

**Consideration of Findings from a Virtual Survey Visit
San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the December 7-8, 2021, routine survey visit to the San Jacinto College North (SJC-N) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Houston, Texas.

Historical Perspective:

- San Jacinto College (SJC) was established in 1961 as a community college to serve the greater Houston area. Currently, the SJC System includes four campuses in Northeast Houston with a total enrollment of 42,000 students.
- Three campuses (North, Central, and South) in the SJC System offer nursing education programs. Nursing is considered the most popular and sought-after college major. Individuals can begin their education in the Certified Nursing Assistant Program, then move up the career ladder to become a Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN), an Associate Degree prepared Registered Nurse (RN), then eventually achieve a Baccalaureate Degree in Nursing (BSN) by completing the RN to BSN Program, approved by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB) in 2019. The new post-licensure RN to BSN Program offered on the SJC Central Campus has obtained national nursing accreditation by the Accreditation Commission for Education in Nursing (ACEN); the RN to BSN Program has served to attract and recruit new students to the SJC System.
- SJC is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACSCOC); the most recent reaccreditation visit occurred in 2019. Of note, Dr. Teddy Farias, SJC Dean, Health and Natural Sciences, is a site reviewer for SACSCOC. San Jacinto College North holds a Certificate of Authorization from THECB to grant degrees.
- The SJC-N VN Education Program began operation in 1974 and has demonstrated long-term success in providing VN education.
- Kerri Hines, EdD, MSN-Ed, RN, is the Department Chair and Interim Program Director for the VN Program. Dr. Hines has been a program administrator at SJC since August 2014.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the table below:

Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2021	Full	92.86%	39/42
2020	Full	97.83%	45/46
2019	Full	91.80%	56/61
2018	Full	98.33%	59/60
2017	Full	95.35%	41/43

Summary of Survey Visit:

Documents Provided to Board Staff to Prepare for the Visit:

- Vision, Mission, Goals, and Values
- Faculty and Program Director Job Descriptions
- Faculty Handbook
- Student Catalogue
- Curriculum Plan
- Syllabi for all Courses
- Clinical Evaluation Tools
- Systematic Plan of Evaluation
- Faculty Minutes
- List of Library/Learning Resource Center Holdings

Individuals Participating in the Virtual Survey Visit:

- Kerri Hines, EdD, MSN-Ed, RN, Department Chair of Nursing and Interim VN Program Director

SJC-N Administrators:

- Alexander Okwonna, PharmD, Provost North Campus
- Teddy Farias, DC, MS, Dean, Health and Natural Sciences
- Monica Taylor, DNP, RN, Interim VN Program Director

SJC-N VN Faculty:

- James Chiles, MSN, RN, Simulation Coordinator
- Chris Evans, MA, NCC, Retention Specialist (Staff position)
- Jenny Glenn, MSN, RN
- Deirdre Moore, MSN-Ed, RN
- Mia Ozan, MSN, RN
- Tyra Rideaux, MSN, RN
- Beverly Smith, MSN-Ed, RN
- Jamie Sunny, MSN, RN
- Suzane Nguyen, BBA, BSN, RN, CVRN-BC

SJC VN Program Students:

- Met virtually with 44 VN students enrolled in various levels of the program

Board Staff:

- Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE

Process for the Survey Visit:

- Dr. Hines scheduled online meetings between Board Staff and SJC-N representatives and hosted the following meetings:
 - December 7, 2021: 9:00 am – Meeting with Program Director
 - December 7, 2021: 10:30 am – Meeting with Administration
 - December 7, 2021: 1:00 pm – Meeting with Faculty
 - December 7, 2021: 3:00 pm – Meeting with Students
 - December 8, 2021: 9:30 am – Meeting with Program Director
 - December 8, 2021: 10:00 am – Exit Meeting

Administration and Organization:

- The organizational chart demonstrates lines of communication, authority, and responsibility between the VN Program and the SJC-N administration as well as lines of communication within the VN Program. The Program Director and faculty members confirmed that clear and frequent communication exist between and among the VN Program staff/faculty and the administration.
- The SJC-N VN Program Director, Dr. Kerri Hines, reports directly to Dr. Teddy Farias, Dean, Health and Natural Sciences, meeting at least every other week. However, Dr. Hines and Dr. Farias communicate telephonically and via e-mail several times per week, as needed. Dr. Farias reports to Dr. Alexander Okwonna, North Campus Provost.

