

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status
 From Full Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval and
 Consideration of Report of Survey Visit
 Houston Community College in Houston, Texas
 Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the proposed change in approval status for Houston Community College (HCC) Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Full Approval with Warning to Conditional based upon the 2015 NCLEX® examination pass rate, findings from the 2014 Self-Study Report, findings from the December 1-2, 2015 focused survey visit, and areas compliance with Board Rule 215.

Historical Perspective:

- The ADN Program at HCC began in 1979.
- The ADN Program uses a face-to-face instruction model.
- There are currently three (3) tracks in the ADN Program: a new track following the newly required 60-credit hour curriculum; a track with the 72-credit hour curriculum in teach-out; and an LVN-to-ADN track. In addition, the program is offered in day and evening classes.

- The NCLEX-RN® pass rates for the past five (5) years are reflected in the table below:

Examination Year	NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)	BON Approval Status
2015	78.43%	80/102	Full with Warning
2014	70.86%	124/175	Full
2013	66.05%	142/215	Full
2012	85.80%	139/162	Full
2011	87.74%	136/155	Full

- The ADN Program was required to submit a Self-Study Report in 2014 due to the 2013 examination pass rate of 66.05%.
- In the Self-Study Report, the Program Director and faculty identified the following areas for correction:
 - Inadequate admission and readmission policies;
 - A need to change course scheduling to sixteen (16) weeks rather than eight (8) weeks and use team teaching;
 - Lack of qualified faculty;
 - A need to reconsider benchmarking of standardized examinations; and
 - Authorization of the new Program Director to administer the program as prescribed by Board rules.

A focused survey visit to the HCC ADN Program was conducted December 1-2, 2015 pursuant to the Board Order of January 22, 2015. The survey visit was conducted by Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator. [This survey visit was expanded to include the Vocational Nursing (VN) Program to evaluate the success of corrective measures implemented in the VN Program.]

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1)

Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:

Pros:

- Administration stated their full support for the ADN program and its importance to the programs in the Coleman College for Health Sciences.
- Dr. Joseph and the nursing faculty have revised the Faculty and Student Handbooks with resulting handbooks that are exemplary.
- Faculty minutes are greatly improved over ones reviewed in 2013 and provide better indication of faculty decisions based upon evaluation data.
- Graduate performance on the NCLEX shows a higher level of success for recent cohorts.

Cons:

- The complexity of scheduling classes and clinical experiences for the three (3) tracks in the ADN program requires a great deal of time of the Program Director and faculty who assist her.
- Students expressed that the skills lab needs additional equipment and requested more opportunities to practice in the lab to improve their skills. This would require faculty time and supervision.

Staff Rationale for Requirement and Recommendation from Survey Visit:

Board Staff have provided rationales for the requirement and recommendation resulting from the survey visit below:

Staff Rationale for Requirement from Survey Visit:

Students expressed that the skills laboratory needs additional equipment to allow more students to practice. Students also requested that the labs be open for additional hours to allow them to become more proficient in skills. This would require that funds are available for more equipment and that additional hours be provided for student practice in the lab. The program currently does not have a dedicated individual to oversee the lab or to oversee clinical scheduling for the nursing program. Faculty fill in the time needed for these multiple tasks. Even though it was learned that such a position is being considered for the Coleman College, an optimal outcome would be for a nurse position to be added to assume these tasks and to serve as a liaison to the clinical agencies in the community.

Requirement from Survey Visit:

The Administration shall ensure that adequate faculty resources and equipment are provided to promote student achievement of clinical objectives in clinical learning activities. Optimally, this would result in the establishment of a new position for a nurse to schedule and coordinate all clinical learning experiences and to ensure that nursing labs have adequate equipment for skill practice. The Administration shall provide a response to and a plan for this requirement to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2016.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #1 from Survey Visit:

The Program Director discussed concern about a change in the HCC time line for admission applications that shortens the time for handling criminal background checks as required by statute. Board Staff find her concerns are warranted and recommend that the time line be readjusted to allow ample time to select the best students for admission.

Recommendation #1 from Survey Visit:

The Administration and Program Director should re-evaluate the time line for admission of nursing students and make adjustments to allow ample time for processing the criminal background checks and make the best selection of students. A response to this recommendation shall be provided to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2016.

Staff Rationale for Requirements Related to Approval Status:

Rule 215.4(c)(3)(B) states: "A program may be placed on conditional approval status if the pass rate of first-time NCLEX-RN® candidates ... is less than 80% for three (3) consecutive examination years." Rule 215.4(a)(4) states that "Conditional approval is issued by the Board for a specified time to provide the opportunity to correct deficiencies. (A) The program shall not enroll students while on conditional approval."

