

**Report of a Survey Visit  
Angelina College in Lufkin, Texas  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request**

Consider the report of the January 29, 2013 routine survey visit to Angelina College in Lufkin, Texas Associate Degree Nursing Education Program (See Attachment #1).

**Historical Perspective:**

- The Angelina College (AC) in Lufkin, Texas Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program began in 1968.
- The program was revised in 1975, and the multiple entry and exit (MEEP) curriculum was approved to provide career mobility.
- Sharon Buffalo, MSN, RN, has been the director of the ADN program since August 1999.
- Besides the director, fourteen (14) full-time and two (2) part-time faculty members teach in the ADN program.
- Ms. Buffalo carries a three (3) hour classroom teaching load in addition to her duties as director of the ADN program.
- The ADN program is located on the Lufkin campus. Seventy-five (75) to eighty (80) students are admitted in the fall of each year. In the summer, there are twenty (20) to thirty (30) LVN-RN Transition students admitted.
- The students have clinical rotations in Lufkin, Nacogdoches, Crockett, and Livingston.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past six (6) years are provided in the following table:

<b>Exam Year</b>	<b>NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First-Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>
2012	97.33%	73/75	Full
2011	81.82%	81/99	Full
2010	84.91%	44/53	Full
2009	94.12%	48/51	Full
2008	94.12%	48/51	Full
2007	88.68%	45/47	Full

- A routine six-year survey visit to the AC ADN Program was conducted on January 29, 2013 by Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC, Contract Program Evaluator (See Attachment #1).

**Summary of Survey Findings:**

- Board Representative identified many strengths in the program.
- Findings from the survey visit indicated that the program is in compliance with Board Rule 215.

## **Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:**

### **Pros:**

- The program has strong administrative and community support.
- In interviews with Board Staff, administration, faculty, and preceptors credited Ms. Buffalo for the high morale and stability in the ADN program.
- Faculty members appear to be a cohesive, dedicated group who has embraced technology to promote success of students.
- The MEEP curriculum has had an almost continuous Board pass rate of 100% since the first class graduated in May 1976.
- The curriculum is developed according to Board rules and the *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* objectives.
- The program of study incorporates creative methods of using hybrid design for course delivery, including online format, face-to-face instruction, and utilization of simulation.
- The program has active contracts with multiple clinical affiliating agencies to ensure provision of a rich variety of clinical learning experiences.
- Students who were interviewed expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program and confidence that the director and faculty are committed to their success.
- The program meets a need in the community for a nursing education program and receives strong support from clinical affiliates.
- The program has adequate contracts with clinical affiliating agencies in order for students to meet all clinical objectives in the program.
- All clinical learning experiences occur in faculty-supervised, direct patient care clinical settings. The program utilizes simulation to prepare students for hands-on patient care and for remediation purposes.

### **Cons:**

- The program learning outcomes and course syllabi objectives need to be revised to better reflect the *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* objectives.

### **Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of findings of the routine six-year survey visit to the Angelina College in Lufkin, Texas Associate Degree Nursing Education Program and issue a recommendation that the program review all curriculum documents to ensure that the DECs-related competencies are stated in behavioral terms, and submit a written response to the recommendation no later than September 1, 2013, to Board Staff. (See Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit  
Angelina College in Lufkin, Texas  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Purpose of Survey Visit:** Routine survey visit

**Date of Visit:** January 29, 2013

**Board Staff Conducting Visit:** Gayle Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC, Contracted Program Evaluator

**Board Representative met with:**

- Sharon Buffalo, MSN, RN, Nursing Program Coordinator
- Larry Phillips, EdD, President of Angelina College
- Patricia McKenzie, MSN, DEd, RN, Vice President and Dean of Instruction
- Winifred Ferguson-Adams, BSN, MEd, RN, Health Careers Division Director
- Alysa Bass, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Keshia Becnel, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Agnes Estraza, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Debra Gibbs, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Carol Havis, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Angela Jones, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Janet King, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Susan McKee, MS, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- J. Brian Opella, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Nancy Rice, BSN, RN, ADN Program Remediation Specialist/ Skills Lab Coordinator
- Bobbie Williams, MSN, RN, ADN Program Faculty
- Greg Stoddard, ADN, RN, Hospital House Supervisor and ER Staff Nurse at Lufkin Memorial Hospital
- Jan Durham, BSN, RN Lufkin ISD Lead Nurse and District Supervisor
- Kelly Clausen, MSN, APRN, CPNP-PC
- Kay Gibbs, Administrative Assistant
- Olivia Pacheco, Receptionist
- Daphne Shepherd, Administrative Assistant
- Arlene Smith, Computer Technician
- Sixty (60) Associate Degree Nursing Students (second year)

**Board Representative conducted the following activities:**

- held initial conference with director, dean, and administration;
- met with faculty members;
- interviewed students;
- observed classroom teaching;
- toured AC facilities;
- reviewed records and documents including: student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, student and faculty handbooks, syllabi, clinical evaluation tools, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan, and
- conducted exit interview with director and administration.

