

**Report of Survey Visit to
Kilgore College in Longview, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Summary of Request:

Consider the report of the September 26-27, 2017 survey visit to Kilgore College Vocational Nursing (VN) Education Program in Longview, Texas. This routine survey visit was conducted by Education Consultant Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE. The previous survey visit was October 2012.

Historical Perspective:

- Kilgore College VN Education Program in Longview, Texas was established in 1962 in association with Good Shepherd Hospital and the Longview Public Schools. Of the 15 students who graduated from the first class, all passed the State Board exam.
- The emphasis of the VN program is on educating safe, competent nurses who are prepared to meet the challenges of today's technology.
- Kilgore College is accredited by Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges (SACS-COC). A reaccreditation visit is scheduled for March 2018. Kilgore College has a certificate of authority from Texas Higher Education Coordination Board (THECB).
- The NCLEX-PN® examination pass rates for the past five years are provided in the following table:

NCLEX Examination Year	BON Approval Status	NCLEX-PN® Examination Pass Rate	Number of First Time Candidates (Passed/Total)
2016	Full	70.45%	31/44
2015	Full	82.98%	39/47
2014	Full	100%	51/51
2013	Full	92.86%	52/56
2012	Full	93.22%	55/59

- The program submitted a Self-Study Report (SSR) in 2017 due to the 2016 NCLEX-PN® examination pass rate of 70.45%. The program has begun to implement measures to improve the performance of students on the national licensing examination, the NCLEX-PN® examination.

- Major areas needing corrective actions with accompanying time frames for implementation were identified in the SSR. Some of the corrective measures included review/analysis of: 1) student success and retention of learning from one semester to next; 2) admission criteria; 3) faculty retention and recruitment; and 4) each course based on Test Plan 2017 and DECS.

Summary of Survey Findings (See Attachment #1):

Positive Aspects of Survey Visit:

- Michaelle Green, RN, the VN Program Director, is an experienced educator having taught in the VN program for two years prior to her appointment as Director in 2015.
- The Program Director is dedicated to administration of the VN and Nurse Aide programs. She currently teaches one full-time course.
- Administration expressed support for the VN program and acknowledged it fulfills a need for VNs in the communities served.
- Students interviewed expressed satisfaction with the program.
- The program of study incorporates various methods for course delivery, including face-to-face instruction, role playing, adaptive quizzes, active learning strategies, and simulation.
- All clinical learning experiences are faculty supervised with hands-on direct-patient care in clinical settings. The program utilizes simulation and skills lab to prepare students for clinical practice.
- The program has a variety of active contracts with clinical affiliating agencies that provide a wide array of clinical learning experiences.
- VN graduates are able to obtain employment in the local and surrounding areas including hospitals, clinics, doctors' offices, and long term care agencies.
- The college provides funds annually for faculty to attend the annual conference of the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) and other conferences related to education and the use of simulation.

Concerns of Survey Visit:

- Cognitive levels of exams across the curriculum are predominantly in the lower domains of Bloom's taxonomy: knowledge, and comprehension. The upper domains of analysis and application are found in the blueprints of one course. Synthesis and evaluation are not utilized.

Staff Rationale for Recommendation #1:

Cognitive levels on exams need to be in the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy (i.e. analysis, synthesis, and evaluation) to measure clinical decision-making and critical thinking skills. The NCLEX® test plan is based on the upper cognitive levels of Bloom's taxonomy.

Recommendation #1:

The program is encouraged to develop exams with cognitive levels using the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy and provide sample blueprints and examples of test items to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2018.

Staff Recommendation:

Move to accept the report of the September 26-27, 2017 survey visit to Kilgore College Vocational Nurse Education Program and issue the recommendation in the attached letter (see Attachment #2).

**Summary of Survey Visit to
Vernon College in Longview, Texas
Vocational Nursing Education Program**

Purpose of Survey Visit: The survey visit was conducted as a routine survey visit.

Date of Visit: September 26-27, 2017

Board Staff Conducting Survey Visit: Susan Lee, PhD, RN, CNE, Education Consultant
Program Evaluator met with:

- Michael H. Turpin, Ph.D., Vice President of Instruction and Chief Academic Officer
- Julie H. Fowler, Ed. D, Executive Dean
- Louise Wiley, MS, RT (R) (M), Dean of Science and Health Sciences
- Michaelle Green, RN, Instructor and Department Chair VN and Nurse Aide
- Amy Collins, BSN, RN, MBA, Faculty
- Kevin (Kay) Hawthorne, BSN, RN, Faculty
- Candice J. Dotson, BSN, RN, Faculty
- Deborah Miller, BSN, RN, Faculty
- Kim Sanders-Reese, BSN, RN, Faculty
- Penny Attaway, RN, Faculty
- Tami Yates, MSN, MBA, RN, Faculty
- 12 VN students

