Report of Survey Visit
Texas State Technical College in Sweetwater, Texas
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program

Summary of Request:
Consider the report of the May 29-30, 2019 regular survey visit to Texas State Technical College West Texas (TSTC) Associate Degree Nursing Education (ADN) program in Sweetwater, Texas.

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.
- In 2016, the decision was made to integrate all 10 TSTC campuses in order to standardize operations and programs to better serve the state.
- TSTC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC).
- TSTC Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)-to-ADN program in Sweetwater was established in 2007 and is an online program with clinical experiences and skills/simulation laboratories having direct faculty supervision.
- Other nursing programs on TSTC campus sites are in Harlingen and Brownwood. These are independent programs from TSTC in Sweetwater.
- TSTC Sweetwater offers 12 Allied Health programs, Associate of Applied Science degrees and certificates.
- Lisa Van Cleave, EdD, MSN, RN, CCRN-E, Program Chair for the LVN-to-ADN (ADN) program, was approved by the Board in August, 2018, has a doctorate in educational leadership, and has over 15 years of nursing education experience. Dr. Van Cleave served as program faculty prior to her appointment.
- There have been 11 different program directors in a 10-year period.
- The last routine ADN program survey visit was conducted in November, 2011.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NCLEX Examination Year</th>
<th>BON Approval Status</th>
<th>Pass Rates</th>
<th>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2018</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>80.82%</td>
<td>59/73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2017</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>93.06%</td>
<td>67/72</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2016</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>76.00%</td>
<td>57/75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>88.89%</td>
<td>32/36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>Full</td>
<td>89.47%</td>
<td>34/38</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Due to the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 76.00%, the previous Program Director and faculty members were required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) to evaluate factors that may have contributed to the graduates’ performance on the NCLEX-RN® examination and a description of corrective measures to be implemented.

The previous Program Director and faculty members identified the following corrective measures:

- Prioritize faculty development funds in the yearly budget to develop simulation skills to utilize for remediation, evaluation of learning, clinical hours and clinical practice sessions;
- Increase the rigor of admission, readmission, and graduation criteria;
- Implement grading rubrics for each course assignment and continuously evaluate the need for updating;
- Review policies, revise handbooks and ensure adherence to policies;
- Align coursework and clinical experiences to consistently meet student learning needs;
- Enforce testing security measure policy on a consistent basis; and
- Revise clinical evaluation tools and develop rubrics to better evaluate clinical proficiency, skills, and documentation.

These efforts for improvement have been successful as evidenced by the 93.06% pass rate for 2017 and the 80.82% pass rate for 2018.

Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN conducted survey visits to both the ADN and VN Education Programs at TSTC on May 29-30, 2019.

Summary of Survey Findings:
See survey visit report in Attachment #1.

Positive Aspects of Survey Visit:

- Lisa Van Cleave, EdD, RN, Program Chair for the LVN-to-ADN (ADN) program, was approved by the Board in August, 2018, has a doctorate in educational leadership, and has over 15 years of nursing education experience.
- Administration is highly supportive, continuously evaluates the needs of the program and understands the nursing faculty and nursing shortage.
- Faculty are well-qualified, dedicated, integrated into TSTC activities, a cohesive group, function as a team and stated they help each other whenever needed.
- Faculty Development consists of institution wide workshops, online teaching training as well as nursing specific webinars, speakers brought to the college, online modules, and attendance at conferences.
- Students enrolled in the ADN program because of the online delivery of didactic content, the flexibility of the curriculum that allows one to work and go to school, the good reputation, the cost including out of state tuition, the easy transition from the TSTC VN program, the faculty availability and one-on-one assistance, the feeling that the whole college is fully supportive of students, and the high practice standards of graduates.
- The program was awarded grant money to fund the development and implementation of a simulation laboratory.
- Clinical affiliation agencies are abundant and provide rich clinical learning experiences.
Concerns of Survey Visit

