

**Consideration of Findings from a Virtual Survey Visit  
North Central Texas College in Gainesville, Texas  
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the report of the virtual survey review of the North Central Texas College (NCTC) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Gainesville, Texas. A face-to-face visit to Gainesville College was originally planned for Fall, 2020, but was cancelled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. A virtual program review was conducted based upon the extensive program documents submitted to Board Staff and conference calls with Program Director, Administration, nursing faculty, and nursing students through online meetings beginning on October 28, 2020, and ending on October 29, 2020.

**Historical Perspective:**

- Established in 1924, Cooke County Junior College in Gainesville changed its name to North Central Texas College (NCTC) in 1992.
- NCTC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC) and the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB). The most recent SACSCOC reaffirmation visit was in 2013. The next reaffirmation will be in 2022 and the next 5<sup>th</sup> year review is scheduled for 2027.
- NCTC offers both Associate Degree (ADN) and Vocational Nursing Education programs.
- The VN and ADN Programs are part of the Health Sciences along with Allied Health, Emergency Medical Technology, Fire Science, Radiology Technology, and Surgical Technology programs.
- NCTC has operated a VN program in Gainesville since 1975. The program has three extension sites: Corinth, established in 1975; Bowie, established in 1979; and Graham, established in 2009. There is also an online/hybrid delivery track established in September, 2009.
- Theresa Borden, MSN, RN, has been the Director of the VN programs since 2008.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are presented in the table below:

<b>Examination Year</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>
2019	Full	94.34%	100/106
2018	Full	93.48%	86/92
2017	Full	92.47%	86/93
2016	Full	84.62%	88/104
2015	Full	92.93%	92/99

## **Summary of Survey Visit:**

### Documents Provided to Board Staff Prior to Visit:

- Curriculum Plan, Philosophy/Mission, Objectives/Goals, Conceptual Framework
- Faculty and Program Director Roster and CVs
- Faculty Handbook
- Student Handbook
- Preceptor Handbook
- Syllabi for all Courses
- Clinical Evaluation Tools
- Total Program Evaluation Plan
- Faculty Minutes
- VN- Survey Program Review
- Library Information
- Clinical Affiliation Master List

### Individuals Participating in the Virtual Survey Visit:

Theresa Borden, MSN, RN, Director of VN Program

### Gainesville College Administrators:

- Brent Wallace, PhD, Chancellor
- Bruce King, MA, Med, EdD, Interim Provost
- Brandon Hernandez, BA, MLA, Dean Health Sciences

### Gainesville College Vocational Nursing Faculty:

- Nicholas Bixby, RN
- Cathy Carney, MSN, RN
- Ashley Hunsucker, BSN, RN
- Alice Hupp, BSN, RN
- Tiffany McQuien, LVN
- Paula Rutherford, BSN, RN
- Dial Swofford, BSN, RN

### Gainesville College Vocational Nursing Students:

- Met virtually with 28 students

### Board Staff:

- Gayle P. Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC

### Process for the Survey Visit:

- Ms. Borden scheduled online meetings between Board Staff and NCTC representatives and hosted the following meetings:
  - October 28, 2020, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. Meeting between G. Varnell and T. Borden
  - October 28, 2020, 11:30 – 12:30 p.m. - Videotapes of VNSG 1331 Pharmacology and VNSG 1509 Nursing Health and Illness II lectures
  - October 28, 2020, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m. – Virtual Tours of four campuses (Gainesville Health Science Center including simulation lab, Bowie, Corinth, and Graham Campus)

- October 29, 2020, 9:00 – 10:00 a.m. - Meeting with Administrative Officers
- October 29, 2020, 10:00 – 11:00 a.m. - Meeting with Nursing Faculty
- October 29, 2020, 11:15 – 12:00 noon – Meeting with Students
- October 29, 2020, 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. – Meeting with Program Director
- October 29, 2020, 3:00 – 4:00 p.m. – Exit Report

#### Administration and Organization:

- The Director of the VN program reports directly to the Dean of Health Sciences, Brandon Hernandez, BA, MLA. The Dean is responsive to the needs of the VN program and there is a good collaborative relationship with the other Allied Health Programs.
- The has the authority to direct the VN program in all its phases.
- Policies are in place and are enforced.
- The Director does not have a teaching assignment this semester.

