistent with the college mission.
- The curriculum has been based upon the concept of caring within the context of the nurse-patient relationship. The nursing process provides the framework for the program of study, guiding the teaching in critical thinking skills.
- The program outcomes are mapped to show progression across levels in cognitive, affective, and psychomotor knowledge and abilities.
- The curriculum is based on theories of scaffolding with concepts and learning activities built upon previous concepts and content. The instructional plan also relies upon modeling by the faculty as a teaching technique where students learn from and mirror faculty behaviors and examples.
- The conceptual model illustrates the interrelationship between teaching strategies, nursing knowledge, student characteristics, thinking skills, testing and evaluation, and success on the NCLEX® examination.
- The program will utilize professional standards and competencies outlined in the *Differentiated Essential Competences of Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (2010)(DECs)*.
- The courses will be sequenced from common to complex nursing care and from chronic to acute health problems.
- All syllabi provide details to students that will guide them through the program. The course objectives have been cross-referenced to program objectives and clinical objectives. The format of the syllabi is consistent and comprehensive.
- Detailed course schedules indicate that the day-to-day details have been considered.
- TSTC has established a University Center on campus in partnership with major universities (such as Texas A&M, University of Texas, Wayland Baptist) to promote the opportunities for students to enroll in bachelor's degree programs following completion of the associate's degree on their own campus.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- Since most clinical learning experiences in VN programs involve long term care settings, the clinical rotations in the ADN program will begin in acute care facilities.
- Hospital rotations will include medical-surgical, pre-operative care, surgical care, post-operative care, rehabilitation, urgent and emergency care, maternity-neonate care, pediatric care, and intensive care units.
- Recently signed agreements with six clinical settings for clinical practice experiences for students are included in the proposal.
- Independent clinical experiences with assigned preceptors will include nursing homes, rehabilitation units, and home health.
- Simulation experiences are integrated into all clinical courses to prepare students for actual patient care and to promote constructive feedback through coaching and debriefing by faculty.
- Since there are few nursing programs in the Rio Grande Valley, there should not be negative impact on other programs using clinical facilities in the area.
- A list of clinical facilities supporting the new program and with whom contracts have been signed is provided in the proposal. A clinical rotation schedule is included.
- Clinical evaluation tools indicate students will be evaluated on their progression of clinical competencies across the levels.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- Students enrolled at TSTC Harlingen experience their education in a full college environment with an array of student services and student activities.
- The building for the nursing programs has been completed remodeled. A written description of the facilities is provided in the proposal as well as photographs. Ms. Skloss' survey visit report is included in Attachment #1.
- The Nursing Department currently has a shared secretary and has determined this is sufficient.
- A part-time teaching/lab assistant is budgeted to aid faculty.

Records and Reports:

- Official documents, records, and reports will be stored and maintained according to the TSTC Records Administration policies.
- Student and faculty files will be stored in a secure area.

Total Evaluation Plan:

- The program's total evaluation plan has been designed to meet all requirements in Rule 215.13. It is practical and involves nursing faculty in all aspects.

Rationale for Staff Recommendation:

The proposal for the new ADN program at TSTC Harlingen and findings from the survey visit indicate that all is in readiness for the program approval and enrollment of students.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to grant initial approval to Texas State Technical College Harlingen to establish a new Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Harlingen, Texas, and impose the conditions/requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (See Attachment #2).

**TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING
SURVEY VISIT PROGRAM REPORT**

Professional Nursing Education Program

NAME OF NURSING PROGRAM: Texas State Technical Institute Associate Degree
Nursing Education Program - Harlingen

PROPOSED DIRECTOR: Shirley Byrd, MSN, RN

REASON FOR SURVEY: New Proposal **DATE:** June 1, 2017

SURVEY VISITOR: Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contractor

Met with: Dr. Stella Garcia, Provost
Nicki Cone, MA, Associate VP for Student Learning
Jean Lashbrook, RN, Nursing Division Director
Shirley Byrd, MSN, RN, Proposed Program Director
Sonia Meza, MSN, RN, Proposed Faculty
Maria T. Gutierrez, MSN, RN, Proposed Faculty
Nancy Hendricks, MLS, Librarian

Narrative in the Evidence column documents findings of pertinent data, outstanding performance, or deficiencies. Narrative in the Comments column includes recommendations or requirements to be met based on analysis of the survey visit.

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
§215.11 Facilities, Resources, and Services		
(a) The governing entity shall be responsible for providing: (1) educational facilities, (2) resources, and (3) services which support the effective development and implementation of the professional nursing education program.	Over 90 percent of the students at TSTC Harlingen are recipients of financial assistance through Title IV Program Funding that includes federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) and Pell grants. Students are granted scholarships based on need. Student Support Services: ---assist with student success ---promotes awareness of wellness, disabilities, domestic violence, drug and alcohol prevention. ---serves as a resource and referral center ---provides financial counseling. ---provides tutoring throughout the curriculum including peers and tutors with national certification ---provides study labs	Criteria Met