**Summary of Findings:**

Findings Related to Administration:

- Administration stated that the ADN program adds value to the college and fulfills a need in the community.
- The organizational chart was reviewed with administration.
- Sharon Buffalo, MSN, RN was appointed Nursing Program Coordinator at AC in 1999. Ms. Buffalo's past experiences include over sixteen (16) years in nursing education.

- The director and faculty unanimously agreed that resources are adequate to meet all teaching needs.
- There appears to be clear communication among the director, dean, and administration.
- The director reported that the majority of graduates remain in the community and are able to find employment in local hospitals and clinical agencies.

#### Findings Related to Program of Study:

- The administration expressed strong support for the ADN program. AC Lufkin offers the following certificate programs: LVN, Paramedic, Pharmacy Technology, Mammography, and Surgical Technology as well as the following Associate of Applied Science Degrees: Nursing, Emergency Medical Services, Respiratory Care, and Sonography.
- The ADN program is a 24-month 45-credit hour program of study, based on sequential learning. There are a total of 1440 contact hours in the program of study: 576 didactic hours, 132 computer lab clinical, 244 skills lab, and 488 clinical contact hours.
- The program is well-organized and includes all Board required content.
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum. However, all competencies are not stated in behavioral terms in the program learning outcomes and course syllabi learning outcomes.
- The teaching model is based upon face-to-face and online modalities.
- Faculty and students receive training in distance education and IT support is available.
- Admission policies have sufficient rigor to ensure that qualified applicants are admitted into the program, including a weighted point system in college level prerequisite courses.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for progression, remediation, and graduation purposes.
- The program has implemented required remediation and tutoring as well as an NCLEX-RN® review course.

#### Findings Related to Faculty:

- The ADN instruction is carried out by an experienced RN faculty group.
- Besides the director, thirteen (13) full-time and two (2) part-time faculty members teach in the program.
- Faculty members meet Board qualifications and offer a rich diversity in their educational and experiential backgrounds. Several faculty members are pursuing advanced degrees.
- Faculty members are actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation.
- Faculty reported that morale is high and they receive strong support from one another as well as the program dean and director.
- Faculty members communicate frequently and meet regularly. Their planning and decision-making is collaborative.
- Minutes of faculty meetings are maintained.

#### Findings Related to Students:

- Students stated that they enrolled in the ADN program because of location, tuition, and the reputation of the program.
- Students interviewed expressed feeling overwhelmed with the number of courses this semester and would like to see a better balance between third and fourth level. The faculty is aware and is looking into this for future classes.
- Students unanimously agreed that they felt that the program of study has prepared them for clinical practice.
- Students cited that the strengths of the program are: clinical experiences, the ADN program director, and faculty.

#### Findings Related to Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with affiliating agencies which provide a variety of appropriate clinical experiences for the curriculum.
- All clinical learning experiences occur in faculty-supervised, direct patient care clinical settings.
- The clinical experiences are scheduled to match related didactic in the classroom.

- The clinical evaluation tools are individually based upon the course content and measure progression of student behaviors across the curriculum.
- Formative and summative evaluations are evident.
- Board faculty-to-student ratios are maintained.

Findings Related to Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The ADN program is located on the Lufkin campus and moved into their new building in June 2010.
- The building housing the ADN program is appropriately equipped and offers a positive learning environment.
- The director has a large private office that is conveniently located to the program assistant and faculty offices.
- Full-time faculty members are provided with fully-furnished private offices and adjunct faculty are provided with a faculty workroom equipped with individual desks, computers, and locking file cabinets.
- The facilities include restrooms as well as faculty and student lounges and break areas.
- The ADN program classrooms are large and well-equipped.
- The skills lab has six (6) glass enclosed beds and seven (7) additional beds plus a debriefing room. Several mannequins are available for students.
- There are two (2) rooms with a total of seventy-eight (78) computers with secure screens for testing purposes. The computer lab assistant's office is located between these rooms and has glass walls for proctoring exams.
- The director stated that resources are adequate and meet the educational objectives.

**DRAFT LETTER**

April 22, 2013

Sharon Buffalo, MSN, RN, Director  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program  
Angelina College  
3500 S. First Street  
Lufkin Texas 75902-1768

Dear Ms. Buffalo:

At the April 18-19, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the routine survey visit to the Angelina College in Lufkin, Texas Associate Degree Nursing Education Program. The program was found to be in compliance with all aspects of Rule 215. The program evaluator did identify an area that warrants attention. Therefore, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue the following recommendation:

Recommendation:

Review all curriculum documents to ensure that the Differentiated Essential Competencies related competencies are stated in behavioral terms.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which a program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

Please provide a written response to the recommendation to Board Staff no later than September 1, 2013.

If you have questions, or if we may provide assistance, please contact Board Staff at 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP  
President of the Board

Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Texas Workforce Commission  
Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board  
President of Angelina College