

**Report of Routine Survey Visit  
 South Plains College, Levelland, Lubbock, and Plainview. TX  
 Vocational Nursing Education Programs**

**Summary of Request:** Consider the report of the June 14, 2013, routine six (6)-year survey visit to South Plains College (SPC) Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Programs in Levelland, Reese Center (Lubbock), and Plainview, Texas.

**Historical Perspective:**

- SPC is accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools (SACS). The next reaffirmation will be in 2014.
- There are three (3) VN programs: South Plains College at Levelland; South Plains College at Plainview; and South Plains College at Reese Center (Lubbock).
- The governing entity for all three (3) VN programs is South Plains College.
- The Levelland and Reese Center (Lubbock) VN programs have been in operation since 1978. The Plainview VN program has been operating since 1980.
- Although each program has an individual NCLEX-PN code and is not an extension site of the Levelland program, the three (3) programs have identical Board-approved curricula that will be implemented in Fall 2013.
- In the fall of 2009 SPC opened the Center for Clinical Excellence (CCE), a state of the art facility that utilizes the latest technology to educate health occupation students on the South Plains. The CCE was partially funded by the U.S. Department of Labor’s Community-Based Job Training Grant.
- The South Plains VN programs NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past six years are provided in the following table:

<b>Program</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2010</b>	<b>2009</b>	<b>2008</b>	<b>2007</b>
Levelland	94.13% (16/17)	100% (18/18)	100% (16/16)	94.74% (18/19)	88.89% (16/18)	100% (19/19)
Plainview Center	100% (16/16)	92.86% (13/14)	100% (20/20)	100% (19/19)	96.30% (26/27)	100% (12/12)
Reese Center (Lubbock)	96.92% (63/65)	100% (56/56)	100% (50/50)	96.61% (57/59)	98.36% (60/61)	100% (45/45)

**Summary of the Survey Visit Findings:**

The South Plains College VN programs have several positive features including a new educational facility housing the nursing programs on the Levelland campus, and the Center for Clinical Excellence simulation facility at Reese Center (Lubbock) that promotes intraprofessional training and collaboration.

**Pros:**

- The three (3) VN programs have a six (6) year history of above average NCLEX-PN® pass rates.
- All three (3) VN program directors are experienced nursing educators who have long tenure with the South Plains College vocational nursing programs.

- SPC administration expressed enthusiastic support for the VN program and values the role that the program plays in educating and providing nurses for the south plains areas west of Lubbock and in the panhandle of Texas.
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum.
- The directors, faculty and students expressed that employment opportunities were available to new graduates in hospitals and other healthcare settings in the area and students often find employment prior to graduation.
- A “Nursing Success Coordinator” is on staff and assists faculty and coordinators with student retention and visits students at all three campuses.
- The Center for Clinical Excellence Simulation facility staff is experienced in simulation and have presented posters and led seminars at international simulation conferences.

**Cons:**

- VN program student attrition rates have been greater than fifty percent (50%) for the past three years.

**Rationale for Staff Recommendation:**

The following requirement is in accordance with Rule 214.9, *Program of Study*, requiring the South Plains College VN program directors and faculty to evaluate outcomes of the fall 2013 implemented curriculum change.

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the report of findings of the routine six (6) - year survey visit to the South Plains College VN programs at Levelland, Reese Center (Lubbock), and Plainview, Texas and issue one (1) requirement: (See attachments # 2, #3, and #4)

Requirement #1:

The South Plains College Vocational Nursing Education program directors and faculty shall evaluate outcomes of the first graduating class under the fall 2013 curriculum change and submit a report to Board staff by January 2015.

