

**Report of a Survey Visit and Notification of Program Closure
 Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request

Consider the report of the September 8-9, 2014, survey visit to Western Texas College (WTC), in Snyder, Texas Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program and notification of program closure. The survey visit was conducted by Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE and Virginia Ayars, EdD, MS, RN.

Historical Perspective:

- The VN Program at WTC has been in operation since 1972.
- The program was placed on Full Approval with Warning at the April 2014 Board meeting due to two (2) consecutive years of NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates under 80%.
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past fourteen (14) years are presented in the table below:

Examination Year January 1 – December 31	NCLEX-PN Pass Rate	Number of Students/Candidates if Available	Texas Average VN Pass Rate for Year
2000	80%	10	85%
2001	83%	18	89%
2002	85%	13	89%
2003	78%	18	90.45%
2004	71% Self-Study	17	92.6%
2005	80%	16/20	91.28%
2006	75% Self-Study	12/16	91.06%
2007	86.67%	13/15	89.28%
2008	86.67%	13/15	88.65%
2009	100%	15/15	88.19%
2010	61.11% Self-Study	11/18	88.68%
2011	83.33%	15/18	86.73%
2012	60.00% Self-Study	9/15	85.52%
2013	73.33%	11/15	86.43%

- The Self-Study Report for the 2004 pass rate indicated that the program had experienced a decreased applicant pool with somewhat less qualified students than in the previous enrollment cycles. They also cited grade inflation, limited student remediation, limited clinical experiences for students in the acute care setting, and academic weaknesses in the students who failed the NCLEX examination. There was no evaluation of the effectiveness of the curriculum.
- The Self-Study Report for the 2006 pass rate indicated that factors that may have contributed to the 75% pass rate included a continuing limited application pool, admission of possibly weak students, and weaknesses in standardized tests. In the Total Program Evaluation Plan submitted with the Self-Study Report, the dates for data collection and specific decisions based on data were not included.
- The Self-Study Report for the 2012 pass rate of 60.00% identified the following weaknesses: lack of adequate clinical facilities; students not taking advantage of the following: tutoring, a remediation packet, or computer supplemental study areas. The corrective measures included continuing to monitor students' weak areas, and evaluate students' performance on standardized examinations and on the NCLEX examination.
- Board Staff made several offers to conduct survey visits to the program, but the program director discouraged visits or asked that they be postponed until a later date.
- The long-standing program director and faculty member both resigned in August 2013 and Eva Culp, BSN, RN was approved to serve as program director.

- The program elected to not admit students in Spring 2014 and new enrollments in the VN program were suspended for Fall 2014.
- Nine (9) students graduated in September 2014.
- Currently the NCLEX pass rate before these nine (9) students test is 33.33%. Even if all nine (9) students pass the examination, the pass rate will be 73.33%.
- Board Staff have spoken with (2) WTC Board members and have had a number of telephone conversations with Dr. Barbara Beebe, College President, prior to the survey visit.

Report of the Survey Visit to Western Texas College:

- The administration of WTC requested that Board of Nursing representatives visit the campus and attend the College Board Meeting on September 8, 2014. The WTC Board agenda was to include an item of discussion about the future of the VN program.
- Board Staff prepared a report outlining the performance of the VN Program at WTC.
- Board Staff met with WTC representatives on campus prior to the WTC Board meeting and attended the WTC Board meeting that followed.
- Board Staff discussed at length the performance of the VN program in an Executive Session with the administration and WTC Board members.
- During the open WTC Board meeting that followed, Board members voted unanimously to close the VN program and to conduct a thorough feasibility study to determine the needs of the community for a future nursing program.
- On the morning of September 9, 2014, Dr. Beebe provided a campus tour to Board of Nursing Staff. The tour included a visit to the VN program facilities (combined classroom and nursing laboratory, storage area, break/study area, and faculty office). The area is in need of renovation and renewal.
- Board Staff met with Richard Schulze, ADN, RN, who has served as nursing faculty during the past year. Mr. Schulze described his role as faculty.
- Following the survey, an official notification of closure of the VN program effective September 8, 2014 was received in Board Office on September 1, 2014 (See Attachment #1).

