

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

**Summary of Request:**

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

**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.
- The VN Education Program's first cohort of students graduated and took State Board examinations in 1954.
- The NCLEX-PN® 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	81.03%	47/58
2015	Full	90.12%	73/81
2014	Full	83.64%	46/55
2013	Full	87.84%	65/74
2012	Full	73.85%	48/65

- Alice Murphy, MPH, BSN, RN was appointed as the VN Program Director in September, 2016. Ms. Murphy meets all qualifications set forth by Board Rule 214.6, Administration and Organization.

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

- A routine, six-year survey visit was conducted to the Ranger College VN Nursing Education Program on February 21-22, 2017 by Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE.
- Findings from the survey visit indicate the program is in compliance with Board Rule 214.

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

- The VN Program Director, Alice Murphy, MPH, BSN, RN, has served in this role for six months. Prior to that, Ms. Murphy taught at Patty Hanks Shelton School of Nursing for 15 years.
- Of the seven VN faculty, one Registered Nurse (RN) and two VNs are full-time. The four faculty who are part-time consist of three are RNs, (one is Masters-prepared), and one VN. Signs of fellowship and administrative backing to facilitate student success are evident in discussions. In addition to the faculty, there is one half-time recruiter who has a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN).
- The Program Director and faculty have 12-month contracts.
- The Program Director and nursing faculty are committed and resourceful in their delivery of nursing education, incorporating active learning strategies, small groups, and computer technology. Remediation is offered after exams and as tutoring by the faculty on an individual basis and in small groups. In addition to unit exams and final exams, students are assessed using formative and summative clinical evaluation tools. Faculty demonstrate collegiality and create a learning environment conducive for students (See Attachment #1).

**Cons:**

- There are currently two full-time and two part-time faculty vacancies. It is difficult to fill vacant faculty positions because of salary.

**Rationale for Staff Recommendation:**

Rule 214.6.(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 Vocational 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 for increased enrollments in the VN Education Program.

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

**Purpose of Survey visit:** Routine six-year visit

**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;
- Alice Murphy, MPH, BSN, RN, VN Program Director;
- Four nursing faculty; and
- 52 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 52 nursing students;
- Interviewed four 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. Murphy for her leadership and dedication to Vocational Nursing (ADN) education.
- The VN program is in the Department of Nursing, which offers programs, including: Generic ADN, Licensed Vocational Nursing (LVN)-to-ADN, and Vocational Nursing (VN).
- Alice Murphy, MPH, BSN, RN, VN Program Director, has been the director of the VN Program for six months and an educator for 15 years.
- Ms. Murphy teaches one (1) section of Gerontology, which is a three-hour course, and co-teaches one section of Obstetrics/Neonatal Nursing, which is a three-hour course. Ms. Murphy states she is able to fulfill the program coordinator responsibilities.

- Ms. Murphy is supportive of the faculty, commending them for their ability to work as a team, and for their willingness to help the students and support the VN program.
- The administration is very supportive of Ms. Murphy as seen in conversations and interactions. Ms. Murphy said she has full authority for program operation.
- The Program Director'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:

- Three full-time and three part-time faculty teach in the VN program. There are two vacant full-time and two vacant part-time faculty positions. When there is a vacancy, it is difficult to fill because of faculty salaries.
- Four faculty members are RNs, with one faculty having a Master's of Science in Nursing (MSN) degree. Three faculty members are VNs. Faculty teaching experience ranges from eight months to four years with various content expertise and clinical backgrounds.
- Faculty reported they support and assist each other, working together and with the Program Director as a team. Experienced faculty assist novice faculty.
- Faculty members are involved in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation. Faculty serve on all committees.
- Faculty have regular meetings with collaborative decision-making from data included in the Total Program Evaluation. Minutes are recorded.
- Full-time faculty annually attend Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators, which is paid for through a Perkins Grant, and have access to resources, such as Nurse Tim. Faculty expressed a desire for additional staff development workshops.

#### Students:

- The program has the capacity and is approved to admit 30 students at each of the four campus sites (Early, Ranger Main Campus, Stephenville, and Comanche) each August for a total of 120 VN students. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants, however, for the current cohort, 63 students were admitted, and 53 students are currently enrolled. At the time of the survey visit, 52 students, who were admitted in August 2016, were in the program. The current cohort will graduate August 2017. With 80 students currently enrolled in pre-requisite nursing courses, it is anticipated there will be 120 applicants in August 2017.
- Students stated that the faculty are caring, and approachable in didactic, clinical and skills/simulation labs. Students acknowledge access to faculty in face-to-face meetings during office hours, or through text messages or telephone calls in the evenings and on weekends.
- Students discussed that the library, financial aid, and counseling services are available, providing additional resources to the educational program.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, available to students and meet Board Rules.

#### Program of Study:

- The 12-month program of study is designed to be completed in three semesters.
- The program of study is logically organized and includes all Board-required content.

- The curriculum is progressive to ensure students have entry-level nursing knowledge and clinical skills upon completing the VN 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 214.9 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 didactic learning with clinical experiences.
- As the Program Director, Ms. Murphy 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. Labs have low fidelity task trainers with plans to implement high-fidelity mannequins on the Brownwood campus beginning Summer 2017. 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 VN Nursing Education Program is conducive to learning, with classrooms equipped with media technology, areas where students can work in small groups, and the skills/simulation lab.
- The program director and faculty have furnished 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 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.

- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 214.

Total Program Evaluation:

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

DRAFT LETTER

April 21, 2017

Alice Murphy, MPH, BSN, RN  
Vocational Nursing Program Director  
Ranger College  
300 Early Boulevard, Suite #105  
Early, Texas 76802

Dear Ms. Murphy:

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 Vocational 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