Summary of Survey Visit  
South Plains College, Levelland, Lubbock, and Plainview, TX  
Vocational Nursing Education Programs

**Purpose of Survey Visit:** routine six (6)-year survey visit

**Date of Visit:** June 14, 2013

**Contract Program Evaluator Conducting Visit:** Susan Wilkinson, PhD, RN, CNS

**Contract Program Evaluator met with:**

- Sue Ann Lopez MSN, RN, ADN/VN Levelland Program Director, Dean of Health Occupations
- Jim Walker, MPA, Vice President for Academic Affairs
- Korbi Berryhill, MSN, RN, VN Program Coordinator, Reese Campus
- Judy Brunner, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Ashlee Davis, RN, VN Instructor (PT), Reese Campus
- Lori Hudson, LVN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus (PT), Levelland (PT)
- Sophia Lightner, BSN, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Jill Maddux, RN, VN Instructor (PT), Reese Campus
- Sue Matthews, BS, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Teresa McNabb, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Rebecca Poole, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Debra Robertson, RN, VN Instructor, Reese Campus
- Suzanne Griffin, RN, VN Program Coordinator, Plainview
- Toy Long, BSN, RN, VN Instructor, Plainview
- Leah Rios, LVN, VN Instructor (PT), Plainview
- Jennifer Ponto, BSN, RN, VN Instructor, Levelland
- Janet Hargrove, RN, VN Instructor, Levelland
- Dorothy Weaver, MS, Nursing Success Coordinator/Retention Specialist
- 16 Students (Levelland-5, Reese Campus-6, Plainview-5)

**Activities Carried Out by Contract Program Evaluator During Survey Visit:**

- Conducted initial meeting with administration
- Met with VN Program Directors from the Levelland VN program, the Reese Center (Lubbock) VN program, and the Plainview Center.
- Interviewed faculty from all three (3) VN programs
- Interviewed students from all three (3) VN programs
- Toured facilities housing the VN program at Levelland
- Toured facilities housing the VN program at Reese Center (Lubbock)
- Reviewed records and documents (student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, examinations, and other program documents)
- Reviewed Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook
- Conducted exit meeting with VN program directors, administration, and faculty

## Summary of Findings

### Findings Related to Administration:

- Sue Ann Lopez, MSN, RN, has served as director for the Levelland VN program for 15 years. She began her tenure at South Plains College as faculty in the associate degree nursing (ADN) program in 1994.
- Korbi Berryhill, MSN, RN, VN program director for Reese Center (Lubbock), became an instructor in the VN program in 1992. She has over seventeen (17) years as a program administrator.
- Suzanne Griffin, BSN, RN, program director for Plainview VN program, has twenty-three (23) years tenure as an instructor and three (3) years' experience as program director.
- South Plains College administration expressed enthusiastic support for the VN programs and values the role that the programs play in educating and providing nurses to the rural areas west of Lubbock and in the panhandle of Texas.
- The Vice-President of Academic Affairs discussed repurposing the former Reese Air Force Base Chapel into the building that houses the health professions simulation center.
- The directors and faculty voiced appreciation for the strong support they receive from the college administration.
- The directors and faculty reported that graduates currently have no difficulty finding employment and often have offers of employment prior to graduation.
- A Nursing Success Coordinator is on staff and assists faculty and coordinators with student retention and visits students on all three campuses.

### Findings Related to Program of Study:

- In October 2012, Board staff approved a major curriculum change for the three (3) VN programs to be implemented in fall 2013. The programs adopted one (1) integrated curriculum, adding pre-requisites to the program of study.
- The twelve (12) month VN program is designed to be completed in three (3) semesters.
- There are a total of 1488 contact hours in the program of study. 560 didactic hours; 112 skills/ 8 simulation lab hours; and 808 patient care clinical hours.
- The organization of the curriculum is based on sequential learning. A pre-requisite semester establishes the groundwork for the program.
- The program of study includes all required content, and is logically organized from simple to complex. The program of study is designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting. The majority of skills are taught in the initial semester of VN classes.
- The curriculum includes a 16 hour IV therapy course. Plans are to move it from the summer semester to spring to allow more time to practice and add venipuncture.
- The *Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the current curriculum.
- The teaching model includes face to face classes only.
- IT support as well as computer labs are available to faculty and students on each campus.
- Through the Reese Center simulation facility, faculty and staff are developing interdisciplinary simulation experiences with other South Plains health occupations students such as Emergency Medical Technician (EMT) students to foster interdisciplinary teamwork.
- Students from all three VN programs attend simulation training at the Reese Center Simulation facility in Lubbock. Each VN program campus has a dedicated skills lab in addition to utilizing the simulation center at the Reese campus.
- A dedicated, experienced simulation center staff has presented posters and led seminars at international simulation conferences.