- The faculty handbook does not contain the director and faculty job descriptions as required.
- Verbal and written information on Board Rule 213.27 and Rule 213.28 that must be provided to students about licensure eligibility is not current in the student handbook.
- The clinical evaluation tools do not correlate with level clinical objectives, are identical and do not indicate progression across the curriculum. Several competencies on the tools refer to a focused patient assessment instead of a comprehensive patient assessment which is the role of a professional nurse.
- A full-time assistant serves as administrative and clerical support for all allied health programs. Board staff discussed this as a concern since the directors and faculty are required to assist with student registration and advising for students not yet enrolled in the program which limits their focus on program needs.
- There is limited evidence regarding decision making related to the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) in faculty meeting minutes.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #1:
Rule 215.7(b)(2) related to a nursing faculty handbook states, “Personnel policies shall include position descriptions for all members of the nursing program (including the director/coordinator) outlining the qualifications and responsibilities directly related to the nursing program.” The faculty handbook is in place but lacks the program director and faculty job descriptions.

Requirement #1:
The program shall ensure that the nursing faculty handbook contains position descriptions for the director and faculty outlining their qualifications and responsibilities directly related to the nursing program and submit the updated faculty handbook to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #2:
Rule 215.8(c)(1) and 215.8(c)(2) regarding verbal and written required information that must be provided to students about licensure eligibility states, “Texas Occupations Code §§301.252, 301.257 and 301.452 – 310.469; and Sections 213.27 – 213.30 of this title (relating to Good Professional Character, Licensure of Individuals with Criminal History, Fitness to Practice and Declaratory Order of Eligibility for Licensure).” Copies of Board Rule 213.27 and Rule 213.28 that are printed in the student handbook are not current.

Requirement #2:
The program shall ensure that Board Rule 213.27 and Rule 213.28 that are printed in the student handbook are current and submit a copy of the updated student handbook to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #3:
Rule 215.10(f) states, “Clinical evaluation tools shall be correlated with level and/or course objectives and shall include a minimum of a formative and summative evaluation for each clinical in the curriculum.” The clinical evaluation tools include formative and summative evaluations for clinical courses but do not correlate with level clinical objectives. All clinical evaluation tools are identical and do not indicate progression across the curriculum. Several competencies on the tools refer to a focused patient assessment instead of a comprehensive patient assessment which is the role of a professional nurse.
Requirement #3:
The program shall ensure that clinical evaluation tools correlate with level clinical objectives, indicate progression across the curriculum and reflect professional nursing competencies and submit copies of the revised clinical evaluation tools to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #4:
Rule 215.11(c) states that the director/coordinator and faculty shall have adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program. A full-time assistant serves as administrative and clerical support for all allied health programs. Board staff discussed this as a concern since the directors and faculty are required to assist with student registration and advising for students not yet enrolled in the program which limits their focus on program needs.

Requirement #4:
The administration shall develop an action plan to provide adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program and submit the plan to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

Staff Rationale for Requirement #5:
Rule 215.13(c) related to the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) states, “Implementation of the plan for total program evaluation shall be documented in the minutes.” The Total Program Evaluation (TPE) is available with limited evidence of decision-making in faculty meeting minutes. Some outcomes are documented on the TPE document with partial information and no dates for changes made.

Requirement #5:
The program shall document decision-making in meeting minutes indicating the Total Program Evaluation Plan has been implemented according to the written plan and submit this evidence to Board Staff no later than January 31, 2019.

Staff Recommendation:
Move to accept the report of findings from the May 29-30, 2019 survey visit to the Texas State Technical College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Sweetwater, Texas and issue the requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (see attachment #2).
Summary of Survey Visit
Texas State Technical College in Sweetwater, Texas
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program

Purpose of Survey Visit: Routine Survey Visit
Date of Survey Visit: May 29-30, 2019
Board Staff Conducting Visit: Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Nursing Consultant for Education

Education Consultant met with:
- Administrators:
  - Rick Denbow, Provost
  - Lance Eastman, Vice President of Student Learning
  - Andy Weaver, L.P., AAS EMS, Division Chair/EMS Director
  - Lisa Van Cleave, EdD, MSN, RN, CCRN-E, Program Director
- ADN Faculty
  - Charlene Rice, MSN, RN, CMSRN
  - Linnea Brown, MSN, RN
  - Ashley Thompson, MSN, RN
  - Jamie Miller, MSN, RN
  - Lindsay Schwartz, MSN, RN, part-time
- Six ADN students

