

## **Report of Innovative Pilot Project Using the Texas Concept-Based Curriculum in Six Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs**

### **Summary of Request:**

Consider the final report for the Pilot Program for Innovative Applications to Professional Nursing Education titled "Using a Concept-Based Instruction Approach Among a Group of Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs".

### **Historical Perspective:**

- At the April 2005 Board meeting, Rule 227, *Pilot Programs for Innovative Applications to Professional Nursing Education*, was adopted enabling professional nursing education programs the opportunity to develop proposals for innovative education delivery models that required a waiver from rule requirements that would be necessary to implement an innovative model.
- The Board also approved the Request for Proposals (RFPs) for Board of Nursing Innovative Professional Nursing Education Pilot Programs consistent with Rule 227.
- At the April 2005 meeting, Midwestern State University, in collaboration with Vernon College and United Regional Healthcare system, submitted the first proposal for a pilot program. The proposal was approved and successfully implemented.
- Seven (7) innovative pilot projects have been approved by the Board since 2005. Four (4) nursing education programs have completed their projects and submitted final reports:
  - Victoria College Associate Degree Nursing Program in Victoria: "Preparing Certified Clinical Instructors";
  - Western Governor University: "Program Expansion While on Initial Approval Status";
  - Coastal Bend College Associate Degree Nursing Program in Beeville, Texas: "The Use of BSN-Prepared Nurses Engaged in Graduate Studies to Serve as Certified Clinical Instructors"; and
  - Tarleton University Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Program in Stephenville, Texas: "Using BSN RN Lab Mentors for Increasing Enrollment and Integrating Simulation Across the Curriculum: Metrics of Success".
- At the January 2013 Board meeting, the Innovative Pilot Project, "Using a Concept-Based Instruction Approach Among a Group of Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs", was approved and has now graduated the first cohorts of students taught using the concept-based instruction approach.

### **History of the Innovative Pilot Project "Using a Concept-Based Instruction Approach Among a Group of Associate Degree Nursing Education Programs":**

- Building on outcomes and deliverables from a 2011-2012 Perkins Grant Project, Trinity Valley Community College (TVCC) in collaboration with five (5) other Texas community college associate degree nursing education programs received a two (2) year Nursing Innovation Grant (NIG) from the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board (THECB).
- The NIG, "The Texas Concept-Based Nursing Curriculum Project", had two (2) major goals: the first was completion of a standardized sixty (60) semester hour curriculum for

Texas community college associate degree nursing education programs and, the second was implementation of the first year of the concept-based curriculum model at a minimum of six (6) community college associate degree nursing programs.

- The six (6) associate degree nursing education programs participating in the grant included: El Centro College in Dallas; McLennan Community College in Waco; Trinity Valley Community College in Kaufman; San Antonio College in San Antonio; Weatherford College in Weatherford; and, Wharton County Junior College in Wharton.
- Each of the six (6) programs held full approval status from the Texas Board of Nursing.
- All except one (1) (Weatherford College) held national nursing accreditation from the Accreditation Commission for Nursing Education (ACEN).
- The initial cohorts of pilot project students began the program of study in August 2013, completing in May 2015. As outcome metrics, the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates, retention rates, and mean standardized testing scores of the initial cohort were maintained for comparison with the prior graduating cohorts.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the control group and for the initial cohort groups are reported in the table below. The 2015 examination pass rates may include candidates who were not part of the concept based curriculum cohorts. The 2014 examination pass rates reflect only candidates who were taught under the previous curriculum.

	<b>2015 NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate</b>	<b>2014 NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate</b>
<b>Program 1</b>	75.66%	82.47%
<b>Program 2</b>	86.96%	87.78%
<b>Program 3</b>	81.39%	69.97%
<b>Program 4</b>	84.07%	81.38%
<b>Program 5</b>	82.71%	90.80%
<b>Program 6</b>	89.83%	86.96%

- For the 2015 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate year, all but one (1) program met the state benchmark of 80% or better.
- Extensive curriculum assistance was developed as part of the project and is available to all programs desiring to use the Texas Concept-Based Curriculum model.
- Since the pilot project began, an additional nine (9) associate degree programs have adopted the Texas Concept-Based Curriculum model and will graduate initial cohorts over the next eighteen (18) months.
- The project director and collaborating programs committed to the completion of a two (2) year cohort despite grant funding ending at the end of year one (1) of the implemented curriculum. The nursing education leaders involved in this project have committed to sustaining the collaboration from this project and have formed the Texas Nursing Concept-Based Curriculum (TxNCBC) Consortium which meets twice a year in conjunction with the Texas Association of Deans, Directors, and Program Directors of Nursing Programs (TADDPNP).
- The project director reports satisfaction with the overall outcome of the project. A significant impact from the magnitude of this curriculum project was the impact on faculty as they were introduced to concept based teaching methodologies. One (1) lesson learned from this project is that resources, time, and exposure for faculty development are essential to the success of any program that adopts a concept-based curriculum approach.
- The following narrative comments reflect impressions from graduates and program directors involved in the pilot project:

- “Transition from a blocked curriculum to the Concept Based curriculum was a challenging but rewarding experience.”
- “Turnover of faculty may be viewed as a negative occurrence, but it has resulted in the hiring of new, younger, and energetic faculty members.”
- “Cost has increased due to increased number of contact hours faculty spend with students in campus laboratory activities. For the experience to be effective, the ratio of faculty to students needs to be a higher (more faculty). Ten students to one faculty is not effective in the laboratory activities. We are attempting to keep the ratio at five students to one faculty in lab setting”.
- “Overall, graduates are better prepared for the workforce.”
- “I wanted to take a moment to tell you how the concept model we used in our studies transfers smoothly going from our TVCC studies to BSN work. Many of my fellow students at UTA are struggling with nursing theory and nursing concepts. It feels like a continuation to me. I wanted to give you this feedback on my BSN course studies compared to TVCC. You made a good choice when you changed the curriculum”.

**Staff Recommendation:**

No action from Board members is required as this is an informational report.