- During the meeting with administration, Dr. Farias shared that SJC was a 2021 recipient of the Aspen Siemens Excellence and Equity in Community College STEM Award. As part of the district-wide award, SJC was gifted \$50,000. This amount was broken down into \$25,000 for scholarships in nursing and \$25,000 for professional development in the nursing program.
- The Aspen Award is the nation's signature recognition for America's community colleges. It honors colleges with outstanding achievement in five critical areas: teaching and learning, certificate and degree completion, transfer and bachelor's attaining, workforce success, and equity for students of color and students from low-income backgrounds. In November 2021, SJC was identified as one of the 150 institutions eligible to apply for the 2023 Aspen Prize of one million dollars.
- The VN Program has been awarded various grants, as described below:
 - The Perkins Grant has provided the VN Program with funding to purchase equipment to support and enhance the curriculum, professional development opportunities, and financial support for students.
 - Equipment: intramuscular injection training models, tube feeding/tracheostomy suctioning models, cervical exam simulations, kangaroo enteral feeding pumps, Obstetric Gaumard Mixed Reality, and a Pyxis medication dispensing machine.
 - Curriculum Support: graduating students attended the Kaplan NCLEX-PN Live Review until the adoption of Assessment Technologies Institute (ATI) in 2020.
 - Professional Development: faculty attended the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) conference, the Organization for Associate Degree Nursing (OADN) conference, and the 2021 National Nurse Summit.
 - Student Support: reimbursement to students for childcare, mileage for clinical transportation, and the costs of program requirements, including immunizations, physical exams, background checks, CPR classes, and drug screenings.
 - In addition, the VN Program has benefited from the Nursing Innovation Grant Program (NIGP) and the Nursing Shortage Reduction Program (NSRP) grants awarded to the ADN Program.
 - The NIGP grant provided funding for simulation equipment, including Gaumard Pediatric Hal simulator, electronic communication boards in the simulation center, workstation on wheels, and professional development for simulation.
 - The NSRP grant provided funding for simulation equipment including Gaumard Susie and Victoria simulators, upgrades to the audiovisual recording system in the simulation center, and professional development for instructors teaching in both the VN and ADN Programs.

- The Department Chair meets with nursing faculty on Framework Fridays; however, this meeting could occur on another day of the week dependent upon individual schedules. The Dean is available as necessary.
- SJC-N timely implemented successful strategies to ensure student progression during the global pandemic.
- Immediately after the campus was closed due to the global pandemic, SJC-N administration began developing methods for a safe return to campus. These plans were piloted, beginning May 4, 2020, with Dr. Hines and the nursing department serving on the front lines to assess the health status of all individuals entering the campus. Masking, social distancing, and allowing only small groups of students and staff members to return at one time were implemented successfully.
- The Program Director has the authority to direct the VN Program in all its phases, including the dismissal of students and the enforcement of student policies.
- The Director does not have a teaching assignment.

Faculty:

- The Faculty Handbook contains all essential elements set forth in Board Rule 214.7 Faculty.
- Faculty policies regarding qualifications, responsibilities, performance evaluation criteria, and terms of employment are articulated in the Faculty Handbook.
- Faculty meeting minutes are detailed and clearly reflect decisions made as well as the rationales for decision-making.
- Faculty members exhibit a rich diversity in their educational and professional backgrounds. Interviewed faculty stated their nursing education experiences range from several months to 28 years.
- There are five full-time VN faculty members and three part-time faculty members in place. Of the total eight faculty members, one is doctoral prepared, one is an Advanced Practice Nurse Practitioner, one is BSN prepared, and the others are MSN prepared.
- Faculty stated they worked diligently during the pandemic to ensure students were provided appropriate instruction to progress in their nursing program, without any lost time.
- It was evident during the virtual survey visit that the faculty are dedicated to the students, support one another, and work collaboratively to achieve Program/Student Learning Objectives/Outcomes.

- Faculty are actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Learning opportunities are available to faculty through OADN, TAVNE, NurseTim, International Nursing Association of Clinical and Simulation Learning (INACSL), Laerdal, and Gaumard. In addition, simulation expert Michelle Decker was recently brought to campus to offer on-site training.
- New faculty are on-boarded via the New Faculty Academy to ensure proficiency in a variety of subjects: equity training, pedagogy, and the college's Blackboard system. They are then assigned a mentor for a period of one year.
- Faculty Handbooks were in the process of being updated during the time of the survey visit.
- Faculty expressed they feel strongly supported by the Dean and the Program Director.
- The current Retention Specialist was hired in January 2021, replacing the initial Retention Specialist who held the position from January 2019 to August 2020. The Simulation Coordinator was hired in January 2019 as a faculty member and assumed the role of Simulation Coordinator in August 2021.