Education Consultant reviewed:
- Curriculum plan and all syllabi;
- Faculty & Student Handbooks;
- Clinical evaluation tools and clinical affiliation agreements;
- Faculty and student files;
- Total Program Evaluation Plan (TPE) and data;
- Faculty meeting minutes; and
- 2018 Nursing Education Program Information Surveys (NEPIS)

Education Consultant:
- held initial conference with administration;
- toured program facilities;
- observed a class in session; and
- conducted an exit interview with administrators.

Summary of Findings:
Administration:
- Lisa Van Cleave, EdD, MSN, RN, CCRN-E, Program Chair for the ADN program, was approved by the Board in August, 2018, has a doctorate in educational leadership, and has over 15 years of nursing education experience.
Dr. Van Cleave served as program faculty prior to assuming the administrative role. She is well qualified to administer the program and is accountable for the planning, implementation, and evaluation of the ADN nursing program.

Administration indicated the ADN program adds substantial value to the college and has a broad student population from a large geographical area in Texas and bordering states due to the hybrid nature of the program.

Administration is highly supportive, continuously evaluates the needs of the program and understands the nursing faculty and nursing shortage.

Dr. Van Cleave indicated she is fully supported by administration and has the authority to direct the ADN program in all phases. She carries a teaching load of three semester credit hours (SCH) each semester.

Faculty:

The ADN program instruction is carried out by four full-time faculty and five part-time faculty. At the time of the survey visit, there were two vacant full-time faculty positions and the school is actively recruiting and interviewing qualified candidates.

Full-time faculty workload is 40 hours per week on a 12-month contract. Load hours include a combination of classroom and clinical teaching, student tutoring and remediation, office hours, preparation time, and committee/curriculum work.

One lead instructor is designated to procure contracts with clinical agencies, to evaluate clinical agencies along with faculty, to schedule clinical experiences, and to maintain a collaborative relationship with clinical sites. The lead instructor currently teaches and provides clinical coordination. When vacant faculty positions are filled, this person’s teaching load will be decreased.

Faculty members offer a rich diversity in their education and experiential backgrounds. Three are new to teaching. One has been at TSTC less than four years, one less than three years, and one less than two years.

One faculty member is pursuing becoming a Certified Nurse Educator (CNE) and several others are planning to pursue this certification. They indicated this will become a requirement for ADN faculty at TSTC.

New faculty indicated orientation is college wide and nursing department specific that is structured and individualized with an assigned nursing faculty mentor. The faculty handbook indicates the structure of the orientation.

Faculty members are typically actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Faculty indicated they are able to spend a minimum amount of time on curriculum development at this time due to the faculty shortage.

Faculty meetings are held every two weeks on a regular basis, minutes of meetings are maintained. There is limited documentation that faculty committee members are involved in planning and decision-making.

Faculty Development consists of institution wide workshops, online teaching training as well as nursing specific webinars, speakers brought to the college, online modules, and attendance at conferences. Faculty may apply for tuition and registration fee assistance from the college.

Faculty are well-qualified, dedicated, integrated into TSTC activities, a cohesive group, function as a team and stated they help each other whenever needed.

The faculty handbook lacks the program director and faculty job descriptions which are Board required content in rule 215.7.
• Board Staff suggested to Dr. Van Cleave that she register all students and faculty in the e-notify program to prevent nurses from experiencing an expiration of their licenses.