Staff Recommendation:

Move to change the approval status of the Houston Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas from Full Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2015 NCLEX® examination pass rate, findings from the 2014 Self-Study Report, findings from the December 1-2, 2015 focused survey visit, and compliance with Rule 215; to accept the Survey Report of December 1-2, 2015; and to impose the conditions and requirements in the attached letter and Board Order (Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit
Houston Community College in Houston, Texas
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey visit: Focused Visit in Response to Board Order dated January 22, 2015

Date of Visit: December 1-2, 2015

Board Representative Conducting Visit: Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN, and Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator

Board Representatives met with Administration:

- Dr. Phillip Nicotera, President
- Dr. Gary Kesling, Dean
- Dr. Kimberly Beatty, Vice-Chancellor of Instructional Services
- Dr. Joanna Kile, Associate Interim Vice Chancellor of Workforce Instruction and Division of Extended Learning
- Thom Ronk, Curriculum Support and Research Manager
- Dr. Patricia Vgwu, Dean of Student Services
- Dr. Diana Castillo, College Operations

Board Representatives:

- Met with Jolly Joseph, PhD, RN, CNE, Program Director
- Met with the following nursing faculty:
 - Tawne Blackful, MSN, RN
 - Rita Callahan, PhD, RN
 - Sofia John, MSN, RN
 - Brenda Jackson McDaniel, PhD, RN
 - Deanna Rix, MSN, RN
 - Delores, Saddler, PhD, RN
 - Susan Thomas, MSN, RN
 - Cherie Watts, MSN, RN
 - Shana Westerfield, PhD, RN
 - Lakisha Williams, MS, RN
 - Penelope Williams, PhD, RN
 - Kathleen Wilson, MS, RN
 - Theresa Wooten, MS, RN
 - Regina Ricks, Advisor
- Reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- Reviewed the Student Handbook and Faculty Handbook;
- Reviewed exam questions and clinical evaluation tools;
- Reviewed the plan outlined in the Self-Study Report;
- Reviewed data in the 2015 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) and faculty profile;
- Interviewed over thirty-five (35) first semester ADN students;
- Toured facilities housing the nursing program;
- Visited a class in session;
- Reviewed minutes of faculty meetings and the Total Program Evaluation Plan; and
- Conducted exit interview with administrators, Program Directors, and faculty.

Summary of Findings:

Administration:

- Many of the administrators are new in their positions, but they all expressed a strong support for the ADN Program.
- Jolly Joseph, PhD, RN, CNE has been the Program Director since 2013. She has been a faculty member at HCC since 1991.
- The nursing programs are located in the Coleman College for Health Sciences that includes numerous health science programs. A new ten-story addition is planned across the street from the present building that will provide expanded classrooms and laboratories including simulation labs.

Program of Study:

- The twenty (20) month program of study allows for various tracks and course scheduling.
- The Program is seeking the best arrangement of prerequisite and support courses in the curriculum.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECs) (2010)* are included within the syllabi, but their application to progression of clinical objectives is not clear.
- Observation of the classroom setting indicated that faculty engage students in active learning with questions and student interaction.
- Standardized examinations are currently used across the program with an exit exam requirement. Board Representatives discussed the use of standardized examinations with the Director, with faculty, and with Administration.

Faculty:

- There are currently fourteen (14) full-time and ten (10) part-time faculty teaching in the ADN program.
- The faculty group are a cohesive group who are highly credentialed and experienced. They expressed a love for teaching nursing and working with students.
- The newly revised Faculty and Student Handbooks are comprehensive, meet Board requirements, and offer guidance to the faculty.
- The faculty members currently have regular meetings and a set of minutes were available for review. A previous Board requirement for the faculty minutes to reflect decision-making based upon evaluation data has been met.
- A faculty development policy is in place and faculty records contain documentation of numerous faculty development activities in all areas. A number of nursing faculty commented that they will be attending a national nursing workshop in January.
- Administration stated that additional funding is being provided for faculty development.
- Currently there are five (5) vacant positions among the faculty and any growth in student enrollment mandates filled positions.
- Faculty assume responsibilities for student remediation.
- Board Representatives discussed the advantages of team teaching with the faculty.
- New faculty indicated their orientation to the faculty role had been extensive. In addition, HCC provides faculty development to all faculty.

Students:

- The program admits two (2) cohorts annually, in January and August. The number of students admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants.
- At the time of the survey visit, there were 250 students enrolled in the program.
- Students interviewed exhibited some anxiety and most of their concerns related to their need for consistency in the program, more guidance, and clearer communications.
- Students indicated they chose HCC because of reasonable tuition, the reputation of the program, and more frequent admission times.