Students:

- The SJC-N VN Student Catalog includes all required information. Eligibility information is provided with a form indicating receipt of the process.
- There are two admission periods per year, in January and August.
- According to the Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) and confirmed by the Dean, the total enrollment in 2021 was 98 VN students. NEPIS data presents that in 2021, 43 VN Program students graduated from the SJC-N campus.
- Student policies are well-written, straightforward, and provided to all students during orientation; they include all Board-required content.
- Forty-four VN students, representing all levels, were available to interview.
- Interviewed students expressed that upon graduation, they are able to easily obtain employment locally in long term care, clinics, rehabilitation facilities, and other healthcare settings. The majority of graduates plan to remain in the community.
- Students expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program. When asked why they selected SJC-N, responses included: SJC-N's strong reputation in the community; direct recommendations from friends and family; and the NCLEX-PN® pass rate history presented on the Board website.

- Students stated they feel faculty are available, patient, communicative, and timely respond to student questions and needs.
- Students have an opportunity each semester to evaluate courses, faculty members, and clinical learning experiences. Subsequently, appropriate revisions may be made based upon the students' feedback.
- The students expressed that they are provided “a wonderful education” and are anxious to enter the workforce as LVNs.
- The senior level students expressed excitement about the Pinning Ceremony scheduled to take place later in the day of the interview.
- Students stated they plan to further their nursing education; however, they clarified that they are anxious to practice as LVNs upon graduation and licensure.
- The interviewed students had completed their semester final examinations immediately prior to the virtual meeting; understandably, the students were rather quiet.

Program of Study:

- SJC-N offers a full-time 12-month daytime program, comprised of 14 vocational nursing courses and two biology courses (Anatomy and Physiology I and II). Admissions occur twice yearly, in January and August. A maximum of 60 new students can be admitted in each cohort for a total yearly admission of 120 new students. BIOL 2301 Anatomy and Physiology I (lecture) and BIOL 2101 Anatomy and Physiology I (lab) are pre-requisite courses.
- The program contains a total of 1344 contact hours, with 480 didactic content hours, 416 lab hours, and 448 hands-on clinical practice hours. The program is categorized as a Level II Certificate of Technology Award by the THECB and offers 45 semester credit hours (SCHs).
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2021)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum.
- The curriculum is provided in a block format.
- Syllabi are consistent in format and include appropriate content with clearly articulated learning objectives/outcomes.
- The VN curriculum follows a linear progression making successful completion of each of the three terms a prerequisite to beginning the next term. The curriculum indicates leveling of nursing content, advancing in difficulty from simple to complex. The program of study

is designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting.

- The VN Program conducts a detailed item analysis of every test to determine validity, reliability, and level of difficulty of each test item.
- Faculty members write unit exams and ATI standardized testing is utilized to confirm content mastery. The ATI scores equal 10% of the course grade.
- At the time of the visit, the preliminary NCLEX-PN® pass rate for the VN Program was 92.86%, with 39 of 42 first-time candidates successfully completing the NCLEX-PN®.

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 practice in the skills lab and demonstrate basic competency prior to providing hands-on direct patient care.
- Faculty provide direct supervision during all clinical learning experiences at the clinical sites. Preceptors are not utilized.
- The clinical experiences are scheduled to be aligned with or follow the provision of didactic content in the classroom.
- The comprehensive clinical evaluation tools demonstrate progression across the curriculum and are used for formative and summative evaluations.
- Leadership has established and maintained strong relationships with clinical sites in the Houston area, thus ensuring the provision of a broad array of rich clinical learning experiences. At the time of the survey visit, 27 clinical contracts were in place. The clinical affiliates included: Encompass Health Rehabilitation Hospitals, Harris Health System, Kindred Hospital-Northwest, Memorial Hermann Health System, Nexus Children's Hospital, River Oaks Hospital and Clinics, The Harris Center for Mental Health, and Texas Elite Hospice.

Resources and Facilities:

- A video tour of the SJC-N campus was provided, and included the following:
 - Overview of the SJC-N Health Science Building;
 - Nursing Classrooms;
 - Clinical Learning Laboratories;
 - Simulation Resources, including the "San Jacinto Community Hospital";
 - Computer Labs;

