

**Report of Survey Visit  
Ranger College in Early, Texas  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Summary of Request:**

Consider the report of the February 21-22, 2017 survey visit to Ranger College Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) Education Program in Early, Texas. This was a joint survey visit of the ADN and Vocational Nursing (VN) education programs with separate Board reports for each.

**Historical Perspective:**

- Ranger College has been in operation since 1925, making it one of the oldest continuously operating public two-year colleges in the state of Texas. In 2011, Ranger College was named by Community College Week as the fifth fastest-growing two-year college in the nation.
- Ranger College holds accreditation from the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges with the most recent reaffirmation of accreditation status received in 2014. The next reaffirmation is scheduled for 2023.
- Ranger College's main campus is located on 50-acres within the Ranger city limits and serves six counties in north central Texas. Extension campuses are located in Brownwood, Early, Stephenville, and Comanche.
- Ranger College has a current enrollment of 2052 students.
- Ranger College offers Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of Applied Science degrees and certificates in Workforce Programs, such as the VN Education Program, which began in 1975.
- Ranger College's ADN Education Program was approved as a single-entry, two-year traditional nursing education program during the October 2010 Board meeting. The first cohort of 29 students was admitted in January 2011; 20 students graduated December 2012. The last cohort of 16 students educated using the traditional curriculum graduated in December 2016.
- In January 2016, Board approval was given to adopt Concept-Based Curriculum using the Texas Model. The first cohort admitted 13 students who will graduate December 2017.
- A Licensed Vocational Nurse (LVN)-to-ADN Bridge Program was approved and will admit the first cohort of 20 students in Fall 2017.

- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past five years are included in the table below:

<b>NCLEX Examination Year</b>	<b>BON Approval Status</b>	<b>NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate</b>	<b>Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)</b>
2016	Full	68.75%	11/16
2015	Full	100%	12/12
2014	Initial with warning	68.42%	13/19
2013	Initial	75.00%	15/20
2012	New Program		

- Due to the 2013 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 75.00%, a Self-Study Report (SSR) was written and submitted to Board staff, as stipulated by Rule 215.4.c. The SSR identified factors contributing to graduates' performance and descriptions of corrective measures to be implemented.
- The program's approval status was changed from Initial to Initial with Warning at the quarterly Board Meeting in January 2015.
- Carolyn Zapata, MSN, RN, was appointed as the Dean of Nursing in 2015 and serves as the ADN Program Director. Ms. Zapata meets all qualifications set forth by Board Rule 215.6, Administration and Organization.

#### **Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):**

- A survey visit was conducted to the Ranger College ADN Nursing Education Program on February 21-22, 2017 by Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE as a follow-up to the change to Concept-Based Curriculum.
- Findings from the survey visit indicate the program is in compliance with Board Rule 215.

#### **Pros and Cons from Survey Visit:**

##### **Pros:**

- The ADN Program Director, Carolyn Zapata, MSN, RN, has served in this role for two years. Prior to that, Ms. Zapata taught at Tarleton State University for eight years.
- The full-time ADN faculty are all Registered Nurses (RNs); three are Master's-prepared, two are Bachelors-prepared, and one is an Advance Practice RN. There is one adjunct MSN faculty. Signs of fellowship and administrative backing to facilitate student success are evident in conversations and interactions.
- The nursing Program Director and nursing faculty are dedicated and inventive in their delivery of nursing education and remediation, incorporating Concept-Based Curriculum using the Texas Model. Simulation and skills lab equipment, and computer technology, (i.e., teaching strategies, student participation, testing) are evident. Methods of evaluating students include formative and summative clinical evaluation tools. Faculty demonstrate a team effort and willingness to assist students in a learning environment conducive for the students (See Attachment #1).

**Cons:**

- It is difficult to fill vacant faculty positions because of salary.

**Rationale for Staff Recommendation:**

Rule 215.6.(d) states, "Salaries shall be adequate to recruit, employ, and retain sufficient qualified nursing faculty members with graduate preparation and expertise necessary for students to meet program goals."

**Staff Recommendation:**

Move to accept the findings in the report of the survey visit conducted on February 21-22, 2017 to Ranger College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Early, Texas and issue the recommendation below:

**Recommendation #1:**

- The college administration and the Program Director are strongly encouraged to consider increasing faculty salaries, if there are plans to increase enrollment in the ADN Education Program.

**Summary of Survey Visit  
Ranger College Early, Texas  
Associate Degree Nursing Education Program**

**Purpose of Survey visit:** Follow-up to the change to Concept-Based Curriculum

**Date of Visit:** February 21-22, 2017

**Nursing Education Consultant Conducting Visit:** Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE

**Nursing Education Consultant met with:**

- Dr. Bill Campion, President;
- Dr. Billy “Bubba” Adams, Vice President of Instruction;
- Dr. Orlando Moreno, Vice President, Brown County;
- Carolyn Zapata, MSN, RN, Dean of Nursing, ADN Program Director;
- Five nursing faculty; and
- 22 nursing students.

**Education Consultant:**

- Held initial conference with Program Director and administration;
- Reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- Reviewed the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook, and clinical contracts;
- Reviewed exams and clinical evaluation tools;
- Toured Ranger College facilities housing the nursing program;
- Met with 22 nursing students;
- Interviewed five nursing faculty;
- Reviewed student and faculty files, minutes of faculty meetings, and the Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan;
- Conducted an exit interview with Program Director, and administration; and
- Presented results of survey visit in verbal report to Program Director, and administration.

