

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status  
From Full Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval  
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 with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2017 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 was the Program Director for the VN program and was appointed in 2015. In February 2018, Mary T. Rivard, PhD, RNC-OB, was named the Interim Program Director.
- A program survey visit was conducted by Board Staff during 2017 due to low NCLEX-VN® pass rates for two subsequent years and warning status.

**Summary of Survey Findings**

**Positive Aspects of Survey Visit:**

- The program of study incorporates a variety of methods for course delivery strategies, including face-to-face instruction, flipping the classroom, and simulation.
- All clinical learning experiences are faculty supervised with hands-on direct-patient care in clinical settings. The program utilizes simulation to prepare students for clinical practice and for remediation.
- The program has a variety of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide a wide array of clinical learning experiences.

**Concerns of Survey Visit:**

- Cognitive levels of exams across the curriculum are in the lower domains of Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge, comprehension, application. The upper domains, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, are not utilized.

- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are included 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>
2017	Full With Warning	76.70%	79/103
2016	Full	74.49%	73/98
2015	Full	73.81%	93/126
2014	Full	80.15%	105/131
2013	Full	86.60%	84/97

- Due to the 2015 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 73.81%, the program submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2016. Although the program implemented measures to improve the performance of students on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate has continued to be below 80%.
- Among the five areas identified as needing change to affect the 2016 NCLEX-PN® pass rate were: 1) increasing the minimum passing score from 75 to 78%; 2) reassessing and revising re-entry policy for failures/withdrawals; 3) making attendance policy more rigorous; 4) increasing usage of simulation; and 5) encouraging faculty to develop exams rather than relying on test banks.
- Major areas needing corrective actions with accompanying time frames for implementation were identified in the SSR. Some of the corrective measures included: 1) increasing the minimum passing score from 75 to 78%; 2) reassessing and revising the re-entry policy for failures/withdrawals.; 3) adding rigor to the attendance policy; 4) implementing a remediation program; 5) increasing simulation use; 6) instructors developing exams; and 7) increasing minimum passing score to 78%.
- At the October 26-27, 2017 Board meeting, Board members accepted the report of the September 5-6, 2017 survey visit made to Vernon College at Wichita Falls Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Wichita Falls, Texas. Two requirements and one recommendation were issued to the program. The requirements were related to improving the physical environment of the classrooms and developing policies for faculty orientation. The recommendation focused on the development of exams with cognitive levels using the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy
- Although the program implemented corrective measures to improve the performance of VN graduates on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate continues to be below 80%. The 2017 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate was 76.70% with 79 of 103 candidates passing the licensing examination.
- In December 2017, 27 students graduated from the VN program. Of these 25 graduates have taken and passed the NCLEX-PN®, for a preliminary 100% pass rate for 2018. Two cohorts will graduate in 2018, the first in July, which has 96 students currently enrolled, and the second in August, which has 60 students currently enrolled.

**Rationale for Recommendations:**

Rule 214.4(c)(3)(B)(i) states: "A program may be placed on conditional approval status if the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-PN® candidates ... is less than 80% for three (3) consecutive examination years."

**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 with Warning to Conditional Approval and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (See Attachment #1).

Draft Letter

April 19, 2018

Mary T. Rivard, PhD, RNC-OB, Interim Director  
Vocational Education Program  
Vernon College at Wichita Falls  
4105 Maplewood Avenue  
Wichita Falls, Texas 76308

Dear Dr. Rivard:

At the April 19-20, 2018 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 2017 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, findings in the 2016 Self-Study Report, and areas for improvement to align with Rule 214.

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 with Warning to Conditional Approval and imposes the following conditions/requirements as indicated in the attached 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](mailto:susan.lee@bon.texas.gov) or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dusty R. Johnston, President  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges

**BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING**

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**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 19-20, 2018, 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 2017, 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, and other interested parties, if any, 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 WITH WARNING to CONDITIONAL APPROVAL and hereby imposes the following conditions/requirements:

1. The program shall not enroll students while on conditional approval status.
2. The program will remain on conditional approval status until the program demonstrates a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the 2018 NCLEX-PN® examination. The NCLEX-PN® examination year is January 1, 2018 through December 31, 2018.
3. The program must demonstrate full compliance with Rule 214 prior to consideration of a change in approval status.

Entered this 19th day of April, 2018

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