

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status
from Full to Full with Warning
Western Governors University, Austin, Texas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the proposed change in approval status for Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in Austin, Texas, from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2014 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and areas of noncompliance with Rule 215 identified in the 2014 Self-Study Report.

Historical Perspective:

- Western Governors University BSN program has been in operation since 2009.
- Jan Jones-Schenk, DHSc, RN, NE-BSC, Dean was appointed BSN program director in 2011 and meets all qualifications set forth by Board Rule 215.6, Administration and Organization.
- Western Governors University BSN program is accredited by the Collegiate Nursing Education (CCNE). The most recent program evaluation occurred in 2013. The next evaluation is scheduled for 2023.
- Western Governors University is also accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities. The most recent program evaluation occurred in 2014. The next evaluation is scheduled for 2017.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past four (4) years are included in the table below:

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2014	Full	71.43%	5/7
2013	Full	73.33%	11/15
2012	Full	87.50%	7/8
2011	Initial	New Program	N/A

- Due to the 2013 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 73.33%, the program director and faculty submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) that evaluates factors that may have contributed to graduates' performance and a description of corrective measures to be implemented.
- Factors identified by the faculty in the 2014 SSR that may have contributed to the decline in the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and led to the program's development and implementation of corrective measures include the following:

- Admission GPA requirements reviewed and revised to include Test of Essential Academic Skills (TEAS V) prior to admission to better correlate student success with NCLEX-RN®
 - Reviewed ESL student success with NCLEX-RN®, revised test preparation to include implementation of test taking strategies.
 - ATI® specialty scores reviewed, revised curriculum to include changing order of clinical rotation to better prepare students for (Assessment Technology Incorporated (ATI®)/NCLEX-RN®.
 - Large faculty turnover reviewed, faculty support revised to include evaluation of mentor effectiveness.
- After review of the SSR received in 2014, a response letter was sent by the Board Staff acknowledging the findings in the SSR and plan for corrective measures (See Attachment #1).
 - The Board Staff conducted a conference call with program representatives Dr. Jones-Schenk and Dr. Kelly-Cortez, Cherie Lowell, and Ben Mayfield on December 3, 2014 to discuss the process for changing the program's approval status from Full approval to Full Approval with Warning at the Board Meeting on January 22, 2015. The conference call provided an opportunity for the Board Staff and program representatives to discuss the process and implications of the warning status
 - Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program provided a letter to the Board in response to the conference call discussion (See Attachment #2).

Rationale for Recommendations:

Rule 215.4(c)(3)(A) states: "A warning may be issued to a program when the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-RN® candidates Is less than 80% for two (2) consecutive examination years..."

Staff Recommendations:

Move to change the approval status for Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Austin, Texas, from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning based upon the 2014 NCLEX-RN examination pass rate, information in the SSR, compliance with Rule 215, and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order (See Attachment #3).

Draft letter

January 22, 2015

Jan Jones-Schenk, DHSc, RN, NE-BC
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
Western Governors University
221 West 6th Street, Suite 1050
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Jones-Schenk:

At the January 22-23, 2015 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (BON) discussed the approval status of Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Austin, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2014, information in the 2014 Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status of the Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Austin, Texas from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning and impose the conditions and requirements in the attached Board Order.

If you have any questions or if we may be of any assistance, please contact Board Staff at Jo.Queen@bon.texas.gov or 512-305-7658.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Robert Mendenhall, President
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities



Texas Board of Nursing

333 Guadalupe Street, Ste. 3-460, Austin, Texas 78701
 Phone: (512) 305-7400 Fax: (512) 305-7401 www.bon.texas.gov

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

February 27, 2014

Veronica Abdur-Rahman, PhD, RN, Director
 Western Governors University
 221 West 6th Street, Suite 1050
 Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Abdur-Rahman:

The Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program at Western Governors University in Austin, Texas is required to complete a Self-Study Report due to the 2013 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate being 73.33%. Rule 215.4(c)(2)(B) related to *Approval* requires that "When the passing score of first-time NCLEX-RN® candidates is less than 80% on the examination during the examination year, the nursing program shall submit a Self-Study Report that evaluates factors that may have contributed to the graduates' performance on the NCLEX-RN® examination and a description of the corrective measures to be implemented. The report shall comply with Board Education Guideline 3.2.1.a. Writing a Self-Study Report on Evaluation of Factors that Contributed to the Graduates' Performance on the NCLEX-RN® Examination."

Education Guideline 3.2.1.a. may be accessed on the Board's web site at www.bon.texas.gov under the Nursing Education link, Guidelines. The Self-Study Report should be written by the **director and faculty** and is due in the Board office by **April 15, 2014**. The number of pages in the Self-Study Report should be at least 30 pages but not exceed 100 pages, including the data analysis. Please send a paper copy to the Board office to my attention.

The Education Consultants plan to have a phone conversation with each program about the Self-Study to provide guidance and answer questions. If you have not had this phone conversation with your consultant, please expect an email scheduling the call.

Board Staff will review the Self-Study Report and program information form, and will contact the program director if there are any questions or if additional information is needed. Board Staff will request an electronic copy after the review to be retained in the program file for future reference. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective measures described in the report should be integrated into the program's Total Program Evaluation Plan. The findings from the Self-Study Report should be very valuable in promoting the success of the program.