**Students:**
• At the time of the survey visit, there were 31 Level I students, 40 Level II students and 32 Level III students enrolled in the program. Twenty-five students graduated in April 2019 and the next graduation is scheduled in August 2019.
• The ADN program admits one cohort every Fall, Spring and Summer semester. The new cohort is scheduled to begin in August, 2019.
• Student policies are written, well-defined, provided to all students during orientation and lack updated Board required content. Copies of Board Rule 213.27 titled Professional Character and Rule 213.28 titled Licensure of Persons with Criminal Offenses that are printed in the student handbook are not current.
• Students have an active student governance, the Student Advisory Committee, with three student representatives from each cohort elected by their peers. This committee provides a formal mechanism for student input into the Nursing Education Program. The representatives are expected to provide input regarding the curriculum, student policies, and student concerns, and report results to their peers.
• Students stated they enrolled in the ADN program because of the online delivery of didactic content, the flexibility of the curriculum that allows one to work and go to school, the good reputation, the cost including out of state tuition, the easy transition from the TSTC VN program, the faculty availability and one-on-one assistance, the feeling that the whole college is fully supportive of students, and the high practice standards of graduates.
• Students drive from all over the state and surrounding states to participate in program clinical learning experiences. The flexible scheduling of clinical time is based upon the distance one has to travel to clinical sites.
• Students cited challenges as managing time to complete the numerous assignments during Level I, juggling family, work and school, adjusting to different instructors in Level I and standardized testing.
• The program has implemented mandatory remediation and tutoring that involves active participation of both student and faculty members. Any student making a score of less than 80 on an exam is placed on academic alert and a remediation plan is initiated. The program plans to elevate the mandatory remediation score to less than 85.
• Students have input into faculty evaluations by completing a faculty and course evaluation at the end of each course.

**Program of Study:**
• The ADN program is a 12 month, three-semester full-time program, consisting of 12 semester credit hours (SCH) each semester for a total of 36 SCH. If the student is beginning with general education courses, the time frame for the program is five semesters.
• The ADN Nursing Education Program utilizes an online teaching-learning environment. The course didactic content is delivered online through TSTC’s Learning Management System (LMS).
• All exams are computer based, administered at testing sites throughout the state, and proctored.
• One faculty member provided a demonstration for Board staff in the skills laboratory related to an obstetrics simulator. Faculty explained how this is utilized for student learning.
• Test blue prints are available online for all exams in each course.
• The curriculum for the ADN program indicates leveling of nursing content, advancing in difficulty from simple to complex.
• The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS)(2010) are incorporated into the curriculum as evidenced in the syllabi.
• Standardized testing is used throughout the program for progression, remediation, and graduation purposes.
• Future plans: The ADN program has received grant funds for a state of the art simulation laboratory to be utilized for the ADN students and for combined nursing discipline simulations with VN students.

Clinical Learning Experiences:
• TSTC ADN program has active clinical contracts with a variety of clinical agencies including acute care hospitals, long term care, residential care homes, schools, psychiatric, and home health in Sweetwater, Abilene, Midland, Lubbock, Eastland and other surrounding areas.
• Students practice in the skills lab with manikins and a simulator prior to providing hands-on care in the clinical setting.
• Student assignments correlate to student learning needs identified in the course syllabi.
• The clinical evaluation tools include formative and summative evaluations for clinical courses but do not correlate with level clinical objectives. All clinical evaluation tools are identical and do not indicate progression across the curriculum. Several competencies on the tools refer to a focused patient assessment instead of a comprehensive patient assessment which is the role of a professional nurse.
• Several evaluation indicators refer to a focused patient assessment instead of a comprehensive patient assessment which is the role of a professional nurse.
• Faculty provide supervision during all clinical learning experiences and BON required faculty-to-student ratios are maintained throughout the program. Preceptors are not utilized.
• Clinical hours vary based on student needs and the distance they drive for clinical experiences, and may be offered during the day, evening, night, or weekend shifts in order to provide a well-rounded, realistic and varied view of registered nurse practice.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:
• The American with Disabilities Act (ADA)-compliant program is housed in the Peevee House Technology Building in Sweetwater. The campus is appropriately equipped and offers a rich learning environment.
• The ADN director has a large private office located in the nursing office suite along with the VN director and faculty in Sweetwater. All full-time faculty have fully furnished private offices in close proximity to the director.
• TSTC offers a wide variety of counseling services available to students at no charge. Faculty is able to refer a student via an online portal and the counselor will contact the student. The services include, but are not limited to, personal and family counseling, academic and vocational guidance, testing and evaluation, and various skills training.
The facilities are spacious, include ADA-compliant restrooms, a large, well-lighted student lounge and break area located in the front of the building and a second smaller lounge-break area in the back of the building. Vending machines, a refrigerator, tables, chairs, couches, and a microwave oven are available. The room includes a photo booth for interactive student learning.

