

**Report of Survey Visit
Howard College in San Angelo, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the September 24-25, 2018 regular survey visit to Howard College in San Angelo, Texas Vocational Nursing Education and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs.

Historical Perspective:

- The history of Howard College (HC) dates back to 1945. In 1980 the college assumed operation of a vocational nursing (VN) program from the San Angelo Independent School District which began their offerings in nursing education.
- Today HC in San Angelo operates a long-standing, successful VN program and an Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program with a generic two-year track and an accelerated LVN-to-ADN track approved by the Board in 2016.
- HC in San Angelo has a main campus for San Angelo and a separate site for many health disciplines located in rented space (26,766 square feet) at the Shannon Medical Center St. John's Campus that includes a working hospital with a skilled nursing, rehabilitation center, infusion clinic, wound clinic, dialysis clinic, and behavioral health facility. The other health programs at this site are Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care, Surgical Technology, and Emergency Medical Sciences labs.
- The total enrollment at HC San Angelo is 2,862 students in many disciplines but the most popular majors are health disciplines, especially nursing.
- The main campus for HC is located in Big Spring, about 80 miles away, which also houses ADN and VN programs.
- The NCLEX examination pass rates for the two programs are provided in the tables below:

NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rates for VN Program

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	Pass Rates	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2017	Full	100%	19/19
2016	Full	100%	15/15
2015	Full	92.31%	12/13
2014	Full	95.65%	22/23
2013	Full	100%	41/41

NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rates for ADN Program

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	Pass Rates	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2017	Full	83.33%	15/18
2016	New Program		

- The survey visit was coordinated to meet the requirements for a six-year visit to the VN program and the first regular survey visit to the newly established ADN program. Thus, many of the survey meetings were combined.

Findings from the Survey Visit:

(See Survey Visit Reports in Attachment #1.)

Pros and Cons from the Survey Visit:

Pros:

- The general consensus from everyone interviewed (Dean, faculty, students) is that teamwork is a major aspect in the nursing programs.
- The location of the nursing programs in the Shannon Medical Center St. John's Site has positive and negative aspects. Positive aspects are: education in a real-live hospital with patients in-house gives an atmosphere of a health care setting.
- Students praised the faculty and their teaching in classroom and clinical settings. Students are aware that they receive clinical learning in exceptional settings.

Cons:

- A negative aspect of the nursing programs' location in the Shannon Medical Center St. John's Site is the limitation of physical space, making it challenging to schedule all programs and classes. Though the community is clamoring for more nursing graduates, programs are basically at capacity due to classroom and lab space. Students are located at a distance from the main campus causing a feeling of isolation. The other campus is unaware of their presence much of the time. The library and student services are located on the main campus.
- Both programs are functioning with a minimal number of full-time faculty and a limited number of adjuncts. The most critical faculty need is at least one more full-time faculty in the ADN program.
- These successful nursing programs are not well-known in the San Angelo community.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of findings of the September 24-25, 2018 survey visit to the Howard College Vocational Nursing and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs in San Angelo, Texas, and issue the recommendation in the attached letter (Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit
Howard College in San Angelo, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: Routine survey visit

Date of Survey Visit: September 24-25, 2018

Board Staff Conducting Visit: Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE and Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, ANEF

Education Consultants met with:

Marnita Jo Guinn, PhD, RN, Director of the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Program

Faleasha L. Moutry, RN, CCRN, Director of the Vocational Nursing (VN) Program

Michelle Trubenstein, AAS, BAT, RRT, MHA, Dean of Health Professions

38 VN students

57 ADN students

VN faculty:

- Britnee Brandt, BSN, RN
- Cassandra Henderson, BSN, RN
- Erin Martinez, BSN, RN

ADN faculty:

- Susann Brundrett, FNP, RN
- Thomas Rodriguez, MSN, RN

Adjuncts, Clinical Teaching Assistants:

- Marianne Simpson, RN
- Manuel Tobias, BSN, RN

Pam Callan, MA, MS, Administrative Dean for Instruction and Student Services

Education Consultants reviewed:

- Curriculum and all syllabi;
- Faculty and Student Handbooks;
- Exams, test blue prints, and item analysis data;
- Clinical evaluation tools;
- Student and faculty files;
- Clinical agreements;
- Faculty minutes;
- Student assignments;
- Student journals and care plans;
- Student learning packets for all courses;
- Total Program Evaluation Plan;
- Scheduling tables; and
- Historical information about the programs.

Education Consultants:

Visited two classes in session (one VN and one ADN);

Toured all areas in the health disciplines area at Shannon Medical Center St. John's Site; and

Conducted exit interview at close of survey visit.

