

**Report of Survey Visit
Cisco College in Abilene, Texas
Vocational and Associate Degree Nursing Programs**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the joint survey visit to the Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program and the Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program at Cisco College in Abilene, Texas on August 5-6, 2015.

Historical Perspective (from the Cisco College catalog):

The history of Cisco College began in 1909 with the opening of a private school known as Britton Training School. This school operated successfully until military involvement in World War I so depleted the number of students that it was forced to close. In 1923, the Christian Church of Texas reopened the institution as Randolph College and operated it until 1932 as a four-year church-related school. Financial shortages required the college again to be closed. On May 8, 1939, Cisco citizens succeeded in getting legislation enacted which created Cisco Junior College as a part of the Cisco Independent School District. Such was the success of this venture that, in 1956, the college was separated from the public schools, and a Board of Regents was elected.

Today, Cisco College is an open enrollment, public, two-year institution whose mission is to provide quality learning experiences for its diverse student population. Academic transfer courses, career and technical education courses and continuing education courses are offered to support the needs of the traditional and non-traditional students.

Cisco College serves a primarily rural segment of West Central Texas. The main campus in Cisco functions as a traditional college campus with dormitories, athletics, band, and other student activities. The Abilene Educational Center is a commuter only location, offering a wide range of both day and evening classes to both traditional and non-traditional students.

The nursing programs are located in the Abilene Educational Center.

Vocational Nursing Education Program:

- The VN Program at Cisco College has been in operation since 1972.
- The 2014 NCLEX examination pass rate for the VN Program dropped below 80% and the program submitted a Self-Study Report in 2015.
- Board Staff reviewed the VN pass rates back to 1999 and this was the first drop in pass rate during that time period.

- The NCLEX examination pass rates for the past five (5) years are provided below:

Examination Year	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status	Board Requirement
2014	70.59%	36/51	Full	Self-Study Report
2013	97.87%	46/47	Full	
2012	94.87%	37/39	Full	
2011	84.91%	45/53	Full	
2010	98.15%	53/54	Full	

Associate Degree Nursing Education Program:

- The current ADN Program was approved by the Board in April 2013 as an LVN-to-ADN mobility program using the second year program of the Texas concept-based curriculum model.
- Their NCLEX examination pass rate for the first examination year was 88.89% (16/18). This was the first evidence of the effectiveness of a concept-based curriculum based upon NCLEX examination performance.
- The approval status of the new ADN Program was changed to Full Approval at the January 2015 Board meeting.
- The approval status of a previous ADN Program at Cisco College was withdrawn by the Board in January 2012 due to a four (4) year period of NCLEX examination pass rates below 80% and other noncompliance issues.
- A combined survey visit was conducted to the VN and ADN Nursing Education Programs on August 5-6, 2015 with interviews and reviews of both programs.
- The VN Program was previously accredited by the National League for Nursing Accreditation Commission until 2011, when the program voluntarily dropped the accreditation. The last visit from Board Staff was in 2002 since accredited programs do not receive regular survey visits from the BON.
- A BON site visit was conducted for the proposed ADN Program in 2012 prior to Board approval of the new program.

Summary of Survey Visit Findings (See Attachment #1).

Both VN and ADN programs were found to be in compliance with Rules 214 and 215.

Pros and Cons of Survey Visit:

Pros:

- The nursing programs at Cisco have the support of college administration and the community.
- The nursing programs at Cisco are important to the Abilene community.
- Nursing faculty exhibit commitment to the success of the students and the programs.

- The educational setting offers a learning environment and resources that promote excellence in education.
- The ADN Program has effectively used the concept-based curriculum and faculty have embraced active learning strategies.
- The design of the nursing programs at Cisco College allow easy mobility for advanced nursing education.

Cons:

- Program documents would be more effective if there were better alignment between the VN and RN Programs of study.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #1:

Aligning program objectives, syllabus formatting, major concepts, clinical evaluation tools, and the Total Program Evaluation Plan would facilitate easy transition from VN to ADN, and would create more effective program planning. The Program Directors and faculty received this possible recommendation very positively.

