

**Consideration of Change in Approval Status
From Initial Approval with Warning to Full Approval
University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the proposed change in approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing (BSN) Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval with Warning to Full Approval based upon the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and compliance with Rule 215.

Historical Perspective:

- The University of St. Thomas BSN Program was approved at the July 2011 Board meeting and enrolled the first cohort of students in May 2012, graduating in May 2014.
- Poldi Tschirch, PhD, RN, CNE has served as Program Director since the program began.
- The university is regionally accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges. The BSN program is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education through December 31, 2019.
- The NCLEX-RN® examination pass rates for the past four (4) years are included in the table below:

Examination Year	Board Approval Status	NCLEX-RN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2016	Initial with Warning	92%	23/25
2015	Initial - Self-Study Report Required	67.65%	23/34
2014	Initial	68.42%	13/19
2013	New program	Initial	Initial

- Due to the 2014 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate of 68.42%, the Program Director and faculty were required to submit a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2015 that would evaluate factors that may have contributed to the graduates' performance on the

NCLEX-RN® examination and a description of the corrective measures to be implemented.

- A comprehensive, in-depth SSR was received in the Board office on April 15, 2015. The Program Director and faculty members identified multiple factors in the SSR that may have contributed to the NCLEX-RN® pass rate falling below 80% as well as corrective measures to improve success, including:
 - Appointment of a full-time Nursing Admissions Counselor;
 - Renovation of a new, larger facility to house the Nursing Success Center;
 - Revision and enhancement of the Comprehensive Retention Plan;
 - Enhancements to academic Boot Camps;
 - Creation of the Student Testing/Evaluation Task Force to establish structures, processes, and outcome criteria;
 - Refinement of faculty orientation process;
 - Further incorporation of Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) products into the curriculum; and
 - Faculty completion of NCSBN online Test-item Writing course.
- In January 2016, the Board changed the approval status of the BSN program from Initial Approval to Initial Approval with Warning, and issued a requirement for a survey visit.
- A survey visit was conducted on August 25, 2016 by Beverly Skloss, MSN, RN, Contract Program Evaluator, pursuant to the January 21, 2016 Board Order.

Rationale for Recommendations:

The program has demonstrated a pass rate for first-time candidates of at least 80% on the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination and is currently in full compliance with Rule 215.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to change the approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval with Warning to Full Approval based upon the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and compliance with Rule 215, as indicated in the attached letter and Board Order (See Attachment #1).

DRAFT LETTER

January 23, 2017

Poldi Tschirch, PhD, RN, CNE, Dean
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
University of St. Thomas
3800 Montrose
Houston, TX 77006-4626

Dear Dr. Tschirch:

At the January 19-20, 2017 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) discussed the approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, based upon the NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate for 2016 and compliance with Rule 215.

Based upon the discussion and review of information, it was the decision of the Board to change the approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, from Initial Approval with Warning to Full Approval.

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

Sincerely,

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

Copy: Dr. Robert Ivany, University of St. Thomas President
Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education

BEFORE THE TEXAS BOARD OF NURSING

ORDER OF THE BOARD

In the Matter of
University of St. Thomas
Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program
In Houston, Texas

A public meeting of the Texas Board of Nursing, hereinafter referred to as the Board, was held on January 19, 2017, 333 Guadalupe, Tower II, Room 225, Austin, Texas, to consider the approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas, pursuant to Section 301.157, Texas Occupations Code and 22 Tex. Admin. Code Chapter 215, based upon the 2016 NCLEX-RN® examination pass rate and compliance with Rule 215.

After review and due consideration of the materials presented by Staff and filed by the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas, and other interested parties, if any, the Board hereby CHANGES the approval status for the University of St. Thomas Baccalaureate Degree Nursing Education Program in Houston, Texas from INITIAL APPROVAL WITH WARNING to FULL APPROVAL.

Entered this 19TH day of January, 2017

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