- The three (3) South Plains College VN programs utilize standardized testing as part of the admission process (Accuplacer & TSI Assessment), and for program progression (ATI).
- Articulation to the South Plains College associate degree nursing program is easily facilitated.

Findings Related to Faculty

- The three (3) South Plains College VN Programs have adequate faculty:  
 Reese Center VN Program: 7 FT RNs, 2 PT RNs, and 1 PT LVN;  
 Plainview Center VN Program: 2 FT RNs, and 1 PT LVN;  
 Levelland VN Program: 2 FT RNs, 2 PT RNs, and 1 PT LVN.
- Current faculty have been employed from a period of one (1) to twenty four (24) years.
- Turnover rate for faculty at all three (3) programs is low. The current faculty appears stable and cohesive. Some ADN faculty help cover VN clinicals in the summer.
- Fifteen (15) faculty members from all three (3) programs were available for interview.
- Faculty confirmed they receive strong support from one another as well as the directors.
- Faculty enthusiastically shared the various instructional teaching strategies they used.
- Faculty meet BON qualifications and offer a rich diversity in their educational and experiential backgrounds.
- Faculty agree that morale is currently high, and described their current semester workweek as reasonable.
- The directors attend the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) Conference and funding is usually available for other faculty to attend.
- SPC nursing faculty members are able to attend local professional development offerings by Texas Tech University Health Science Center School of Nursing several times per year.
- Each VN program director holds a monthly meeting with their program faculty. At least once a semester, a combined meeting of all faculty from the three (3) VN programs occurs.
- Meeting minutes reflect collaborative decision-making.
- All regulations specific to faculty policies are in place with files providing evidence that policies related to faculty qualifications and evaluations are followed.

Findings Related to Students

- According to the program directors, the Levelland and Plainview VN programs have the capacity to admit up to thirty (30) students annually each August. The Reese Center VN program has the capacity to admit up to fifty 50 students semi-annually, in August and January. The table below reflects current enrollments:

<b>Program</b>	<b># Students enrolled</b>	<b>Level</b>
Levelland	17	Two (2)
Plainview	17	Two (2)
Reese Center (Lubbock)	36	One (1)
Reese Center (Lubbock)	31	Two (2)

- Sixteen (16) students were available to interview. (Levelland-5, Reese Center-6, Plainview-5)
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of location in their local community, the program reputation, small faculty/student ratio, and the NCLEX-PN® pass rates.
- Students expressed that they felt that employment opportunities were available to new graduates in hospitals and other healthcare settings in the area.
- Students cited clinical rotation experiences and simulation as highlights of the program.

- Students agreed that the program of study and methods of instruction are effective. They felt the classroom instruction prepared them well for clinical experiences as do the simulation experiences.
- Levelland VN program students commented that it would be helpful to have later access to the library and computer labs during the summer semester as the facilities closed at 4pm on most days.
- Student policies are in place.
- Students receive required information in their initial orientation verbally as well as in a handbook. Students indicated they received declaratory order information beginning with the week-long orientation in July and in the VN program student handbook.
- Students commented that they feel all current faculty are engaged teachers and approachable and committed to their success. They also commented that faculty members are attentive to students that may be struggling with studies.
- The majority of students reported they plan to seek further education to become registered nurses.