Summary of Findings:

Administration:

- The administration expressed support for the nursing programs and their awareness of the need for more nurses in the community. There is no other VN program and no other ADN program in the area. Angelo State University provides education for nurses to earn a BSN, but HC provides an opportunity for students who are unable to commit to a four-year degree plan.
- Ms. Trubenstein, Dean of Health Professions, indicated that the nursing programs are a vital part of the HC system and that the nursing programs share space and equipment with the other health programs. All of the health disciplines also participate in interdisciplinary reality simulation activities (e.g., simulated community trauma day).
- Faleasha Moutry, VN Director, has been in the role for two years and is a graduate of the VN program at HC. Dr. Guinn attested to the excellent working relationship between the two program directors and the value of the support she receives from Ms. Moutry.
- Dr. Marneta Guinn, ADN Program Director, authored the proposal for the new ADN program and demonstrates strong organizational skills and commitment to the program.
- One administrative assistant serves all the health programs. Indications are that this organizational structure is adequate.
- Even though the community is clamoring for more graduates from the nursing programs (especially the ADN program), three major factors are barriers to their growth: faculty, facilities, and funding. These three "f's" surfaced many times in the discussion of HC's importance to the community and the possibility of meeting their potential for growth and their ability to meet community needs. The issues around each of these three factors were discussed and most revolve around the basis for funding for the college and its location in Tom Green County, a county with no tax base. Currently the programs are managing with a minimal number of nursing faculty in very crowded spaces.
- Pam Callan, MA, MS, Administrative Dean for Instruction and Student Services, attended the exit interview in person and Dr. Cheryl Sparks, HC President, participated by conference call. Both verbalized support for the nursing programs.

Program of Study:

- Board Staff attended class sessions for the VN and ADN programs. Palliative care nursing was the topic of discussion in the VN class and was presented by the faculty in a sensitive and caring manner. The ADN class was focused on mental health but the topic for discussion was communication. Both faculty used power point slides. Presentations were logically organized, interesting, informative, and they engaged the students.
- The curricula for both programs are sound and the content is developed in a progressive format, moving from simple to complex. Syllabi provide thorough guidance for students and Student Learning Packets accompany every syllabus.
- Faculty engage in ongoing evaluation of the program of study and decisions about changes were documented in the faculty minutes.
- Board Staff reviewed numerous notebooks with test items for each class, blueprints for students to prepare for examinations, and data on item analysis for each test item.

- Samples of student papers and assignments were provided among items for Board Staff review. Of particular interest were samples of reflective journaling by students about their patient care experiences. These journal entries allow faculty to evaluate the affective domain of student learning.
- Fifty-seven ADN and 38 VN students participated in the student interviews. All students expressed satisfaction with both programs, even stating that HC offers a caring environment mostly due to the committed faculty.
- The VN program is a one-year program using a three-level approach. A new cohort is admitted once each year. The prerequisite courses may be transferred or taken at the HC main campus.
- The ADN program offers two tracks: a generic two-year track and an accelerated track for Licensed Vocational Nurses to earn an ADN and apply to take the NCLEX-RN® examination. Many HC VN graduates continue their education at HC to become RNs.
- The VN program is presented in a face-to-face format. The first year of the ADN program is face-to-face and the second year is online with labs and clinicals under faculty supervision.
- The space at the Shannon Medical Center St. John's Site houses programs in nursing, Radiologic Technology, Respiratory Care, Surgical Technology, and Emergency Medical Sciences labs with numerous simulation and skill labs, computer labs, classrooms, and an auditorium. The physical space is limited and scheduling all programs with the shared space is tedious; Dr. Guinn spends countless hours with the scheduling challenges. Limited space is one of the significant barriers to growth.

Faculty:

- Instruction in the HC nursing programs is an example of extending a few faculty members to meet great needs. The VN program has two full-time and two part-time faculty members. The ADN program has two full-time MSN-prepared faculty members, one regular part-time faculty, and two part-time faculty who "fill-in" where there are needs. There is also one Clinical Teaching Assistant/Student Success faculty helper. The full-time faculty provide all didactic content.
- The immediate faculty need is for one more full-time faculty for the ADN program. An application for a faculty position arrived during the survey visit.
- The secret of the success of the faculty is teamwork and good relationships among faculty and staff.
- Faculty backgrounds in the practice areas validate they are a highly-skilled group.
- Faculty are available to students even during off-hours.
- The Faculty Handbooks are individual for each program and include required policies in Rule 214.7 and Rule 215.7.

Students:

- The following data presents current enrollment of students in both programs:

ADN	1 st year generic students	18
	2 nd year generic students	19
	LVN to ADN students	20
VN	Current Cohort	38
- There were 38 ADN graduates in the last class and 19 VN graduates.
- There is pressure from the community to admit more students but the barriers remain as the need for faculty, funding, and facilities (space).