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
	<p>Advisement Center provides: ---career guidance and support ---success coaches to motivate and support students</p> <p>The Humana student assistance program offers enrolled students and their families, free of charge, access to a network of professionals to provide emotional support, life-coaching, financial and legal consultation and a wide range of resources to balance school and life. Short term counseling is provided by this program, up to five visits, prior to referring out when needed.</p>	
<p>(b) An appropriately equipped skills laboratory shall be provided to accommodate the maximum number of students allowed for the program. (1) The laboratory shall be equipped with hot and cold running water. (2) The laboratory shall have adequate storage for equipment and supplies.</p>	<p>Nursing skills laboratories: Two, large, spacious in size, contain durable and non-durable medical equipment including low and medium fidelity manikins; there are adequate supplies in the lab for the number of students projected for admission. The labs are equipped with three sinks that have hot and cold running water. There are desks in both labs to accommodate all students.</p> <p>Two simulation labs, have attached control room with full view of simulation rooms, fully equipped with high fidelity manikins. The simulation lab will only be utilized only for the ADN program.</p> <p>Supply rooms: Two extra-large rooms hold supplies, can also be used as a sterile supply room; there are adequate supplies for the number of students projected. This is separate from the skills lab which also has an abundant amount of storage space.</p> <p>Laundry room in building near labs.</p>	Criteria Met
<p>(c) The dean/director and faculty shall have adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program.</p>	<p>There is one Administrative Assistant to assist faculty in the ADN and VN Program. All agree she is efficient and able to meet the needs of the programs.</p>	Criteria Met
<p>(d) The physical facilities shall be adequate to meet the needs of the program in relation to the size of the faculty and the student body. (1) The dean/director shall have a private office.</p>	<p>The newly renovated, green building utilizing reclaimed wood, Nursing Education Center is a 15,795 square feet educational facility, appropriate in size with ample parking in front of building including handicap spaces. The Center houses instructional and administrative areas for students and faculty:</p>	Criteria Met

STANDARD/CRITERIA	EVIDENCE	COMMENTS
<p>(2) Faculty offices shall be conveniently located and adequate in number and size to provide faculty with privacy for conferences with students and uninterrupted work.</p> <p>(3) Space for clerical staff, records, files, and equipment shall be adequate.</p> <p>(4) There shall be mechanisms which provide for the security of sensitive materials, such as examinations and health records.</p> <p>(5) 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.</p> <p>(6) Teaching aids shall be provided to meet the objectives/outcomes of the program.</p> <p>(7) Adequate restrooms and lounges shall be provided convenient to the classroom.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private office for the program director; • Private faculty offices: Four <p>NOTE: Faculty offices have glass doors to ensure the safety of faculty and students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Employee lounge/workrooms: One • Central desk area with access for 14 computers for adjunct faculty and/or students. • Private student consultation/counseling offices are available for privacy. • Nursing Classrooms: Three spacious nursing classrooms, conducive learning environment; each one is equipped with audio visual technology. • Nursing dedicated computer lab: One large with additional laboratory as needed • Administrative Assistant large work station: One • A separate locked file room is near the faculty work area; Records will be maintained in this area in compliance with Rule 215. • Student lounges, vending machines, restrooms, and conference rooms are adequate and strategically placed conveniently to classrooms. • Restrooms and lounges are in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. 	
<p>(e) The learning resources, library, and departmental holdings shall be current, use contemporary technology appropriate for the level of the curriculum, and be sufficient for the size of the student body and the needs of the faculty.</p> <p>(1) Provisions shall be made for accessibility, availability, and timely delivery of information resources.</p> <p>(2) Facilities and policies shall promote effective use, i.e. environment, accessibility, and hours of operation.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning Resource Center (Library) has ---35,364 square feet, remodeled, two stories facility, ---rooms: orientation, media center, board room, private study ---sufficient current holdings ---80 computers and other audiovisual resources ---resources to print fax, and copy ---large number of academic eBooks ---anatomic models ---DVD resources <p>The Center is open seven days a week with staff support. Homework help is available as well as professional and peer tutoring.</p> <p>Students have 24-hour access to online services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ---11 nursing data bases and adding more 	Criteria Met

Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:

Pros:

- Facilities, resources, and services are adequate to meet the needs of the proposed ADN program.

Cons:

- None identified

DRAFT LETTER

July 24, 2017

Shirley Byrd, MSN, RN, Program Director
Texas State Technical College Harlingen
1902 North Loop 499
Harlingen, Texas 78550

Dear Ms. Byrd:

At the July 20-21, 2017 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing discussed the Texas State Technical College Harlingen Proposal to Establish a New Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Harlingen, Texas. The Board wishes to thank -----, and you for being present to answer questions. Based upon the discussion and review of documents, it was the decision of the Board to grant initial approval to Texas State Technical College Harlingen to establish a new Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Harlingen, Texas, and impose the conditions/requirements in the attached Board Order.

We wish you success with the program. If you have questions, or if we may be of assistance, please contact Board Staff at 512-305-6814.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Jean Lashbrook, RN, Director of Nursing
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Texas State Technical College Harlingen
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
In Harlingen, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on July 20, 2017, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the Texas State Technical College Harlingen proposal to establish a new Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Harlingen, Texas, based upon the review of the Proposal, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by the representatives from Texas State Technical College Harlingen in Harlingen, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby grants INITIAL APPROVAL of the Texas State Technical College Harlingen Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Harlingen, Texas, and imposes the following conditions/requirements:

1. The program shall not admit more than one (1) cohort of thirty (30) students each fall while on initial approval.

Entered this 20th day of July, 2017

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