**Summary of Findings:**

Administration and Organization:

- Administration indicated the nursing program is valued by the college and fulfills a need in the local community, crediting Ms. Zapata for her leadership and dedication to Associate Degree Nursing (ADN) education.
- The ADN program is in the Department of Nursing, which offers programs, including: Generic ADN, Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN)-to-ADN, and Vocational Nursing (VN).
- Carolyn Zapata, MSN, RN, Dean of Nursing, ADN Program Director, has been the director of the ADN Program for two years and an educator for 10 years.
- Ms. Zapata co-teaches one section of Transition to Professional Nursing Practice, which is a two-hour course, and one section of Medical Terminology, which is a one-hour

course. Ms. Zapata indicates she has adequate time to fulfill the program coordinator responsibilities.

- Ms. Zapata commended the faculty for their collegiality, and dedication to the students and the program.
- Clear channels of communication between the Program Director and administration are evident in conversations and interactions. Ms. Zapata shared she has full authority for program operation.
- The Program Director's (Ms. Zapata's) and faculty employment contracts extend for 12 months.
- There is one part-time Recruiter who has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).

#### Faculty:

- Four full-time faculty teach in the ADN program. There are one vacant full time and one vacant part-time faculty positions. The program has one adjunct faculty. When there is a vacancy, it is difficult to fill because of faculty salaries.
- Faculty members are all RNs, with two faculty having Advanced Practice Registered Nurse (APRN) licenses. APRN faculty are given release time to meet practice requirements to maintain a practice. All faculty have experience in teaching with various content expertise and clinical backgrounds.
- Faculty reported they receive support from each other, and the Program Director. Experienced faculty mentor less-experienced faculty.
- Faculty members are involved in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Faculty serve on all committees.
- Two faculty have been in place since the new program began, while two faculty began Fall 2016.
- Faculty have regular meetings with collaborative decision-making from data included in the Total Program Evaluation. Minutes are recorded.

#### Students:

- The program has the capacity and is approved to admit one cohort of 50 students each January. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants, however, for the first cohort, 29 applicants were accepted. The first cohort of students using the Concept-Based Curriculum will graduate in December 2017.
- At the time of the survey visit, 22 students, who were admitted in January 2017, were in the program. Thirty-one qualified applicants were considered for admission.
- Students stated that the faculty are very supportive, helpful, and approachable with positive clinical and simulation learning experiences.
- Students discussed that the educational resources (e.g. library, financial aid, counseling) are considered a valuable component of the educational program.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, available to students and meet Board Rules.

#### Program of Study:

- The 24-month program of study is designed to be completed in four semesters.
- The program of study is logically organized and includes all Board-required content.

- The curriculum is concept-based using the Texas Model, and designed to ensure students have critical thinking skills and clinical judgment upon completing the nursing education program.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS) (2010)* are incorporated into the curriculum.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for admission, progression, and remediation purposes. No high-stakes standardized testing is used for graduation purposes.
- Evaluation methods and tools to measure progression are according to Board Rule 215.9 and Board Education Guideline 3.7.3.a.

#### Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with a number of affiliating facilities where students are able to correlate concept-based learning with practical experiences.
- As the Program Director, Ms. Zapata establishes and maintains clinical agreements and sites. Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined with annual affiliation agreement renewals.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are located in the same building that houses the nursing education program. The simulation lab has both mid- and high-fidelity mannequins, along with low fidelity task trainers. There are adequate supplies available for student use.
- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences in Board-approved ratios.
- The clinical evaluation tools are based upon course content and the DECs, and they measure students' formative and summative progression throughout the program.

#### Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- Student services (e.g. counseling; financial aid) are offered on campus.
- A library with computer resources, current journals, online databases, and group meeting rooms is available.
- There is open parking available adjacent to the program's building.
- The building housing the ADN Nursing Education Program is conducive to learning, with classrooms equipped with media technology, and the skills and simulation lab.
- The program coordinator and faculty have furnished shared offices.
- The program has full-time clerical and secretarial support.
- The facilities include restrooms, break areas, and faculty and student lounges.

#### Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, responsibilities, and faculty evaluations.
- Meeting minutes indicate collaborative decision-making.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 215.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.

- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 215.

Total Program Evaluation:

- The program has a Total Program Evaluation plan that is used for decision making.

DRAFT LETTER

April 21, 2017

Carolyn Zapata, MSN, RN, Dean of Nursing  
Program Director Associate Degree Nursing Education Program  
Ranger College  
3201 Coggin Avenue  
Brownwood, TX 76801

Dear Ms. Zapata:

At the April 20-21, 2017 meeting, the members of the Texas Board of Nursing considered the report of the survey visit to the Ranger College Associate Degree Nursing Education Program in Early, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit conducted February 21-22, 2017 and issue the recommendation below.

Recommendation #1:

The college administration and the Program Director are encouraged to consider increasing faculty salaries for increased enrollments in the ADN Education Program.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rule. The program must respond in a method of the program's choice.

If you have any questions or if we may be of assistance, please contact Board Staff at (512) 463-4631.

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dr. Bill Campion, President  
Dr. Billy "Bubba" Adams, Vice President of Instruction  
Dr. Orlando Moreno, Vice President, Brown County