#### Faculty:

- The 2020 VN Faculty Handbook includes faculty policies required in Rule 214: By-Laws for the Faculty Organization; Faculty Workload Policy; Faculty Evaluation; Job Descriptions; Faculty Orientation; and mentoring of new faculty. The Faculty Handbook does not include any of the following: an organizational chart; information regarding the nursing programs offered on extension sites or online; Peer Review; or plans for faculty member's professional development.
- The program has a cohesive, supportive faculty, and full-time faculty turnover rates are low.
- There are eight full-time (FT) VN faculty and two part-time (PT) faculty with 10 clinical adjuncts. Currently the breakdown of faculty on all campuses is as follows
  - Gainesville Fall 1 FT, 2 Adjunct 1 shared
  - Gainesville Spring 1 FT, 2 Adjunct and 1 shared
  - Gainesville Online 1 FT, 1 shared, and 1 adjunct
  - Corinth 1 FT and 1 Adjunct
  - Bowie 1 FT and 1 Adjunct
  - Graham 1 FT and 3 Adjunct, and 1 PT
  - 1 PT faculty teaches OB/Pedi in long semesters
- Four faculty are pursuing advanced degrees.
- Several of the faculty received their VN and ADN education at NCTC.
- All full-time faculty teach both clinical and didactic courses.
- Several faculty currently practice or have been employed at the local hospitals where they supervise clinicals.
- There is stability in the faculty. Six of the FT faculty were present at the previous survey visit in 2013.
- It was evident during the survey visit, that the faculty support each other and although they are on different campuses, they communicate regularly. They all expressed their love for teaching and students' comments validated that the faculty work as a team.

#### Students:

- A 2020-2021 Student Handbook is specific to the Vocational Nursing student and includes required policies for admission, readmission, transfer, progression, graduation, and dismissal. Eligibility information is provided in the Handbook and a form indicating receipt of this information.

- There are 72 students currently enrolled in the VN program. Thirty-four students will graduate in December 2020. The remaining 38 are scheduled to graduate in August 2021.
- The program admits on four campuses in the fall and on two campuses in the spring. Enrollment for the Fall 2020 admission was limited to facilitate social distancing and measures to protect students from COVID-19 exposure as well as the ability to provide hands on clinical experiences to all of the students. Plans for Spring 2021 will also limit admissions.
- Following Spring Break in March, all VN courses were moved to online instruction with virtual clinical activities. The technology at NCTC and the experience with the online/hybrid VN program made this an easy transition.
- When VN students graduate, they have no difficulty finding employment in the area. The majority of graduates remain in the community.
- Students interviewed expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program and confidence that the director, faculty, and administration are committed to their success.
- Students cited that the strengths of the program are the excellent clinical learning experiences both in clinicals and the simulation lab/center and the faculty support they receive. Students stated that faculty are very detail-oriented and explain the rationale for all procedures and skills.
- Nursing students have an opportunity to engage in interdisciplinary simulations involving collaboration with EMS, Surgical Technology and Radiology Technology programs.
- The program meets a need in the community for a VN education program and receives strong support from clinical affiliates.

#### Program of Study:

- The 12-month, 42-semester credit hour curriculum is delivered through 10 nursing courses and 3 clinical courses. There is a separate course for maternal-neonatal nursing and pediatrics with clinical instruction being taught through simulation.
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* have been incorporated into the curriculum.
- NCTC uses an integrated curriculum. There are separate courses in Pharmacology, Medication Administration, Anatomy and Physiology for Allied Health, and Basic Nursing Skills. There are three leveled nursing and clinical courses. Students who are admitted in the spring take obstetrics and Pediatrics in Level III while students admitted in the fall have these courses offered in Level II. All students have a Professional Development course in Level III.
- At the time of the survey visit, Level I students were in the skills lab while Level III students were assigned to clinical settings.
- All students are scheduled in the simulation center twice a semester.
- At the time of the visit, the preliminary pass rate for the VN program was 86.49% with 32 out of 37 candidates passing the NCLEX-PN®.

#### Resources and Facilities:

A video tour of the Gainesville, Bowie, Corinth, and Graham campuses was provided. The Gainesville Campus video included:

- Health Science Center building that was built in 2017 and houses the Simulation Center. The Simulation Center is staffed with one full-time instructor, one part-time instructor and one part-time technical assistant. The Center consists of 12 beds that can be arranged to meet any requirement or situation. There are areas for Emergency Room and Intensive

Care, Trauma, Medical-Surgical, Obstetrics and Pediatrics including a delivery/OR room, as well as Home Health and outpatient services and office settings. There is also a Psychiatric area for students to manage inpatient and outpatient psychiatric patients. There are high-fidelity manikins as well as medical equipment to perform a variety of skills. There is a control center to control the scenarios as well as debriefing areas.

- Program Director's private office is located on the Gainesville campus along with all Allied Health Programs;
- Individual Faculty offices;
- Reception area;
- Conference Rooms;
- Classrooms;
- Study/lounge area; and
- Reception area

There were three separate videos for Corinth, Bowie, and Graham which included:

- Classroom, computer room, and lounge/ study areas;
- Skills labs that included, hospital beds, medical equipment to perform basic skills and ample storage. The labs are smaller, but contain sufficient beds with low and moderate fidelity manikins as well as at least one high fidelity manikin. All have hot and cold running water and adequate storage.
- Faculty share their office space with part-time faculty, faculty of other Health Science programs, or adjunct faculty when they are on campus. There are private areas available for faculty and student conferences.
- All campuses have adequate space for files with permanent records housed on the Gainesville campus.
- There is no full-time administrative assistant for the nursing program. One part-time administrative assistant is located on the Graham campus and there are three other department administrative assistants on the Gainesville campus.

