

**Report of Survey Visit
San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the routine six (6) year survey visit to the San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program. The visit was conducted on June 11, 2013 by LeAnn Wagner, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator (See Attachment #1).

Historical Perspective:

- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five (5) years are provided in the following table:

Exam Year	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First-Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status
2012	95.35%	82/86	Full
2011	91.67%	66/72	Full
2010	92.05%	81/88	Full
2009	89.33%	67/75	Full
2008	95.38%	62/65	Full

- San Jacinto College North (SJC) was established in 1961 as a community college to serve the greater Houston area.
- SJC is currently accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS) with an initial SACS accreditation in 1966.
- The SJC Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program began operation in 1974 and has demonstrated success in providing VN education.

Summary of Survey Visit:

- The Program Evaluator identified many strengths of the program.
- Findings from the survey visit indicate that the program meets the requirements of Board Rule 214.

Pros:

- Administrative support for the program is strong, with open lines of communication among administration and faculty members.
- The program has a dedicated and knowledgeable director and faculty who appear to be committed to the program and enthusiastic about teaching nursing.
- The 2012 NCLEX-PN examination pass rate is 95.35% (82/86).
- The provision of release time for both the Clinical Coordinator and the Simulation Coordinator enhances the students' learning experiences.

- The development of a plan to make the Anatomy and Physiology course a program prerequisite should have positive results for student learning outcomes as well as serve to decrease faculty teaching load.

Cons:

- The students' clinical documents were not maintained in a secure location.
- The provision of a formal mechanism for students to participate in departmental governance was not identified.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the routine six (6) year survey visit to the San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program, as noted in the attached letter (See Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit and Findings
San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Programs**

Purpose of Survey Visit: Routine six (6) year survey visit

Date of Visit: June 11, 2013

Board Representative Conducting Visit: LeAnn Wagner, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator

Program Evaluator met with:

- Richard Bailey, PhD, Interim Provost
- Serita Dickey, MSN, RN, Dean Allied Health and Sciences
- Rhonda Bell, MS, RN, Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program Director
- Kerri Hines, MSN, RN, Clinical Coordinator
- Robbie Murphy, MSN, RN, Simulation Coordinator
- Dan CoVan, BSN, RN, Full-time VN Faculty
- Beverly Smith, MSN, RN, Full-time VN Faculty
- VN Students

Program Evaluator conducted the following activities:

- Conducted initial conference with administration and director;
- Met with program director;
- Interviewed faculty;
- Interviewed students;
- Observed classroom instruction;
- Toured campus facilities housing the VN program;
- Reviewed records and documents, including student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, examinations, and other program documents;
- Conducted exit conference with administration, director, coordinators, and faculty.

Summary of Findings:

Philosophy/Mission and Objectives/Outcomes:

- A detailed crosswalk identifies the *Differentiated Essential Competencies for Graduates of Texas Nursing Programs (DECs)* taught in each course.
- According to the Total Program Evaluation Plan, the program philosophy and objectives are reviewed every other year, in the fall semester; the most recent review was documented in the November 2011 faculty minutes.
- The program objectives are the *Differentiated Essential Competencies of Graduates of Texas Vocational Nursing Programs Evidenced by Knowledge, Clinical Judgment and Behaviors*. Clinical objectives are stated in behavioral terms and demonstrate student progression in skills, knowledge, and clinical judgments.

Administration and Organization:

- The organizational chart demonstrates lines of communication, authority, and responsibility between the nursing program and the college administration as well as within the nursing program. The program director and faculty confirmed that good communication exists between the program and the administration.
- Salaries are adequate to recruit and retain well qualified faculty members.
- The college administration is supportive of program decisions regarding student policies and their implementation.
- The director has the authority to direct all phases of the program including the dismissal of students and enforcement of student policies. The program director was able to defer admission of students for the summer term due to having two (2) faculty members on FMLA and the move to a new building. The director and the faculty stated that they feel strongly supported by the college administration.