Please contact me if you have further questions. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Gayle P. Varnell, PhD, APRN, CPNP-PC
 Nursing Consultant for Education

Members of the Board

Kathleen Shipp, MSN, RN, FNP
 Lubbock, *President*

Nina Almasy, MSN, RN Austin	Deborah Bell, CLU, ChFC Abilene	Patricia Clapp, BA Dallas	Tamara Cowen, MSN, RN Harlingen	Sheri Crosby, JD, SPHR Dallas	Marilyn Davis, MPA, BSN, RN Sugar Land
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December 17, 2014

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Dr. Jo Queen, Nursing Consultant for Education
Texas Board of Nursing
333 Guadalupe Street, Ste. 3-460
Austin, TX 78701

Dear Dr. Queen:

We appreciate you meeting with our staff on December 3, 2014 to discuss the NCLEX-RN pass rates for Western Governors University (WGU). We have prepared this letter to be included with the Board Report for January 22, 2015.

WGU outlined in the 2014 Self-Study Report (SSR) a number of measures to be taken to improve NCLEX-RN pass rates. Notwithstanding these actions, one challenge that WGU has experienced in meeting the 80% pass rate results from the small population of our program and its impact on pass rates. In reviewing the NCLEX pass rate data for all BSN programs in Texas (provided by the TX Board of Nursing to WGU), we note the following observations:

- We have taken steps to address NCLEX pass rates as outlined in our self-study report and outlined with this letter, and include admissions standards, demonstrated assessments, and targeted interventions that will ensure students are well prepared for the exam.
- Our small number of examinees meant that our pass rates could be greatly affected by one person; two students who failed were admitted prior to the reforms described here. As our enrollment increases, our ability to meet the 80% pass rate will not be susceptible to such a high degree of elasticity.

In addition to the measures described in the 2014 SSR, we have implemented the following changes this year which we expect will have a favorable impact on our institutional pass rate:

- We have developed an **NCLEX-RN Bridge Program** that is part of each student's final clinical course: Nursing Role Transition. This program uses the results of the ATI Comprehensive Predictor to create an individualized student remediation plan for the identified knowledge gap. This program starts during the student's last term, but continues after graduation as the student prepares to take the NCLEX-RN examination.
- Students are required to submit evidence of their successful completion of the **Hurst Review** during the professional portfolio assignment in the Nursing Role Transition course.



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- As part of a newly designed **Student Success Initiative**, Student Mentors (faculty), the State Director, and the Student Success Team all meet weekly to develop plans for specific students who are struggling in the program. They pair a Student Success Counselor with each such student based on that student's specific needs and create a success plan to help the student overcome obstacles. Indicators for referral include (but are not limited to):
 - A student is unable to successfully master course specific exams on the first attempt;
 - A student is placed on modified progression after being unable to keep up with the assigned cohort (personal or academic);
 - A student is struggling with reading, writing, or oral expression;
 - A student has test anxiety;
 - Test taking strategies for identified ESL students
 - The Student Mentor, Course Mentor, Lab Instructor, or Clinical instructor feel the student needs additional support to be successful.
- Six months after graduation, the State Director contacts each graduate by e-mail and telephone to ask the graduate to complete the **Graduation Follow-Up Survey**. This is another attempt to not only gather data, but also to find out which students still need to take the NCLEX-RN examination. The survey also assesses which students were unable to pass the examination on the first attempt so that remediation may be provided.

WGU Provost, David Leasure, has issued the following statement:

The administration of WGU is in full support of the prelicensure nursing BSN program in Texas and commits the required support and resources to produce quality results. We have had some challenges with the NCLEX first time pass rate and believe that given the change in program leadership, solid improvement plans we have in place, and the firm university commitment to the program, this rate will improve.

We believe that these efforts will result in WGU consistently meeting the 80% pass rate in future years. We look forward to working with the Board of Nursing to further strengthen our program and our efforts to produce high quality nursing graduates.

Sincerely,

Jan Jones Schenk DHSc, RN, NE-BC

Texas State Nursing Director

Chief Nursing Officer / National Director College of Health Professions

Western Governors University

(801) 428-5304

jan.jonesschenk@wgu.edu

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Western Governors University
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
Austin, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on January 22, 2015, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of the Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Austin, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2014, information in the 2014 Self-Study Report, and compliance with Rule 215.

Representatives from Western Governors University in Austin, Texas discussed the change in approval status during a conference call with Board Staff and were offered the opportunity to provide a written response for the Board's consideration. After review and due consideration of the materials presented by Staff and filed by Western Governors University in Austin, Texas, the Board hereby **CHANGES** the approval status of Western Governors University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Austin, Texas from **FULL APPROVAL** to **FULL APPROVAL WITH WARNING** and imposes the following conditions/requirements:

1. In accordance with Rule 215.4(a)(3)(A), a program survey visit will be conducted by Board Staff during 2015.
2. An evaluation of the effectiveness of the corrective measures outlined in the 2014 Self-Study Report is to be submitted by the program to Board Staff no later than June 1, 2015, per Education Guideline 3.2.1.a.

Entered this 22nd day of January, 2015

Katherine A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director
On Behalf of the Texas Board of Nursing