Therefore, the Program Directors and faculty are encouraged to review all program documents and consider making revisions that will bring closer alignment between the VN and ADN handbooks, program objectives, syllabi formatting, clinical evaluation tools, and the Total Program Evaluation Plan. The program shall provide a response to this recommendation to Board Staff by March 1, 2016, with a plan and timeline, if applicable.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the survey visit to the Cisco College Vocational and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs in Abilene, Texas and issue the recommendation in the attached letter (Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit
Cisco College in Abilene, Texas
Vocational and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs**

Purpose of Visit: Regular survey visit for VN program. Follow-up visit for change in approval status from Initial Approval to Full Approval for the ADN Program.

Date of Visit: August 5-6, 2015

Board Staff Conducting Survey Visit: Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE and Virginia Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE, Nursing Consultants for Education.

Nursing Consultants for Education met with:

- Bobby Smith, BBA, CPA, President of Cisco College
- Randy Golson, MA, Vice-President of Instruction
- Charlotte Dupree, PhD, Provost
- Charlotte Speegle, BBA, Executive Dean of Workforce and Economic Development
- Pearl Merritt, EdD, MS, MSN, RN, FAAN, Dean of Nursing and ADN Program Director
- Donella Tucker, MSN, RN, Director for VN Program, Coordinator for ADN Program
- Ruth Bargainer, MSN, RN, Director for Traditional Undergraduate at Texas Tech
- Jessica Kiehle, RNC, FACHE, MSN, MBA/HCM, Chief Nursing Officer, Abilene Regional Medical Center
- Kaye Eppenauer, RN, Alumna of first graduating class of ADN program
- Susie Cassle, MSN, Chief Nursing Officer, Hendrick Medical Center
- Kathryn Whitcomb, DNP, RN, Director of TTUHSC Simulation Center
- Twenty (20) VN and RN students
- Seven (7) VN and RN faculty

Nursing Consultants for Education:

- Held initial meeting with Administration and Program Directors (Dr. Merritt and Ms. Tucker);
- Met with Program Directors (Dr. Merritt and Ms. Tucker);
- Included Ruth Bargainer in all meetings as a guest from Texas Tech and a Candidate Fellow with the National League for Nursing;
- Attended a class for VN students and a class for RN students in progress;
- Interviewed twenty (20) VN and RN students in a mixed meeting;

- Dialogued with nursing administrators from Abilene Regional Medical Center and Hendrick Medical Center;
- Interviewed Cisco Alumna;
- Interviewed five (5) VN and two (2) ADN faculty; (met additional faculty member on August 6, 2015);
- Toured Cisco simulation and nursing skills labs;
- Toured Texas Tech simulation facilities and interviewed staff; and
- Conducted exit meeting with Administration, nursing faculty and Program Directors.

Documents Reviewed by Education Consultants included:

- Program mission and program objectives for VN and RN programs;
- Organization Charts;
- Total curricula for both VN and RN programs;
- Clinical Evaluation Tools;
- Faculty policies and handbook materials;
- Student Handbook;
- Total Program Evaluation Plans;
- VN Self-Study Report;
- Remediation Plan;
- Faculty minutes;
- Students' papers; and
- Faculty and student files.

Administration and Organization:

- The administration expressed strong support for the nursing programs and reflected on the painful experience of losing the previous ADN Program.
- The lines of communication in the organization allow for easy access and participation in governance and decision-making.
- Faculty verified that both Dr. Merritt and Ms. Tucker are readily available to students and faculty.
- Faculty Organization By-Laws are included in the Faculty Handbook.
- Faculty hold monthly faculty meetings as a combined group and committees meet separately as scheduled.
- Board Staff met at length with the Program Directors to discuss the program philosophy, objectives, concept-based curriculum, the Total Program Evaluation Plan, and offered some suggestions.
- Board Staff discussed the Remediation Policy and the plan to use standardized examinations in the programs.

Faculty:

- Board Staff observed two classes in session where faculty were using active learning strategies, encouraging student participation, asking questions of students, responding to students by name, providing examples, and teaching in language appropriate for

nursing students. Their teaching methods resulted in student engagement and student interest.