Faculty:

- Faculty policies regarding qualifications, responsibilities, performance evaluation criteria, and terms of employment are stated in the Faculty Handbook. The Program Evaluator identified minor discrepancies between the faculty qualifications found in the handbook and those in the HR job description; the director will ensure both documents reflect the same required qualifications.
- The faculty organizational structure including committees is described in the Faculty Handbook. Faculty meetings are generally held monthly and level meetings are held weekly. Minutes of each faculty meeting are kept but increasing the detail of the minutes would better reflect decisions and rationales for decision-making. At the time of the survey visit, student participation in departmental governance was handled through the chain of command or directly with the program director; this process was confirmed by students when the Program Evaluator met with them. The faculty is considering developing a more formal mechanism for student participation in the department.
- Faculty workload is approximately twenty (20) to twenty-four (24) contact hours per week in the long semesters with overload paid above twenty-four (24) hours; this policy is currently under review. Although the faculty stated that they did not feel their workload was too heavy, many of them end up with overloads each semester. The program director teaches one (1) three (3) credit hour course each long semester.
- The director makes teaching assignments based on the faculty members' preparation, experience, and preference.
- Each year the college provides funding for four (4) VN faculty members to attend the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators annual conference. The college also provided an item writing workshop for all nursing faculty members, as well as sent the program director to the National League for Nursing annual meeting. Additionally, during the fall convocation week, a three (3) hour professional development activity is offered that is specific to nursing.
- The program director and the Division Operations Manager are responsible for validating faculty nursing licenses and maintaining documentation of current licensure in faculty files.
- The VN program grants release time to one (1) of the full-time faculty members to serve as the Simulation Coordinator. The program has recently moved into a spacious new building that has six (6) simulation rooms as well as three (3) nursing labs with thirty-four (34) beds. In addition, the simulation center has two (2) high tech manikins, six (6) Vita-Sim manikins, one (1) OB manikin with newborn, and two (2) child manikins.

- Faculty members provide student supervision for all direct patient care. There are eight (8) full-time faculty members with eight (8) to ten (10) adjuncts used each semester depending on student enrollment. There is currently one (1) faculty vacancy due to a resignation in March.
- The director conducts faculty evaluations of all full-time faculty members each summer and the clinical coordinator conducts evaluations of the clinical adjuncts.

Students:

- Currently, 104 students are enrolled; with fifty (50) to sixty (60) students admitted each fall and spring. The director has the authority to alter the number of admissions depending on clinical placements and availability of faculty.
- Students are apprised of licensure eligibility requirements in the program application information, during the orientation meeting, and in the student handbook. Students sign an acknowledgement of receipt that is maintained in the student's folder.
- Students have an opportunity each semester to evaluate courses, clinical experiences, and instructors. Subsequently, appropriate changes may be made, based upon student responses.
- Students were very positive about the program during the meeting with the Program Evaluator and seemed well informed about student policies.

Program of Study:

- The curriculum has forty-two (42) credit hours and 1472 contact hours. It is organized in a logical manner with some front loading of nursing skills. The curriculum grid shows class, lab, and contact hours but it does not show clinical hours separately. The grid for the 2013-2014 Student Handbook will reflect class, laboratory, and clinical hours so that minimum required hours in class and clinical can be easily validated. This will better meet the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board requirements as well as clearly demonstrate alignment with Board requirements.
- The Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) data indicate the program is comprised of: 576 hours of didactic instruction; 192 hours in skills lab; 48 hours in simulation; and 656 hours of patient care clinical experiences.
- Currently, there are no course pre-requisites for the program, but the program is considering phasing in Anatomy and Physiology as a prerequisite over the next few years. Not only would this change decrease the students' load during the first semester and increase their chance of success, but also decrease the faculty teaching load.
- The program does not use online instruction for every course, but has Blackboard enhancement to assist students.
- The program conducts a detailed item analysis of every test to determine validity, reliability, and level of difficulty of each test item.
- The only recent curriculum change has been the incorporation of the DEC's.
- The program will be initiating the use of the HESI system of testing and remediation throughout the curriculum beginning in the next academic year. The Program Evaluator suggested considering ways to incentivize student achievement on the HESI comprehensive exam (including possibly making the test results part of the student's grade) that would be more reflective of the Board Education Guideline regarding the use of standardized examinations.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The Program Evaluator found that clinical contracts for clinical facilities being utilized at the time of the survey visit were current. However, the program will be developing a more efficient process to track and renew clinical contracts.