- Conference Rooms;
 - Administration Suite; and
 - Library and Quiet Study Areas.
- The facilities are modern, spacious, and state-of-the art. In 2013, the VN Program moved into the new Health Science Building.
- The Health Science Building offers two teaching theaters dedicated to the VN Program with each theater having the capacity to seat 60 students.
- Two Skills Labs specific to the VN Program offer seating for 30 students for didactic instruction in each and have 12 patient beds located along the perimeter of each room for hands-on instruction and student practice. Functional sinks with hot and cold running water are also provided in each lab.
- The “San Jacinto Community Hospital” contains a total of seven beds with six simulation bays equipped with a variety of mannequins: Victoria (birthing mother); Newbie (newborn); Susie and SimMan (medical/surgical); and Hal (pediatric). A working Pyxis machine (automated medication dispensing cabinet) is available for students to practice medication withdrawal and preparation. In each bay, a wall computer screen presents patient data similar to wall computers utilized in hospitals. Whiteboards are hung outside the patient areas for increased realism.
- A large Storage Area is well-stocked with the nursing program’s equipment and supplies. In addition, a washing machine and dryer are located in the Storage Area and in the Simulation Lab.
- A Med Prep area is available for students to practice medication withdrawal and preparation; the current medication dispensing machines are scheduled to be replaced with two new Pyxis machines. A sink with hot and cold running water is located in this area.
- In addition to the tiered teaching theaters, three Smart classrooms are located on second floor. Each classroom has the capacity to accommodate up to 30 students.
- Multiple areas for students to relax, read, or visit with other students are located on the first and second floors of the Health Science Building. The study/lounge areas contain vending machines, microwaves, printers, tables, and chairs.
- A locked area requiring a badge to enter separates faculty offices and the director’s private office from the rest of the floor. Two locking file cabinets in the director’s office maintain and secure records.

- The VN Program follows the SJC-N records and retention policy that is in alignment with the Board rules and regulations concerning records and reports.
- Two Computer Testing Suites offer students online testing opportunities and seat up to 30 students each. Partitions are in place to reconfigure the room as instructional needs change.
- A wall-mounted Suggestion Box is available for students to offer confidential feedback. The contents are examined and reviewed once weekly.
- A Conference Room with a Whiteboard, projector, and computer access is located in the secure area.
- An Administration Suite houses the program's administrative assistants and four faculty offices. Student records are securely retained in this area.
- The video tour provided evidence that the campus meets or exceeds the requirements of Board Rule 214.11. Facilities, Resources, and Services.

Total Program Evaluation:

- SJC-N utilizes a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) that meets all requirements of Board Rule 214.
- Components of the TPE plan include the following elements:
 - Criteria/Component to be Evaluated;
 - Data Collection Method/Tools;
 - Individual or Group Responsible;
 - Frequency of Data Collection;
 - Indicators of Achievement;
 - Findings (Aggregate Data) and Recommendations; and
 - Outcome/Action Plan.

Pros and Cons of Program Review:

Pros:

Quality Indicators Recognized: (Spector et al., 2020).

- The SJC-N VN Program Director communicates frequently with both Dr. Alexander Okwonna, Provost North Campus, and Dr. Teddy Farias, Dean, Health and Natural Sciences. In addition, the Department Chair meets with nursing faculty on Framework Fridays. The dean makes himself available to the nursing staff and faculty as necessary.
- Faculty are provided extensive professional development opportunities and are encouraged to further their nursing education.

- The proven curriculum is sound and emphasizes critical thinking, as evidenced by the NCLEX-PN® pass rate history. The *DECs* are fully incorporated into all aspects of the program. Plans to prepare students for the Next Generation NCLEX were timely implemented in order to ensure graduate success on the updated licensure examination.
- A further demonstration of excellence is SJC's being a 2021 recipient of the Aspen Siemens Excellence and Equity in Community College STEM Award. As part of the district-wide award, SJC was gifted \$50,000.
- The clinical learning opportunities are exemplary for VN students, as the students are assigned direct patient care learning experiences in a wide variety of healthcare settings, including acute care facilities. At the time of the survey visit, 35 clinical contracts were in place.
- The SJC-N Administration and Nursing Program Director ensured that return to campus plans were piloted, beginning May 4, 2020, following the start of the global pandemic in March 2020. Dr. Hines and the nursing department led the efforts for a safe return to campus by serving on the front lines to assess the health status of students and staff entering the campus.
- The physical resources are modern, state-of-the-art, and evidence a learner-centered environment.

Cons:

- None identified.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the December 7-8, 2021, virtual survey visit to the San Jacinto College North Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, with no recommendations and/or requirements (See Attachment #1).

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 Regulation*, 11(2), S1-S64.

DRAFT LETTER

April 21, 2022

Kerri Hines, EdD, MSN-Ed, RN, Interim Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
San Jacinto College North
5800 Uvalde
Houston, TX 77049-4599

Dear Dr. Hines:

At the April 21, 2022, quarterly meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the virtual routine survey visit to the San Jacinto College North Vocational Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the virtual survey visit conducted on December 7-8, 2021, and to thank San Jacinto College North for coordinating and participating in the virtual survey visit.

If you have any questions or if we may offer 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. Alexander Okwonna, Provost North Campus