

**Report of Survey Visit to
 Trinity Valley Community College in Palestine, Texas
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the January 31, 2018 routine survey visit to Trinity Valley Community College(TVCC) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Palestine, Texas. Prior to this visit, a survey visit was conducted at TVCC VN Education Program in Kaufman, Texas. Separate reports are submitted as the curriculum is similar, but not identical, and each program has a separate program code. This routine survey visit was conducted by Education Consultant Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE. The previous survey visit was conducted in October 2012.

Historical Perspective:

- Trinity Valley Community College was founded in 1945 as Henderson County Junior College with the first classes conducted at Athens High School. By 1946, classes were moved to the main campus in Athens, TX. The college has additional campuses in Kaufman, Palestine, and Terrell. The Palestine campus was established in 1972. The VN Education Program in Palestine began in 1980. In 1986, the college name was changed to Trinity Valley Community College to reflect the five counties served.
- Trinity Valley Community College is accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). The most recent reaffirmation was in 2017, with no sanctions or negative actions. Trinity Valley Community College has a certificate of authority from Texas Higher Education Coordination Board (THECB).
- Within the Health Occupations Division, the VN and Emergency Medical Services (EMS) programs are offered in Palestine, TX. The VN Education program is offered at the Palestine Workforce Education Center. The EMS program is located on the main Palestine campus.
- Helen Reid, Ed.D, MSN, RN, CNE, FAADN, began as an ADN instructor on the Kaufman campus in 1983, and became the Dean of Health Occupations in 1990. In 2007, her title was changed to Provost of the Health Science Center.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the following table:

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2017	Full	100%	20/20
2016	Full	100%	13/13
2015	Full	88.46%	23/26
2014	Full	92.00%	23/25
2013	Full	100%	20/20

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):

Positive Aspects of Survey Visit:

- Helen Reid, Ed.D, MSN, RN, CNE, FAADN, Provost, Health Occupations Division, has overseen the VN program since 1990.
- Dr. Reid is an experienced leader whose objective is to apply leadership and management skills to attain effective, high-quality instructional programs that enhance the nursing profession.
- Elizabeth Starr, MSN, BSN, RN, has served as the VN Program Coordinator since 2016 She has taught with the VN program since 2010 and is experienced in medical/surgical nursing, intensive care, post-partum, day surgery, and oncology.
- Administration expressed support for the VN program and acknowledged it fulfills a need for VNs in the community.
- Students interviewed said they chose this program as it is affordable, the faculty are accessible and approachable, and it is close to home.
- The program of study incorporates various methods for course delivery, including lectures with PowerPoints, audiovisuals, group reports/projects, reading assignments, clinical assignments, written assignments, independent study, and handouts.
- Clinical learning experiences are faculty-supervised in a 1:10 ratio of faculty to students with hands-on direct-patient care in clinical settings or 1:12 when preceptors are used, and 1:7 in simulation and skills lab activities.
- The program has a variety of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide clinical learning experiences.
- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the local and surrounding areas including acute care hospitals, clinics, pediatrics, dialysis, and long term care facilities.
- Faculty development includes participation at the TVCC Learning Day each semester for full-time faculty, pertinent workshops, self-paced courses, and Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE), in addition to completing continuing education to maintain licensure.

Concerns of Survey Visit:

- None noted

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the January 31, 2018 survey visit to Trinity Valley Community College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Palestine, Texas (see Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit to
Trinity Valley Community College in Palestine, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: The survey visit was conducted as a routine survey visit.

Date of Visit: January 31, 2018

Board Staff Conducting Survey Visit: Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE, Education Consultant

Program Evaluator met with:

- Jerry King, Ed. D, President, Trinity Valley Community College
- Wendy Elmore, Ed. D, Vice President of Instruction
- Helen Reid, Ed. D, MSN, RN, CNE, FAADN, Provost Health Occupations Division
- Elizabeth Starr, MSN, BSN, RN, VN Program Coordinator
- Jennifer Collins, RN, Adjunct VN Program Faculty
- Sandra Roberson, BSN, RN, VN Program Faculty
- Sherry Landers, Administrative Assistant
- Three Vocational Nursing Students

Program Evaluator:

- held initial conference with Provost and administration;
- reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- reviewed the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook and Academic Catalog;
- reviewed the clinical evaluation tools and available clinical affiliation agreements;
- reviewed organizational chart and minutes of faculty meetings;
- reviewed 2017 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) and faculty profile;
- reviewed faculty and student files;
- reviewed Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and data;
- toured program facilities;
- observed a class in session; and
- conducted exit interview with administrators and provost.

