

**Report of Survey Visit
 University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas
 Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the June 2, 2016 survey visit to the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio (UTHSCSA) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in San Antonio, Texas pursuant to the January 21, 2016 Board Order.

Historical Perspective:

- UTHSCSA was founded in 1959 as an institution of health science education and research located in the South Texas Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas.
- Health Science education is provided by the School of Medicine, School of Nursing, School of Dentistry, Graduate School of Biomedical Sciences, and the School of Health Professions.
- The School of Nursing was established in 1969 and houses graduate and undergraduate programs in nursing. The pre-licensure BSN program includes two (2) tracks:
 - A Traditional Track for individuals completing their first baccalaureate degree to prepare them for licensure as registered nurses; and
 - An Accelerated Track for individuals who hold at least a baccalaureate degree in another discipline and who are seeking preparation for licensure as a registered nurse.
- Other programs in the School of Nursing include:
 - An Alternate Entry Master's Degree for graduates of Associate Degree or Diploma Nursing Education programs;
 - A Master of Science in Nursing (MSN) Program;
 - A PhD in Nursing Program; and
 - A Doctorate of Nursing Practice (DNP) Program.
- The BSN Program (both tracks) is approved by the Board of Nursing.
- Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN was appointed Dean of the School of Nursing in 2008.
- The BSN Program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Education (CCNE).
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for the past five (5) years is provided in the following table:

Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2015	Full with Warning (January 2016)	79.73%	240/301
2014	Full - Self Study required	78.49%	270/344
2013	Full	83.54%	269/322
2012	Full	84.67%	232/274
2011	Full	88.99%	194/218

- The program submitted a comprehensive Self-Study Report in 2015 due to the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 78.49%. The Self-Study Report evaluated factors that may have contributed to the graduates' performance on the licensure examination and provided a description of corrective measures to be implemented.
- In January 2016, the Board changed the approval status of the BSN program from Full Approval to Full Approval with Warning, and issued a requirement for a survey visit.
- A survey visit was conducted on June 2, 2016 by Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE and Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN that focused on the program's identified areas for improvement. Sunset Staff Skylar Wilk and Emily Johnson observed the survey visit.

Summary of Survey Findings: (See Attachment #1)

Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:

Pros:

- Strong administrative support
- Positive outcomes of implemented corrective measures identified in the Self-Study Report
- Ongoing plans for improvement
- Completion of the Academic Learning and Teaching Center

Cons:

None identified

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of findings in the survey visit report to the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas School of Nursing Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program, acknowledge the program's efforts in implementing corrective measures identified in the Self-Study Report, and encourage the continuation of such efforts in the future. (See letter in Attachment #2).

Summary of Survey Visit
University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, Texas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program

Purpose of Survey Visit: Change in approval status to Full with Warning

Date of Visit: June 2, 2016

Board Staff Conducting Visit: Virginia D. Ayars, EdD, MS, RN, CNE, and Janice I. Hooper, PhD, RN, FRE, CNE, FAAN

Sunset Staff Observing the Survey Visit: Skylar Wilk and Emily Johnson

Education Consultants met with:

William L. Henrich, MD, MACP, President, UTHSCSA

Jacqueline Mok, PhD, Vice President of Academic Affairs, UTHSCSA

Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN, Dean, School of Nursing

Cynthia O'Neal, PhD, RN, Assistant Dean, School of Nursing

David A. Byrd, PhD, Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Services, School of Nursing

Linda Jean Porter-Wenzlaff, PhD, RN, Clinical Professor

James A. Cleveland, MSN, RN, Clinical Assistant Professor

Six (6) Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Students

Nursing Faculty:

- Heidi Benavides, MSN, RN
- Glenn Ermer, MSN, RN
- Lark Ford, PhD, RN
- Rozmin Jiwani, PhD, RN
- Susan McDonald, PhD, RN
- Jennie Shaw, MSN, RN
- Lisa Sievers, MSN, RN
- Cathy White, MSN, RN

Education Consultants:

