

**Report of a Follow-Up Survey Visit
 Vista College in El Paso, Texas
 Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request

Consider the report of the follow-up survey visit to Vista College Vocational Nursing (VN) Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, on August 13, 2014. The survey visit was conducted by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator.

Historical Perspective:

- Vista College VN Program has been in operation since 2004 and is licensed by The Texas Workforce Commission (TWC).
- Vista College was initially accredited by the Council on Occupational Education (COE) in 1989. In 2012, the college received reaffirmation for a four (4) year period.
- The main campus for the Vista College VN Program is located in El Paso, Texas. Three (3) extension sites for Vista College VN Program have been approved by Board staff. These are located in 1) Lubbock, 2) Beaumont, and 3) Amarillo, Texas. The Lubbock extension site admitted its first cohort of students in December 2009. The Beaumont and Amarillo extension sites admitted their first student cohorts in spring 2014.
- The NCLEX-PN® pass rates for the past five (5) years are presented in the table below:

Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2013	Full with warning	67.26%	76/113
2012	Full	74.55%	41/55
2011	Full	84.06%	58/69
2010	Full	93.75%	60/64
2009	Full	86.05%	37/43

- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate for all extension sites are included in the pass rate for Vista College. The pass rates in the table represent graduates from El Paso and Lubbock. There have not been graduates from the Beaumont and Amarillo sites.
- The Vista College VN program director submitted a Self-Study Report in response to the 2012 74.55% NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate as required by §214.4(c)(2)(B). The Self-Study Report was received in the Board Office on July 15, 2013.
 The following program weaknesses were identified in the Self-Study Report:
 - High turnover of program directors and faculty;
 - Vacant faculty positions;
 - Inconsistent use of established faculty orientation policy and process;
 - Inconsistent use of standardized testing resources for remediation;
 - NCLEX reviews not structured to meet student needs and learning purposes;
 - Inconsistent use of test blueprinting and exam development among faculty;
 - Lack of rigor in admission requirements;
 - Inconsistently applied attendance policy;
 - Lack of progression metrics from term to term; and
 - Lack of student accountability.
- Plans for corrective measures with accompanying time frames were included in the Self-Study Report to address the areas of weakness. The corrective measures to be addressed included:
 - Strengthening testing rigor by using test question item analysis, blue-printing of the NCLEX-PN® test plan, and increasing the difficulty of test questions;
 - Revising and implementing the faculty orientation policy and plan;

- Strengthening the rigor of admission requirements by increasing entrance score requirements and adding an additional screening tool;
 - Utilizing standardized examination package resources to promote student remediation and success;
 - Implementing monthly conference calls with nursing leaders at each location; and,
 - Revising and consistently implementing clinical grading tool, progression and grading policies.
- In April 18, 2014, the approval status of Vista College was changed from Full to Full with Warning due to 2013 pass rates.
 - In May 2014, Cathy Johnson, MSN, RN, NE-BC, was approved as Program Director.
 - The Vista College VN Program has had five (5) directors in the past two (2) years.
 - Each year the program admits four (4) student cohorts at each site. The April 23, 2014 Board Order restricted the program from enrolling more than their current enrollment (245 total students).
 - The enrollment has been maintained at 245 students as seen in the table below:

Campus	Level	Start Date	Graduation Date	No. of Students	Total Program Enrollment 8/13/14
El Paso	1	7/2014	7/2015	39	121 Students
	2	4/2014	4/2015	32	
	3	1/2014	1/2015	27	
	4	8/2013	10/2014	23	
Beaumont	1	7/2014	7/2015	19	50 Students
	2	4/2014	4/2015	16	
	3	1/2014	1/2015	15	
Amarillo	1	7/2014	7/2015	11	29 Students
	2	4/2014	4/2015	8	
	3	1/2014	1/2015	10	
Lubbock	1	6/2014	6/2015	10	45 Students
	2	3/2014	3/2015	10	
	3	11/2013	11/2014	12	
	4	7/2013	8/2014	13	
					245 Students

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):

The Contract Program Evaluator identified areas of compliance in the program as indicated in the Pros below. During the survey visit, a conference call that included the coordinators from all sites, the Contract Program Evaluator, and Board Staff in Austin was held. Most of the findings from the survey visit reflect the El Paso physical site.