Pros and Cons:

Pros:

- WTC has an important place in the community and is respected and supported by community leaders.
- Dr. Beebe has been President of WTC for two (2) years and has past experience in administration over programs including nursing.

Cons:

- Opportunities for clinical learning experiences in the local area are limited, though many alternate sites have not been explored.
- There is a scarcity of qualified nursing faculty in the community.

Rationales for Staff Recommendation:

- The WTC administration and Board have studied the issue and deliberated about the best decision for the VN program at this time. Since there are currently no students and there is no opportunity for success with the 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate, the WTC Board unanimously voted to close the program and conduct a feasibility study to determine the needs of the community for the future.
- Rule 214.3(d) *Closing a Program* requires that "When the decision to close a program has been made, the director/coordinator must notify the Board by submitting a written plan for closure which includes the following: (A) reason for closing the program; (B) date of intended closure; (C) academic provisions for students to complete the vocational nursing education program; (D) provisions made for access to and safe storage of vital school records, including transcripts of all graduates; and (E) methods to be used to maintain requirements and standards until the program closes."
- The program has met these requirements.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the survey visit and the notification of closure of the Vocational Nursing Education Program at Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas, effective September 8, 2014, and impose the conditions/requirements in the Board Order (See Letter and Board Order in Attachment #2).



September 11, 2014

Janice Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE
Nursing Consultant for Education
Texas Board of Nursing
William P. Hobby Building
333 Guadalupe, Suite 3-460
Austin, TX 78701-3944

Dear Dr. Hooper:

On September 8, 2014, the Western Texas College Board of Trustees voted to close the WTC LVN program. The LVN program at Western Texas College currently holds a Full Approval with Warning status. The decision to close was precipitated by pass rates in 2012 and 2013 of 60% and 73.33% respectively, and the current 2014 pass rate of 33.33%.

The nine students in the final LVN class were graduated from the program on August 28, 2014. All vital program records are kept secure in the former Director of Nursing's office. All student transcripts are kept secure in the Registrar's Office.

I would like to personally thank you for your assistance over the past 18 months. The transition from a long standing Program Director and Nursing Instructor, with a combined 62 years of service to Western Texas College, to a new Program Director and Nursing Instructors was a difficult one. The decision to close the LVN program was an arduous one, however it was one unanimously supported by the WTC Board of Trustees and WTC Administration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara R. Beebe".

Barbara R. Beebe
President

DRAFT LETTER

October 27, 2014

Barbara R. Beebe, PhD, President
Western Texas College
6200 College Avenue
Snyder, TX 79549

Dear Dr. Beebe,

At the October 23-24, 2014 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the September 8-9, 2014 survey visit to Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas related to the Vocational Nursing Education Program, and the letter of notification of closure of the Vocational Nursing Education Program effective September 8, 2014. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and the notification of closure of the Vocational Nursing Education Program effective September 8, 2014, and impose the conditions/requirements in the attached Board Order.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact board staff at Janice.hooper@bon.texas.gov or (512) 305-6814.

Sincerely,

Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

Copy: The Texas Higher Education Board

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of:

Western Texas College
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In Snyder, Texas

ORDER OF THE BOARD

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on October 23, 2014, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the report of the survey visit to Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas, related to the Vocational Nursing Education Program, and the letter of notification to close the Vocational Nursing Education Program at Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas, effective ----- pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Texas Administrative Code, Chapter 214.

After review and due consideration of the findings from the survey visit and history of the program, including currently being on Full Approval with Warning; and the official notification of closure of the Vocational Nursing Education Program effective -----; as well as the presentation by representatives from Western Texas College in Snyder, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the survey visit report and the notification of closure of the Western Texas College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Snyder, Texas, and imposes the following conditions/requirements:

Requirements:

Since no current students are enrolled in the program, no teach-out plan is necessary. The program has described the provision for storage of vital school records of the closed program. Therefore,

1. The program may not reapply for approval of a new proposal for a nursing education program until at least twelve (12) calendar months from the date of this order have elapsed.

Entered this 23rd day of October, 2014

Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director on behalf of the
Texas Board of Nursing