- Held initial conference with Dr. Henrich, Dr. Mok, Dr. Breslin, and Dr. O'Neal;
- Toured the 130,000 square foot Academic Learning and Teaching Center that is equipped with the "next generation" of active learning enhanced by technology;
- Met with Dr. Breslin, Dr. O'Neal, and Dr. Byrd;
- Observed nursing students in Health Assessment Class receiving instruction and practicing new assessment skills in the skills laboratories;
- Toured the Simulation Laboratories guided by Mr. Cleveland;
- Met with six (6) students representing the two (2) tracks at different points in the program;
- Met with eight (8) nursing faculty members;
- Reviewed program documents and records as indicated in sections below;
- Conducted a pre-summary exit conference with Dr. Breslin and Dr. O'Neal; and
- Conducted the exit interview with Administration.

Summary of Findings:

Administration:

- Dr. Henrich and Dr. Mok expressed support for the nursing programs and recognition of the pre-licensure nursing program's efforts to achieve future success on the NCLEX-RN® examination.
- In response to a discussion about the changing environment in which nursing education is preparing graduates for nursing practice in the twenty-first century, Dr. Henrich identified current pressures in nursing education:
 - Maintaining adequate nursing faculty and providing faculty development;
 - Educational funding dependent upon enrollment; and
 - Responding to meeting the needs for diversity in students admitted to the program.
- The report of survey findings during the exit interview validated that the program has been implementing measures described in the Self-Study Report with positive indicators of their effectiveness.
- Dr. Breslin has initiated changes in the organizational structure that provide an administrative and leadership staff to empower nursing faculty to devote their attention to instruction and to meeting student needs.

Program of Study:

- Board Staff reviewed all nursing syllabi and program documents.
- The Traditional Track is designed for nursing students who have completed two (2) years of support courses and prerequisites to enter the nursing curriculum. This track may be completed in four (4) regular semesters and one (1) summer semester.
- The Accelerated Track is a fifteen (15) month compressed track for students who have earned a previous baccalaureate or higher degree.
- The faculty have carefully analyzed all aspects of the program of study and designed strategies to strengthen the curriculum.
- The curriculum plan for both tracks meets requirements in Rule 215 and syllabi are clear and student-friendly. However, faculty have identified some gaps in the curriculum and areas for improvement in pedagogical approaches and sequencing of courses, and are making changes accordingly.
- Faculty members are addressing any inconsistencies in the alignment of course outcomes and test blue prints.
- Faculty members have completed mapping the curriculum to the NCLEX-RN® test plan and are correcting the identified gaps.
- Faculty are also correcting grade inflation and reviewing the current use of standardized examinations.
- Results of these changes have already made a difference in the success patterns of students who have taken the NCLEX-RN® examination.
- Standardized examinations are given across the curriculum in order to provide a timely remediation for students who may be at-risk. Faculty determined that items on the standardized examinations match the current didactic content.
- In order to increase rigor in the program, the ranges of grades have been raised, and there is more emphasis on the scores on standardized examinations.

Faculty:

- There was a 39.5% turnover in nursing faculty between 2009 and 2011, resulting in new faculty hires and a stronger faculty orientation, especially for inexperienced new faculty.
- Two (2) orientation workshops are presented during each academic year. A new faculty handbook was created.
- Dr. Breslin surveyed the nursing faculty to identify areas for faculty development, and one particular topic that surfaced was item-writing and test analysis.
- The Faculty Handbook provides faculty with extensive information including the organizational environment, faculty responsibilities, faculty and student policies, workload, evaluation, and faculty helps.
- Interviewed faculty who teach courses across the programs spoke positively of this arrangement.
- Faculty described their teaching assignments and strategies for applying didactic content to the clinical practice area.
- Some faculty enjoy using active learning in the classing such as “flipping the classroom”.
- Faculty interviewed included ones with many years of experience and ones who are new to teaching nursing courses.
- Adjunct clinical faculty are included in faculty orientation and in decision-making.
- The percentage of full-time faculty is about 64%. Board Staff suggested consideration for future hires to include more full-time faculty. The program is continuing to progressively increase the percentage each year.
- The program is seeking to strengthen the plan for recruitment, retention, and development of nursing faculty.