Pros and Cons from the Survey Visit:

Pros:

- The VN Program Director is an experienced educator and administrator. She is respected by administration, faculty, students, and the professional community. Her time is devoted to administration of the program with no teaching responsibilities.
- Administration expressed support for the VN program and stated that it fulfills a continued need for nurses in the communities served.
- The Program Director stated that she is supported by the administration.
- Vista College added a new position that is filled by Dr. Moriston, an experienced nursing educator, who provides support for curriculum standardization, curricula mapping, professional development, policy development, etc.
- Students stated that they are satisfied with the program.
- The program of study incorporates creative methods for course delivery, including frequent communication with faculty, face-to-face instruction, student centered learning activities, and utilization of simulation.
- All clinical learning experiences are faculty supervised with hands-on direct patient care and use of preceptors in clinical settings. The program utilizes simulation to prepare students for clinical practice and for remediation.
- The program utilizes a full-time clinical coordinator to assist with clinical learning experiences and to liaison with clinical sites.
- The program has increased the number of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that

provide a variety of clinical learning experiences.

- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the long term care agencies, clinics, and some acute care hospitals.
- The Administration, the Program Director, and faculty have implemented corrective measures as identified in their Self-Study report.

Cons:

- For the past two (2) years, the program has experienced frequent turnover in leadership and faculty.
- NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates have been below 80% for first time test-takers for the examination years 2012 and 2013.

Rationales for staff recommendation:

During the discussion at the April 2014 Board meeting related to the five vocational nursing education programs that were placed on Full Approval with Warning, questions arose about whether increasing enrollments factored into the pass rates. The Board required that the affected programs restrict enrollments until Board Staff could conduct follow-up survey visits to reassess the situation in each program. Board Staff determined that each program should receive individual consideration in respect to future admissions and total enrollments.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the survey visit to Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, and impose the conditions/requirements in the Board Order (See Letter and Board Order in Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit
Vista College in El Paso, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey visit: Follow-up related to Board Order

Date of Visit: August 13, 2014

Board Representative Conducting Visit: Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator

Program Evaluator met with:

- Rebecca Zielinski, RN, BBA, Corp. Director of Healthcare Programs
- Dr. Shelley G. Moriston, Corp. Dean of Nursing Education Support
- Dyana Chahda, Director of Education, El Paso campus
- Cathy Johnson, RN, MSN, NE-BC, Program Director
- Margaret Jackson, RN, MSN, MBA, Program Coordinator
- Sally Gaines, RN, MSN, Program Coordinator (via conference call)
- Troy Palmer, RN, MSN, Program Coordinator (via conference call)
- Jose Gutierrez, RN, BSN, Faculty
- Marie Villa, RN, BSN, Faculty
- Lizzette Lopez, RN, BSN, Faculty
- Alejandra Anguiano, RN, Faculty
- Elizabeth Richardson, RN, BSN, Faculty
- Taneka Wilborn, RN, MSN, Faculty
- Jaclyn Reyes, RN, BSN, Faculty
- Tammy Purdon, LVN, Faculty
- Five (5) VN students

Program Evaluator:

- Reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- Reviewed the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook;
- Reviewed exams, assignments, and clinical evaluation tools;
- Reviewed clinical affiliation agreements;
- Interviewed five (5) students;
- Toured facilities housing the nursing program;
- Held initial conference with director, coordinator and administration;
- Participated in conference call with program coordinators at other sites and Board Staff in Austin;
- Met with faculty members;
- Reviewed records and documents including: student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan;
- Conducted exit interview with director, coordinator and administration.

Summary of Findings:

Administration

- Administration indicated the nursing program fulfills a need in the local community and has comparable status to other education units in the college.
- Cathy Johnson, MSN, RN, NE-BC has been the Program Director since May 2014. She possesses extensive experience in nursing education and administration.
- Ms. Johnson expressed that she is supported by administration and has the authority and autonomy to direct the program in all aspects
- Ms. Johnson's time is devoted to program administration with no teaching responsibilities.
- Clear channels of communication between the director and administration were evident.

- Ms. Johnson and Ms. Jackson indicate they have strong support from Ms. Zielinski and Dr. Moriston. Their roles are strictly supportive and not directive.

Program of Study:

- The twelve (12) month program of study is designed to be completed in four (4), twelve (12) week levels.
- The program is comprised of 1440 clock hours: 570 didactic hours and 870 clinical hours. This equates to 87.5 credit hours.
- The program of study is well organized and includes all Board required content.
- The organization of the curriculum is based upon an arrangement of simple to complex content, and designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* have been fully incorporated into the curriculum.
- Standardized testing is consistently used throughout the program for admission, progression, remediation, and readiness for the NCLEX-PN examination.
- An effective process for testing and testing analysis is consistently being used.
- The process for strengthening of testing rigor by using test question item analysis, blue-printing of the NCLEXPN® test plan, and increasing the difficulty of test questions is consistently being used.