Summary of Findings:

Administration and Organization:

- Administration indicated the nursing program fulfills a need in the local and surrounding community and has comparable status to other education units in the college.
 - The VN program in Palestine is included in the Trinity Valley Community College Organization Chart as part of Health Occupations Division, along with Emergency Medical Services.
 - The VN program is offered in Kaufman and Palestine, Texas using similar, but not identical, curriculum, and separate program codes.
 - Helen Reid, Ed. D, MSN, RN, began as the Kaufman VN Program Director in 1990, and became Dean in 2000. Later, in 2007, her title was changed to Provost of the Health Occupations Division.
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Program of Study:

- The full-time, 12-month program of study is designed to be completed in 3 semesters. One cohort is admitted annually in August.
- The program is comprised of a total of 1840 clock hours: 560 didactic hours and 1280 clinical hours.
- The program of study includes all Board required content.
- The foundation of the conceptual framework consists of students, patient, community, learning, and nursing with the student and patient being the central focus of the VN curriculum. Seven major concepts, caring, competency, collaboration, cultural sensitivity, patient advocacy, critical thinking, and community form the central framework. Nursing process, nursing roles, health care needs, ethical/legal considerations, and pharmacological considerations are threaded across the curriculum. WECM course descriptions and learning outcomes are included in the syllabi, along with a course outline.
- The majority of skills are front loaded in the first semester. The curriculum includes Intravenous (IV) therapy.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS)* (2010) are incorporated into the curriculum.
- The teaching model is based upon a continuous improvement model in face-to-face Monday through Friday classes. Teaching methods include lectures with PowerPoints, audiovisuals, group reports/projects, reading assignments, clinical assignments, written assignments, independent study, handouts, and lecture.
- Students expressed that the syllabi and instruction are effective, sharing that the faculty demonstrate caring.
- Test blueprints identify critical thinking and clinical problem solving, caring/communication/documentation, patient needs, nursing process, nursing diagnosis, patient care prioritization, lab data, and medications. Cognitive levels in the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy, such as application, analysis, and evaluation, are also evident in test blueprints.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for progression and remediation with a comprehensive predictor exam administered in one of the final semester courses. The syllabi and school policy allow the students three attempts to pass the comprehensive predictor. If students are not successful, remediation is offered. High-stakes standardized testing is not used for graduation purposes.
- Tutoring is provided before and after classes, along with one-to-one focused tutorials and unit exam reviews.

Faculty:

- Elizabeth Starr, MSN, BSN, RN, has served as the VN Program Coordinator since 2016. She has taught with the VN program since 2010 and is experienced in medical/surgical nursing, intensive care, post-partum, day surgery, and oncology. In the fall, Ms. Starr teaches Nutrition, Medical/Surgical Nursing, and Pharmacology. In the spring, Ms. Starr teaches Maternal/neonatal and professional development.
- In addition to Ms. Starr, one full-time faculty teaches in the VN program. At the time of the survey visit, there were no faculty vacancies.
- The faculty is a stable, cohesive group of individuals who have been with the program from two to 21 years.

- Faculty are comprised of experienced nurses in the area of teaching. Faculty are diverse in content expertise and clinical backgrounds.
- VN faculty workload is 37½ hours per week in Fall, Spring, and Summer. Load hours include actual face-to-face time with students, course or exam preparation, office hours for student conferences, and committee work. For clinical, skills lab, and simulation, one load hour is equivalent to one hour of actual clinical time.
- Faculty members are actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation for their courses, and serve on institutional and Health Science Center committees, such as Health Safety and Secure Environment and the Grievance Committee.
- Interrater reliability is ensured as faculty each grade the same assignment and discuss the results.
- Faculty development includes participation at the TVCC Learning Day each semester for full-time faculty, pertinent workshops, self-paced courses, and Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE), in addition to completing continuing education to maintain licensure.
- Two faculty members, the coordinator, and the administrative assistant were available for interview.
- Faculty policies are in place per BON requirement.
- Orientation is provided for new full-time nursing faculty members at the onset of employment. Adjunct faculty are invited to attend faculty meetings and are assigned to full-time faculty who keep them informed, and up-dated on pertinent information.
- Faculty meetings are held as needed for smooth functioning of the team and include discussion and problem solving, clarification of duties, and analysis of tests and results. Minutes document faculty participation in curriculum development, program policy development and implementation, program evaluation, and evaluation of clinical affiliates.
- Evaluation methods include student evaluations of instruction after each course, self and peer evaluations, and annual director-conducted evaluations of faculty.