- The program has a policy on clinical practice site selection that is used as a guide to select clinical learning sites.
- Currently the program uses clinics, long term care facilities, acute care facilities, and long term acute care facilities for clinical learning experiences. The clinical coordinator is responsible for securing clinical sites. It appears that having one (1) assigned faculty member responsible for the clinical sites is helpful in securing an adequate number of sites for the large number of students in the program.
- Feedback from graduates' employers indicates that the program is appropriately preparing graduates to function in a variety of clinical settings.
- All patient assignments are made on the day of the clinical experience. In Level 1, the faculty make the patient assignments for the students; in Levels 2 and 3, the students, with the help of the faculty and staff, chose their own patient assignments.
- Students participate in at least one (1) simulation in each of the clinical rotation areas. Resultant to the move into the new building with six (6) simulation rooms, the use of simulation is expected to increase.
- Each clinical faculty member has ten (10) or fewer students in the clinical setting.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The VN program has recently moved into a spacious new state-of-the-art Health Science Center that has three (3) teaching theatres that seat sixty (60) students, three (3) skills labs with a total of thirty-five (35) beds, six (6) simulation rooms fully equipped with a variety of manikins including two (2) high-tech Sim-Man manikins. The building is well lighted with many areas for students to study in groups or alone. The program director and the faculty were involved with the building process from design through move-in and indicated that every accommodation they requested was provided. The college administration is very pleased with the outcome and feels the faculty made significant contributions to the building's functionality.
- The department is well supported by a Division Operations Manager and two (2) administrative assistants.
- All student services are available to the VN students with many students receiving assistance with study skills and test taking skills.
- The VN program follows the college records and retention policy.

Records and Reports:

- Student files contain all required documents including the signed receipt of license eligibility issues. These files are kept in a secure location.
- For many years student's clinical documentation has been kept in a large individual binder with the student's name on it in the skills lab that is not always locked. The Program Director indicated that the material in these binders will be moved immediately into folders that will be placed in locked filing cabinets to protect the confidentiality of the documents.
- All student records are kept for two (2) years after graduation.
- Faculty files contain the required documentation including the signed current faculty contract. Faculty evaluation documents are kept in three (3) separate files, but all are in secured locations.
- There are minutes of all committee meetings but more detail would help document discussion, decisions, and rationales for decision-making.

Total Program Evaluation:

- The Total Program Evaluation (TPE) plan includes all required areas to be evaluated as well as the evaluative criteria, methodology, frequency of evaluation, assignment of responsibility, and benchmarks of program and instructional effectiveness. The Program Evaluator suggested that if the TPE plan were set up as a continuous document, it would provide a clearer picture of the program over time. Further, the TPE plan would offer evidence of how the program identified trends and problem areas and implemented appropriate changes to resolve areas of concern.

DRAFT LETTER

October 21, 2013

Rhonda Bell, MS, RN, Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
San Jacinto College North
5800 Uvalde
Houston, TX 77049-4599

Dear Ms. Bell,

At the October 17-18, 2013 Board meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered a report of the June 11, 2013 routine survey visit to the San Jacinto College North in Houston, Texas Vocational Nursing Education Program. The program was found to be in compliance with all aspects of Rule 214. Therefore, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit.

If you have any questions or need assistance, please contact Board Staff at Virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov or 512-305-7660.

Sincerely,

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

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

Copy: Richard Bailey, PhD, Interim Provost
Serita Dickey, MSN, RN, Dean Allied Health and Sciences