#### Clinical Learning Experiences:

- Clinical Evaluation Tools are based upon the *DECs*.
- Progression in expectations of student performance and competence is seen in the clinical evaluation tools across the program.
- Students were invited back to the hospital setting in mid-June, but some long term care settings and other facilities remain closed.
- VN and ADN students share lab space and equipment for nursing skills and simulation experiences with other Health Sciences Programs.
- Medication administration is practiced in the skills lab where students are learning to use electronic health records before they are assigned to clinical rotations.

#### Total Program Evaluation:

- Faculty meet annually to review the program and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) as well as during curriculum meetings. All elements required in Rule 214.13 are included and supporting documents and minutes of faculty meetings were submitted for review.

#### **Pros and Cons of Program Review:**

##### Pros:

- See Attachment #2 identifying Quality indicators.

Cons:

- The Faculty Handbook does not include an organizational chart nor address §217.19 (relating to Incident-Based Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) and §217.20 (relating to Safe Harbor Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) of this title.
- There is one part-time administrative assistant on the Graham campus, but no dedicated nursing administrative assistant for the nursing program.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of the findings from the virtual survey visit to North Central Texas College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Gainesville, Texas, and issue one requirement and one recommendation as indicated in the attached letter (See Attachment #1):

Requirement #1: The Faculty Handbook should be revised to include an organizational chart and address 217.19 (relating to Incident-Based Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) and §217.20 (relating to Safe Harbor Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) of this title.

Recommendation #1: The NCTC administration is encouraged to provide a designated administrative assistant for the nursing programs on the Gainesville campus.

DRAFT LETTER

January 21, 2021

Theresa Borden, MSN, RN, Director of VN Program  
North Central Texas College  
1525 West California Street  
Gainesville, TX 76240

Dear Ms. Borden

At the January 21, 2021 virtual Board meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the findings from program review of the Gainesville College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Gainesville, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the survey visit report and issue one requirement and one recommendation:

Requirement #1:

The Faculty Handbook should be revised to include an organizational chart and address 217.19 (relating to Incident-Based Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) and §217.20 (relating to Safe Harbor Nursing Peer Review and Whistleblower Protections) of this title. The revision should be sent to the BON by April 1, 2021

Recommendation #1:

The NCTC administration is encouraged to provide a designated administrative assistant for the nursing programs on the Gainesville campus.

A requirement is a mandatory criterion based on program assessment directly related to the rule that must be addressed in the manner prescribed.

A recommendation is a suggestion based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which a program must respond but in a method of their choosing

If you have any questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at [gayle.varnell@bon.texas.gov](mailto:gayle.varnell@bon.texas.gov) or (512) 621-5179.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Brent Wallace Ph.D, Chancellor  
Bruce King BA, M.Ed., EdD., Interim Provost  
Brandon Hernandez BA, MLA, Dean Health Sciences

**Regulatory Quality Indicators  
 North Central Texas College in Gainesville, Texas  
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

**Basis:**

Spector, N., Silvestre, J., Alexander, M., Martin, B., Hooper, J. I., Squires, A., & Ojemeni, M. (2020). NCSBN regulatory guidelines and evidence-based quality indicators for nursing Education programs. *Journal of Nursing Education*, 11(2), S2-S64.

Quality indicators for pre-licensure nursing education programs were identified in a NCSBN national, mixed-methods study of data and responses from nursing education programs, clinical educators, and board of nursing education consultants. The following table reflects a strong association between specific quality indicators and evidence from the survey visit.

<b>Identified Quality Indicator</b>	<b>Findings from Survey Visit</b>
Institutional administrative support of the nursing program	Chancellor, Interim Provost, and Dean of Health Sciences expressed strong support for the VN program. Board Staff discussed the need for a full-time administrative assistant on the Gainesville campus and administration agreed there was a need.
Consistent administrative leadership in the nursing program.	Program Director has been in the position since 2007 and is committed to the success of the students.
Consistent full-time faculty as opposed to reliance on adjunct faculty.	Eight full-time faculty are in place. Four faculty are pursuing advanced degrees. Several of the faculty graduated from the program and their main focus is on the students. Six of the faculty were teaching in the program in 2013 when the last survey visit was conducted.
Clinical experiences with actual patients that prepare students for the reality of clinical practice.	VN students were able to return to clinical practice in the hospital setting in the fall to work with actual patients.
Quality simulation is used to augment clinical experiences.	A simulation center is state-of-the art and located on the main campus. Interdisciplinary scenarios are done with other allied health students.
Consistently has a pattern of NCLEX pass rates that meet set standards.	Pass rates for the past 5 years have been in the 90% range for 4 years and 84.62% for 1 year.
Faculty are able to role model professional behaviors.	Students described faculty as consistently encouraging them to reach higher goals. Students were complimentary in their

	comments about both faculty and hospital staff. Clinical ratios are lower than the 10:1.
Collaboration between education and practice to enhance readiness for practice.	Several faculty discussed ways they interact with practice to produce graduates that meet the needs of the community. Several of the faculty practice or have practiced in the hospitals where they have students.
Administrative support for ongoing faculty development.	Faculty listed several ways that their development is encouraged and supported. Funding is available for other faculty development.