TSTC has a Learning Resource Center that includes an online library of resources, databases, and services. Library holdings include current nursing books, journals, and national nursing databases such as CINAHL and MEDLINE. Reference books are available in the nursing office on the Sweetwater Campus.

There are two classrooms, one large and the other moderate in size, that are modern, spacious, well-lit and equipped with adequate audio visual (AV) equipment.

There are two skills labs solely for the ADN program. One large lab has five patient bays with privacy curtains, each with a bed and hospital type equipment, and four adult manikins. There is one high fidelity manikin with a laptop utilized for obstetric simulations.

The second skills lab contains four patient bays with privacy curtains, each with a patient bed, an adult manikin, and hospital type equipment. Pediatric manikins are available.

Each lab has three sinks with hot and cold running water, tables/chairs set-up for student use, adequate equipment and supplies, and AV equipment. There is abundant storage space for supplies/equipment.

A full-time assistant serves as administrative and clerical support for all allied health programs. Board staff discussed this as a concern since the directors and faculty are required to assist with student registration and advising for students not yet enrolled in the program which limits their focus on program needs.

There is a supplemental instruction and tutoring program at TSTC that offers free tutoring and academic support services for students.

Records and Reports:

Student and faculty files are maintained with all required documents in a locked room in locked file cabinets and are compliant with Board Rule 215.12.

Official student academic records are maintained on the Sweetwater campus in the office of the Registrar.

Minutes of faculty meetings are maintained in the program director’s office.

Clinical affiliation agreements are current.

The Total Program Evaluation (TPE) is available with limited evidence of decision-making in faculty meeting minutes. Some outcomes are documented on the TPE document with partial information and no dates for changes made.
DRAFT LETTER

July 25, 2019

Lisa Van Cleave, EdD, RN, Director
TSTC Vocational Nursing
300 Homer K. Taylor Dr.
Sweetwater, Texas 79556

Dear Dr. Van Cleave:

At the July 25-26, 2019 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the survey visit to the Texas State Technical College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Sweetwater, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit conducted on May 29-30, 2019 and impose the requirements as indicated in the attached Board Order.

A Requirement is a mandatory criteria based upon program assessment directly related to the rules that must be addressed in the manner prescribed.

If you have any questions, or if we may be of any assistance, please contact Board Staff at beverly.skloss@bon.texas.gov or 512-318-3219.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dr. Brenda Jones, Provost
In the Matter of
Texas State Technical College
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
In Sweetwater, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on July 25, 2019, to consider the report of the May 29-30, 2019 survey visit to Texas State Technical College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Sweetwater, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215, based upon compliance with Rule 215.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the report of the survey visit to Texas State Technical College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Sweetwater, Texas, and hereby imposes the following requirements:

Requirements:

1. The program shall ensure that the nursing faculty handbook contains position descriptions for the director and faculty outlining their qualifications and responsibilities directly related to the nursing program and submit the faculty handbook to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

2. The program shall ensure that Board Rule 213.27 and Rule 213.28 that are printed in the student handbook are current and submit a copy of the updated student handbook to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

3. The program shall ensure that clinical evaluation tools correlate with level clinical objectives, indicate progression across the curriculum and reflect professional nursing competencies and submit copies of the revised clinical evaluation tools to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

4. The administration shall develop an action plan to provide adequate secretarial and clerical assistance to meet the needs of the program and submit the plan to Board Staff no later than December 1, 2019.

5. The program shall document decision making in meeting minutes indicating the Total Program Evaluation Plan has been implemented according to the written plan and submit this evidence to Board Staff no later than January 31, 2019.

Entered this 25th day of July, 2019

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