Students:

- The program admits one cohort into the program in August each year. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants. The program has the capacity to admit 40 students annually. In August 2017, 24 students were admitted from an applicant pool of 36 qualified candidates. In August 2016, 25 students were admitted from an applicant pool of 40 qualified candidates and 20 students graduated (75%).
- At the time of the survey visit, 21 students were in the second semester of the program and are scheduled to graduate in August 2018. Three students were interviewed.
- Students interviewed said they chose this program as it is affordable, the faculty are accessible and approachable, and it is close to home.
- Students cited challenges as the fast pace of the program makes it difficult to keep up, everyday life, having young children at home, cost of day care, and travel.
- Students acknowledged faculty are available to assist students with tutoring, exam review, and remediation.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students, and include honesty, non-discrimination, health and safety, communicable disease, blood/body fluid exposure, medication error and incident, grievance, due process, civility, safe harbor, social media, and drug screening. Additionally, information regarding admission, progression,

mobility/articulation, dismissal, and criminal background checks are also available to students.

- Three student representatives are nominated and elected by the students to organize student and community events, attend faculty meetings, serve as role models, and liaise with faculty to problem-solve.
- Two of the students plan to continue their educations to obtain an ADN. Most of the students plan to stay in the community after graduation, indicating they hope to obtain employment in acute care hospitals, home health agencies, clinics, and physician's offices.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with eight affiliating agencies (e.g. long-term care, physician's offices, schools, a summer camp, and acute care hospitals) that provide a variety of clinical learning experiences to meet the objectives and outcomes of the curriculum. All partner medical facilities for clinical learning experiences are within 35 miles of Palestine and Athens.
- The VN students have opportunities to participate in simulated experiences. The simulation/skills lab is equipped with two programmable and six low-fidelity mannequins, task trainers, oxygen and suction, eight hospital beds, medication dispensers, and hot and cold running water. The students expressed a desire for additional supplies, indicating some supplies are repackaged. The lab is shared with an evening certified nurse assistant and phlebotomy program. IV therapy is taught as part of the clinical learning experiences.
- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintains BON required ratios. Preceptors are utilized in the VN education program when faculty have 11 or 12 students after the first semester. Written criteria for selecting qualified preceptors is provided to faculty, along with written agreements between the preceptor, affiliating agency, and VN program.
- Clinical learning experiences correlate with didactic content.
- General clinical rules and a policy for "Criteria for Unsafe Clinical Performance" are included in the student handbook, along with a signed acknowledgment.
- Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined.
- The clinical evaluation tools are progressive and are based upon course content and the DEC's. Clinical evaluation tools include formative and summative evaluations throughout the program.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The Palestine campus is approximately 40 miles from the main campus in Athens and 83 miles from the Kaufman campus.
- Facilities on Palestine campus include restrooms, faculty and student lounges, and study areas. A public library, testing center, peer tutoring, counseling, and financial aid are available on campus and students have 24-hour access to online resources. Study skills tutoring are available through the counseling department one day each week. Students also work in study groups.
- Computer resources, and a student retention coordinator are available on campus.
- There is ample, open parking available adjacent to the program building.
- The program coordinator and full-time faculty have furnished, private offices.
- The VN program classroom and the eight-bed nursing skills laboratory are spacious and equipped. Several mannequins and simulation models are available for instructional

purposes in the skills lab.

- One shared program assistant provides adequate secretarial support to the VN program.
- Dr. Reid indicated that resources are adequate to meet teaching needs.

Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, official transcripts, employment contracts, job descriptions, and performance appraisals.
- Student files include signed counseling acknowledgements, signed Student Handbook receipts, clearance of criminal background checks, statements of financial services, emergency contact information, VN program selection process, application, transcripts, academic achievement records, textbook receipts, degree plans, and evaluations of skills competencies.
- The budget includes faculty salaries; travel and conference expenses; student insurance; testing, screening, and assessment costs; books, subscriptions and periodicals; and consumables.
- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, which includes evaluative criteria, methodology of assessment, frequency of evaluation, responsibility and documentation of annual evaluation and planned actions. These are used for decision making.
- The faculty meet at least once a year with the Kaufman campus faculty to evaluate the curriculum, suggest changes, review the VN handbook, philosophy, mission, goals, objectives, policies, and procedures. The community advisory committee meets every six months and the curriculum committee meets as needed.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.
- Files are locked and stored in a secure area as required in Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

April 19, 2018

Helen Reid, Ed. D, MSN, RN, CNE, FAADN, Provost
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Trinity Valley Community College
PO Box 2530
Palestine, TX 75802

Dear Dr. Reid:

At the April 19, 2018 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the January 31, 2018 survey visit to Trinity Valley Community College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Palestine, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the January 31, 2018 survey visit to Trinity Valley Community College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Palestine, Texas.

If you have any questions, please contact Board Staff at susan.lee@bon.texas.gov or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

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

copy: Jerry King, Ed.D, MBA, President, Trinity Valley Community College