- Students requested that more lab equipment be available to allow more students to practice skills at one time. They also requested that the skills lab be available for opportunities to practice skills and gain expertise.
- Other expressed areas of concern included inconsistencies in care plan expectations and the decreased credit hours for health assessment. Faculty are aware of this concern and are addressing solutions.
- The student population in the ADN program includes a diverse ethnic population and about twenty-five percent (25%) are males. Most of the students expressed they plan to continue their nursing education in the future.
- The Program Director stated that changes in processing applications for new students do not allow enough time to handle criminal background checks prior to enrolling students as required by statute.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program provides hands-on patient care opportunities for all required clinical settings: maternal and pediatric care, long term care, acute care, and community care.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are fully utilized, and one (1) lab is shared with the Vocational Nursing Education Program.
- Faculty provide supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintain Board required ratios.
- Clinical learning experiences are scheduled to correlate with didactic content.
- The clinical evaluation tools differ across courses and Board Representatives suggested moving toward a common tool with progression across the curriculum.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services is offered on the campus.
- Classrooms are well-lit, spacious, and conducive to learning.
- Skills and simulation labs are large, but students state that there is a lack of adequate equipment to meet the needs of student groups.
- Media equipment is available for every classroom.
- Offices for the Program Director and faculty are appropriate for a comfortable work environment with privacy for counseling students.
- The many open areas in the building invite students to study individually or in groups throughout the building.

Records and Reports:

- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan that is designed to determine the effectiveness of various aspects of the program. The Program is encouraged to more closely connect information in the TPE to the faculty minutes.
- Meeting minutes indicate faculty are involved in faculty meetings and make decisions based upon rationale.

Challenges Discussed During the Survey:

- Improving success on the NCLEX examination.
- Achieving consistency in syllabi and clinical evaluation tools.
- Adjusting to changes in administration.
- Engaging all faculty in continuing faculty development.
- Meeting student needs in clinical instruction in the labs.

DRAFT LETTER

January 25, 2016

Jolly Joseph, PhD, RN, CNE
Program Director
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
Houston Community College
1900 Pressler St.
Houston, Texas 77030

Dear Dr. Joseph:

At the January 21-22, 2016 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the approval status of the Houston Community College (HCC) Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, and reviewed the Report of the December 1-2, 2015 Survey Visit to the program. Members of the Board wish to thank you and XXXXX for being present to answer questions.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to:

- Change the approval status of the Houston Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Full Approval with Warning to Conditional Approval based upon the 2015 NCLEX® examination pass rate, findings from the December 1-2, 2015 focused survey visit, and areas of noncompliance with Board Rule 215 identified in the 2014 Self-Study Report;
- Accept the Report of the December 1-2, 2015, Survey Visit; and
- Impose the requirements and conditions in the attached Board Order.

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

A recommendation is a specific suggestion based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which the program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

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 A. Thomas, MN, RN, FAAN
Executive Director

Copy: Dr. Phillip Nicotera, President

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
Houston Community College
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program
Houston, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on January 21, 2016, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status of and the survey visit to the Houston Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, based upon the 2015 NCLEX® examination pass rate, findings from the 2014 Self-Study Report, findings from the December 1-2, 2015 focused survey visit, and compliance with Rule 215 pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215.

After review and due consideration of the filed materials, as well as the presentation by representatives from the Houston Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby ACCEPTS the report of the December 1-2, 2015 survey visit and CHANGES the approval status of the Houston Community College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from FULL APPROVAL WITH WARNING TO CONDITIONAL APPROVAL and hereby imposes the following conditions/requirements:

Requirements:

1. The program shall not enroll students while on conditional approval status.
2. The program will remain on conditional approval status until the program demonstrates a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination. The NCLEX-RN® examination year is October 1, 2015 through September 30, 2016.
3. The program must demonstrate full compliance with Rule 215 prior to consideration of a change in approval status.
4. The Administration shall ensure that adequate faculty resources and equipment are provided to promote student achievement of clinical objectives in clinical learning activities. Optimally, this would result in the establishment of a new position for a nurse to schedule and coordinate all clinical learning experiences and to ensure that

nursing labs have adequate equipment for skill practice. The Administration shall provide a response to and a plan for this requirement to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2016.

Recommendation:

1. The Administration and Program Director should re-evaluate the time line for admission of nursing students and make adjustments to allow ample time for processing the criminal background checks and make the best selection of students. A response to this recommendation shall be provided to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2016.

Entered this 21st day of January, 2016

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