Faculty:

- Eight (8) full-time faculty and eleven (11) part-time faculty teach on the El Paso campus. Seven (7) full-time faculty teach in Lubbock, six (6) full-time faculty teach in Beaumont, and three (3) full-time faculty teach in Amarillo.
- Faculty members are dedicated and possess strong nursing education experience and clinical experience in nursing practice.
- Faculty reported they are supported by each other, the program director and administration.
- Faculty expressed their workload is manageable and they have time to serve on committees including curriculum development. All committees meet at least every five (5) weeks utilizing conference calls to connect all campuses.
- Faculty were educated on interpretation of a test item analysis and feel comfortable using the tool.
- Faculty express satisfaction with having a clinical coordinator for lab and clinical sites.
- Faculty policies are well-written and in place per BON requirement.
- Faculty have regular meetings with minutes available
- There is adequate non-teaching time for faculty development and faculty expressed they have plenty of opportunities for development and training.
- Faculty turnover has significantly decreased with new experienced faculty hired.

Students:

- The program admits four (4) cohorts at each site per year. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants.
- At the time of the survey visit, two hundred forty-five (245) students were in the program.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of the desire to become a nurse, recommendations by graduates, and availability of enrollment slots.
- Students agreed the program of study is preparing them well for clinical practice and they cited hands-on learning experiences as being the most rewarding part of the program.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students. Students interviewed expressed they feel these are consistently applied.
- Five (5) students were available for interview and all expressed the desire to become a Registered Nurse (RN).
- Satisfaction with having a Student Services Coordinator for counseling and advisement was expressed.
- Each student has a student success plan in effect that is utilized throughout the program to promote accountability.
- Increased rigor in admission requirements was evident.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has increased the number of active clinical contracts with a number of affiliating agencies that provide more than adequate clinical opportunities for the curriculum.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are also utilized.

- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintains BON required ratios.
- Clinical preceptors are utilized and guidelines are well written.
- Clinical learning experiences are scheduled to correlate with didactic content.
- Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined.
- The clinical evaluation tools are based upon course content and indicate progression in the level of expectations.
- Clinical evaluation tools are used throughout the program, including formative and summative evaluations.
- Student expectations are detailed and clear.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services is offered on each site.
- Computer labs are available in the nursing building and students have twenty-four (24) hour access to online resources.
- There is ample, parking available in front of the building and adjacent to the program building.
- Skills and simulation labs are adequately equipped.
- Media equipment is available for every classroom.
- The program director is provided with a fully furnished private office. Faculty share offices with two per large office.
- The program has full-time clerical and secretarial support.
- The program director and faculty agreed that resources are adequate to meet all teaching needs.
- The facilities include restrooms, faculty and student lounges, break areas, and study areas.

Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, responsibilities, and faculty evaluations.
- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan that is used for decision making.
- Meeting minutes consistently reflect implementation of the TPE.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are up to date.
- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 214.

Future Plans indicated by Vista College:

- Purchasing more equipment for skills labs.
- Start an evening program to accommodate students that were unable to complete another VN program in El Paso due to its closure.
- Increase enrollment on all campuses.

DRAFT LETTER

October 27, 2014

Cathy Johnson, RN, MSN, NE-BC, Program Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Vista College
7731 North Loop Ave
El Paso, TX 79915

Dear Ms. Johnson,

At the October 23, 2014 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the August 13, 2014 survey visit to Vista College in El Paso, Texas, Vocational Nursing Education Program. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and impose the conditions/requirements in the attached Board Order.

Requirements are based upon program assessment directly related to the rules 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 sandi.emerson@bon.texas.gov or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

Katherine Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

Copy: Terri Lowery, MBA, President, CHCP

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

In the Matter of:

Vista College
Vocational Nursing Education Program
In El Paso, 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 follow-up survey visit to Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, 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, as well as the presentation by representatives from Vista College Vocational Nursing Education Program in El Paso, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the survey visit report and imposes the following conditions/requirements:

Requirements:

1. The program shall submit for Board Staff approval a proposed enrollment plan for each site considering the number of qualified nursing faculty and available qualified student candidates, and clinical resources. The enrollment plan will be effective upon Board Staff approval until April 2015. The Board will reconsider any further changes to the enrollment plan following the determination of the 2014 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate at each site. The enrollment plan is to be submitted to Board Staff no later than November 15, 2014.
2. The program shall submit for Board Staff approval any plans for an evening program before implementation.
3. The program shall provide evaluation data that indicates the effectiveness of the proposed corrective measures outlined in the Self-Study Report to Board Staff no later than January 1, 2015.

Entered this _____, 2014

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