- VN students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of the desire to become a nurse, strong reputation of the program, low tuition costs, and location.
- The ADN students offered similar reasons for enrolling in HC. Additionally, the ADN students currently employed as LVNs shared that their positive experiences with HC graduates and students in their workplaces provided a strong incentive to attend HC.
- The second year of the ADN Program is offered in an online format. Students acknowledged the flexibility of the online method of delivery but stated they appreciate and value face-to-face time with faculty and peers.
- Students recognized faculty as being available to assist with ensuring student success. Students are provided timely responses by faculty to their questions and concerns.
- Student policies are documented, well-defined, and available to students. Students stated they know how to locate specific policies and these policies appear to be enforced in a fair, objective manner.
- One of the admission requirements for the ADN and VN programs is that the applicant is a Certified Nurse Aide (CNA). Students applauded this requirement indicating they are more ready for the health care environment as CNAs.
- Students expressed great appreciation for the excellent clinical experiences they are getting in the programs.
- It was reported that the nursing programs turn away about 30 highly qualified students each year.
- Each program has a student representative as a liaison with faculty and administration.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- HC has excellent opportunities for clinical learning experiences for students in both programs. When many VN programs are struggling to find any experiences in maternity and pediatrics, hospitals in the San Angelo area welcome the HC students for clinical experiences.
- A new contract with the Goodfellow Air Force Base Clinic has been signed.
- Preceptors are used in the ADN program in the second year and VN program in the spring.
- The St. John's Site is in a hospital building that has been modified to house the health professions programs but also provides actual care for in-house rehabilitation patients, skilled nursing, an infusion clinic, a wound clinic, a dialysis unit, and behavioral health facility. These provide practice areas for the students, though they are only one of the clinical settings.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:



- There were positive and negative comments about their location in the Shannon Medical Center. Though there is a general opinion that there are advantages in being a part of a real hospital setting, the students lose touch with the main campus environment and fear the community is less familiar with their existence.

- Though the rented spaces provide 26,766 square feet for numerous simulation labs, computer labs, and classrooms, careful attention is devoted to scheduling classes and labs for all the health disciplines. The nursing programs appear to be at capacity, purely due to students filling the spaces.
- Updating internet infrastructure at this site is an urgent need, and HC is well aware that the current infrastructure creates problems for computer testing and the use of the internet when all are on campus. This issue is under consideration.
- At times there are not enough computers to meet the demand, especially for testing.
- Comments were voiced about the need for more equipment or for more modern equipment. Health care facilities in the area often donate items when they are replacing them with more modern equipment.
- The library is located on the main campus.
- Students commented that there are areas on the main campus that could be used for student study groups.
- All student services are available on the main campus. Since most students have taken classes on the main campus, all seem to be familiar with the location and facilities there.
- Each director has a private office and VN faculty share offices.

Records and Reports:

- Student and faculty files are maintained in a secure area. Student files were orderly and complete.
- Clinical agreements are current.
- The Total Program Evaluation Plan was provided to Board Staff for review. Minutes indicated that faculty make decisions based upon program data.

Summary of Exit Interview:

The exit interview not only reviewed findings from the meetings with directors, faculty, and students, but also attempted to summarize the potentials for future development in the nursing programs to meet the needs of the community.

Conclusions from Interviews:

- The community has voiced a need for more nurses from HC.
- Representatives from the Goodfellow Air Force Base have expressed interest in a nursing track for military.
- HC has excellent relationships with the community, health care facilities, and Angelo State University.
- Three main reasons HC cannot take more nursing students:
 - Need for faculty
 - Need for funding
 - Need for facilities (space and equipment)

Dr. Guinn asked an important question about whether the ADN program should seek national nursing accreditation which led to discussion during the exit interview. Board Staff provided information about the pros and cons of accreditation, and explained that nursing accreditation is not mandated in Texas but is voluntary. Deciding to begin the process of seeking nursing accreditation would guide in setting priorities for the nursing programs since ensuring that adequate resources are available becomes more relevant.

Suggestions included: (these are only suggestions – not requirements)

- Develop a plan to bolster community support and make HC nursing programs more visible;
- Seek possibilities for additional funding;
- Review accreditation standards and requirements to determine if the time is right for pursuing accreditation;
- Recruit at least one additional full-time nursing faculty for the ADN program;
- Delegate some responsibilities of the ADN Director to allow time for study and planning;
- Choose major goals carefully in order to successfully meet them; and
- Consider new opportunities for nursing education in the community (e.g., military track).

DRAFT

October 29, 2018

Marnita Jo Guinn, PhD, RN, Director, Associate Degree Nursing
Faleasha L. Moutry, RN, CCRN, Director, Vocational Nursing
Howard College – San Angelo
3501 N. US Highway 67
San Angelo, TX 76905

Dear Dr. Guinn and Ms. Moutry:

At the October 25-26, 2018 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the survey visit to the Howard College Vocational Nursing Education and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs in San Angelo, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit conducted September 24-25, 2018, and issue the recommendation below.

Recommendation #1:

During the survey visit, Board Staff were informed of the strong need in the community for more Registered Nurses and the desire of the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program to obtain national nursing accreditation. Before any growth in enrollment is planned or the ADN Program begins any accreditation activities, it is recommended that an additional full-time faculty member be added to the ADN Program faculty.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rule. The program must respond in a method of the program's choice.

We wish you continued success with the programs. If you have questions, or if we may be of assistance, please contact Board Staff at virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov or 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dr. Cheryl Sparks, President