Students:

- Increased student enrollments have increased faculty workload and placed additional burdens on clinical sites.
- Students interviewed were very articulate and aware of the current status of the program.
- Though they are anxious about new grading policies and more emphasis on standardized examinations, students spoke very positively about the nursing program.
- They also indicated their future plans to pursue advanced degrees in nursing.
- There are currently four hundred seventy-eight (478) students in the traditional track and one hundred seventy-two (172) students in the accelerated track.
- An estimated two hundred six (206) students are expected to have completed degree requirements between May 2016 and August 2016 and may be counted in the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate.
- The Self-Study Report indicated the admission policies for readmission, progression, and graduation are being reviewed for revision. In addition, the program is seeking a mechanism for selection of students who will be successful in the program, as well as early identification for at-risk students.
- Students expressed a need for better communication in the program at all levels. This seemed pertinent since Dr. Breslin had earlier discussed the importance of more face-to-face communications among students and faculty, and promoting faculty skills for crucial conversations and handling situations of incivility.
- A Student Success Center was initiated in Fall 2014 in response to a need for remediation resources. The Success Center (under the direction of Dr. Byrd) offers a variety of student services including academic coaching, supplemental study sessions, personal tutoring, writing tutoring, academic skills workshops, and peer mentoring. High-

achieving students are recruited to serve in the supplemental study sessions and peer mentoring.

- The reading ability of students is evaluated and an intensive reading program has been established.
- Students have representation with voice and vote on two (2) faculty committees.
- Board Staff reviewed the Student Handbook.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has contracts with a large number of quality clinical affiliating agencies and long-standing relationships in the area facilitates maintaining these experiences.
- Skills labs and an entire simulation suite provide valuable preparation of the students prior to their engagement in hands-on patient care.
- Staff to coordinate and maintain labs is available to ensure the adequacy of these experiences.
- Faculty described successful experiences with a Dedicated Education Unit (DEU) model of clinical instruction implemented at a general and surgical unit at the Methodist Hospital. They plan to involve other partners soon.
- The current clinical evaluation tools demonstrate the evaluation of students in meeting the clinical objectives and measure progression in expected behaviors of students across the curriculum.
- The program is studying the possibility of including a competency-based tool to evaluate students' ongoing competency in essential nursing skills.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- The educational facilities in the School of Nursing provide a positive learning environment for the program. The administration is aware of infrastructure repairs in the future planning.
- The Self-Study Report acknowledged that the physical space and technology for classroom learning needs to be upgraded. Future improvements are being planned.
- Faculty and students identified a need for upgrading internet access since often students lose connection when taking examinations. A solution is under investigation.

Records and Reports:

- Official files and records are maintained securely.
- Board Staff were provided access to clinical contracts and student files. The signed receipt for information about eligibility and licensure may be found in student files.
- Program documents are organized and easily accessible.

Total Program Evaluation:

- The Total Program Evaluation Plan is based upon the CCNE format and includes current data and decision-making based upon data.
- Board Staff reviewed many sets of faculty minutes that indicate faculty participation in decision-making based upon evidence.

DRAFT LETTER

Eileen T. Breslin, PhD, RN, FAAN, Dean
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio
7703 Floyd Curl Drive, MC 7942
San Antonio, Texas 78229-3900

Dear Dr. Breslin:

At the July 21-22, 2016 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the survey visit to the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in San Antonio, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit, acknowledge the program's efforts in implementing corrective measures identified in the Self-Study Report, and encourage the continuation of such efforts in the future.

If you have questions or if we may offer assistance, please contact Board Staff at 512-305-7660 or Virginia.ayars@bon.texas.gov.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: William L. Henrich, MD, President, UTHSCSA
Jacqueline Mok, PhD, Vice President of Academic Affairs, UTHSCSA
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education