- Faculty placed emphasis on scope of practice and safety.
- Students expressed that faculty go beyond common expectations by offering tutoring, remediation, and feedback at times when students are available.
- At the time of the visit, there were six (6) full-time faculty for the VN Program; there was also one (1) full-time and one (1) part-time vacant position. There were one (1) full-time and one (1) part-time faculty for the ADN Program; there was also one (1) full-time and two (2) part-time vacancies.
- Faculty stated that Cisco provides faculty development opportunities to help faculty develop their teaching abilities and knowledge base.
- Faculty discussed their implementation of the concept-based curriculum and spoke of this model positively. Though the VN curriculum was not designed as a concept-based program, much of their teaching follows the principles.
- Faculty guided the Education Consultants describing their use of the Clinical Evaluation Tools for the three (3) levels. The Consultants encouraged their careful documentation, both formative and summative, on all the tools to ensure proper documentation of student progress.
- The VN faculty discussed findings in their Self-Study Report and measures they are implementing for improvement.
- It was evident that the faculty are very committed to the program and to the students.

Students:

- Students expressed that they attend Cisco College because of location, tuition, and the opportunities to proceed with further education in nursing. The programs were designed for articulation from VN to ADN at Cisco, and from ADN to BSN at Texas Tech in Abilene.
- Many of the students began as Certified Nurse Aides (CNAs) and the VN Program plans to require that new students hold this certification. The CNA Program at Cisco is both successful and popular with one hundred eighty (180) students having completed the program since it began about eighteen (18) months ago. They currently have one hundred (100) students on the waiting list for the CNA Program.
- Students indicated that the VN Program allows for excellent hands-on care experiences.
- One LVN in the ADN Program stated that she had worked as LVN for twelve (12) years but is learning a great deal in the ADN Program.
- Students in the ADN Program find the concept-based curriculum very helpful because they can transfer information; it “ties things together,” and they can see the “total picture.”
- They noted that the interactive experiences in skills lab are valuable, and that the nurses in the clinical setting are very helpful.
- They also stated that the faculty are available and supportive.
- The students in the ADN Program often help the VN students in their educational needs.

- Students requested a boot camp before the programs begin to help them anticipate the rigors in nursing education.
- One student requested an internship rotation at the end of the ADN Program.

Program of Study:

- The syllabi are complete and the program of study is designed for progression of knowledge and clinical experiences.
- Faculty develop test questions based upon course objectives and carry out test analyses following student testing.
- They also use standardized examinations to determine gaps in the curriculum and student abilities.
- The two programs could be better aligned with each other by using some common or similar documents. For example, the program objectives for each program could mirror the other with appropriate leveling.
- The Faculty Organization allows for faculty participation in decision-making and committee activities. The faculty minutes document these activities.
- A wide variety of clinical learning experiences provide opportunities for hands-on care in all clinical areas. VN students rotate through advanced areas in hospitals and other healthcare settings in the area.
- The Education Consultants suggested ways for the Total Program Evaluation Plan to better measure the effectiveness of program aspects for better evaluation of the entire program.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- Cisco College provides a full array of student services.
- The educational setting provides modern, fully-equipped classrooms and offices.
- There is ample parking on campus.
- The nursing skills lab and the simulation lab are up-to-date and offer a setting for competency attainment.
- A trained simulation lab coordinator maintains and supervises the labs.
- Texas Tech provides an excellent resource when assistance is needed.
- Students have access to this state-of-the art facility on the Texas Tech campus.

Records and Reports:

- Student and faculty files were reviewed and found to be in order.
- Confidential information is maintained in a secure fashion.

DRAFT LETTER

October 26, 2015

Pearl Merritt, EdD, MS, MSN, RN, FAAN, Director
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
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Donella Tucker, MSN, RN, Coordinator
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Cisco College
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Abilene, Texas 79602

Dear Dr. Merritt and Ms. Tucker:

At the October 22-23, 2015 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the joint survey visit to the Cisco College Vocational and Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs in Abilene, Texas. Based upon the discussion and review of the findings from the August 5-6, 2015 survey visit, it was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and issue the following recommendation:

Recommendation:

The Program Directors and faculty are encouraged to review all program documents and consider making revisions that will bring closer alignment between the VN and ADN handbooks, program objectives, syllabi formatting, clinical evaluation tools, and the Total Program Evaluation Plan. The program shall provide a response to this recommendation to Board Staff by March 1, 2016, with a plan and timeline, if applicable.

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.

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

Sincerely,

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

Copy: Bobby Smith, President