#### Findings Related to Clinical Learning Experiences

- The three (3) VN programs have active clinical contracts with thirty-one (31) affiliating agencies. The breakdown of clinical affiliating agencies per program is: Plainview, nine (9); Reese Center, fourteen (14); and Levelland, eight (8).
- The directors and faculty reported the affiliating agencies provide sound clinical opportunities for students.
- In each South Plains College VN program, faculty provide hands-on supervision in all clinical experiences.
- Preceptors are utilized for occasional home health or community-focused observational experiences in the Plainview VN program only. Board required ratios are maintained for these experiences.
- The Center for Clinical Excellence Simulation facility is staffed with a full-time experienced simulation director and staff. Faculty members participate with students in simulation activities.
- The clinical experiences are scheduled to match related didactic content in the classroom.
- The clinical evaluation tools demonstrate progression across the program and are used for formative and summative evaluation.
- Faculty members remediate students individually based on individual student needs. A dedicated retention specialist, the Nursing Success Coordinator, is also available to assist students.

#### Findings Related to Facilities, Resources, and Services

- A full array of student services is located on each VN program campus.
- Students have online library access to include 28 databases. Students also have access to the library at nearby Texas Tech University.
- Computer resources are available on each campus. Students are able to access various computer programs from home and through their handheld devices.
- The Levelland VN program director has a large private office in close proximity to administrative assistants, faculty offices and classrooms.
- Faculty members at each VN program are provided with fully-equipped, furnished private offices.
- Levelland and Reese VN programs have adequate restrooms located throughout the facilities.
- At the Levelland VN program location, there is a lounge with a refrigerator and a microwave. The main VN classroom on the Levelland campus is spacious, comfortable and adequately equipped.

- The Reese Center campus houses a four (4) room high-fidelity simulation center that is used by all three (3) VN program students and faculty. Multiple skills labs are well-equipped for skills training. Rooms are available on the Levelland campus for students to tape themselves performing skills and then submit to faculty for review.
- Virtual IV training equipment is located in the Center for Clinical Excellence Simulation Center.
- Each of the VN programs has a dedicated administrative assistant.
- At the Levelland VN program location, student files are locked and located in a secure room connected to the office housing the administrative assistants.

Findings Related to Records and Reports:

- Each program has a detailed Total Program Evaluation Plan (TPE) in place.
- Minutes indicate when decisions are made and evidence is provided that decisions are made based upon evaluation data.
- Student and faculty files reviewed contained all documents required by Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

October 18, 2013

Sue Ann Lopez, MSN, RN  
VN Program Director, Dean of Health Occupations  
South Plains College  
1401 S. College Ave  
Levelland, TX 79336

Dear Ms. Lopez:

At the October 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the June 14, 2013 routine six (6) -year survey visit to the South Plains College Vocational Nursing Education Program at Levelland, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue one (1) requirement:

Requirement #1:

The South Plains College Vocational Nursing Education program directors and faculty shall evaluate outcomes of the first graduating class under the fall 2013 curriculum change and submit a report to Board staff by January 2015.

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

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact board staff at (512) 463-4631.

Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN  
President

Sandi Emerson, MSN, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Kelvin W. Sharp, Ed.D., South Plains College President

DRAFT LETTER

October 18, 2013

Korbi Berryhill, MSN, RN  
VN Program Director  
South Plains College Reese Campus  
819 Gilbert Drive  
Lubbock, TX 79416

Dear Ms. Berryhill:

At the October 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the June 14, 2013 routine six (6) -year survey visit to the South Plains College Vocational Nursing Education Program at Reese Center, Lubbock, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue one (1) requirement:

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Sincerely,

Kathy Shipp, MSN, RN  
President

Sandi Emerson, MSN, RN  
Nursing Consultant for Education

copy: Kelvin W. Sharp, Ed. D., South Plains College President

DRAFT LETTER

October 18, 2013

Suzanne Griffin, RN, BSN  
VN Program Director  
South Plains College Plainview Center  
1920 W. 24<sup>th</sup> Street  
Plainview, TX 79072

Dear Ms. Griffin:

At the October 17-18, 2013 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the June 14, 2013 routine six (6) - year survey visit to the South Plains College Vocational Nursing Education Program at SPC Plainview Center, Plainview, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue one (1) requirement:

Requirement #1:

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Sincerely,

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Nursing Consultant for Education

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