Program Evaluator:

- held initial conference with Program Director and administration;
- reviewed the curriculum and all syllabi;
- reviewed the Student Handbook, Faculty Handbook and Academic Catalog;
- reviewed the clinical evaluation tools and available clinical affiliation agreements;
- reviewed organizational chart and minutes of faculty meetings;
- reviewed 2016 Nursing Education Program Information Survey (NEPIS) and faculty profile;
- reviewed faculty and student files;
- reviewed Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan and data;
- toured program facilities;
- observed a class in session; and
- conducted exit interview with administrators and program director.

Summary of Findings:

Administration and Organization:

- Administration indicated the nursing program fulfills a need in the local and surrounding community and has comparable status to other education units in the college.

- The VN program is included in the Kilgore College Organization Chart as part of Science and Health Sciences Programs, along with Associate Degree Nursing (ADN), Emergency Medical Technician, Paramedic, Nurse Aide, Physical Therapy Assistant, Surgical Technologist, and Radiation Technologist.
- The VN program is offered in Longview, Texas.
- Michaelle Green, RN, has been the Program Director for two years and taught in the VN program for two years prior to her appointment as director.
- Ms. Green teaches one course in addition to her Program Director duties in the VN and Nurse Aide programs.

Program of Study:

- The full-time, 12-month program of study is designed to be completed in 3 semesters for a total of 47 credit hours. Two cohorts are admitted annually, in August and January.
- The program is comprised of a total of 1472 clock hours: 560 didactic hours and 912 clinical hours.
- The program of study includes all Board required content.
- The organization of the curriculum moves from simple to complex and is designed to ensure students are competent in skills prior to entering the clinical setting. Currently, pathways are being developed to facilitate educational mobility as students indicated a desire to advance their nursing education upon completion of this program.
- *The Differentiated Essential Competencies (DECS)* (2010) are incorporated into the curriculum.
- Test blueprints include cognitive levels in the knowledge, comprehension, application, and analysis domains of Bloom's taxonomy. However, the exams have a greater number of questions at the knowledge and comprehension cognitive levels across the curriculum and levels; with few application and analysis cognitive level questions.
- Standardized testing is used throughout the program for progression and remediation. High-stakes standardized testing is not used for graduation purposes. Health Education Systems Incorporated (HESI) exams were reviewed by faculty and Program Director, looking for weaknesses. Tutoring was then provided before and after classes, along with focused tutorials.

Faculty:

- Four full-time and three adjunct faculty teach in the VN program. At the time of the survey visit, there were no full-time or adjunct faculty vacancies.
- Faculty are comprised of experienced and less-experienced members in the area of teaching. Faculty are diverse in content expertise and clinical backgrounds.
- VN faculty workload is 15 load hours per semester in Fall and Spring, and 12 load hours during the summer session. Load hours include actual face-to-face time with students, course or exam preparation, office hours to meet with students, and committee work. For clinical, one load hour is equivalent to 0.75 hours of actual clinical time. For skills lab and simulation, one load hour is equivalent to 0.67 hours of actual lab time.
- Faculty members are actively engaged in curriculum planning, implementation, and evaluation for each of their courses.

- Faculty has regular monthly meetings with decisions reached by consensus.
- Faculty development includes attendance at the Texas Association of Vocational Nurse Educators (TAVNE) annual conference, a mental health conference, and the national Laerdal simulation conferences.
- All of faculty members were available for interview.
- Faculty policies are in place per BON requirement.
- Orientation is provided for all new nursing faculty members at the onset of employment.

Students:

- The program admits two cohorts per year into the program, in January and August. The number admitted varies based on the number of qualified applicants.
- At the time of the survey visit, 62 students were in the program, with 36 students in the first semester and 26 students in the third semester.
- Students reported they enrolled in the VN program because of the location.
- Students agreed the program of study is preparing them for clinical practice, citing clinical learning experiences as being a valuable component of the program.
- Students cited challenges as curriculum loads and employment/family obligations. Students have 18 credit hours in the first semester and 17 credit hours in the second semester. Reasons given for attrition are: health, failing grades, and employment/family issues.
- Students acknowledged faculty are available to assist with ensuring student success and remediation.
- Student policies are well-defined, written, and available to students.
- There are four class officers from each cohort who represent the students and who have input into the development of policies.
- Twelve students were interviewed, six from the first-semester cohort, and 6 from the third-semester cohort.
- Eleven of the interviewed students expressed a desire to further their education to become an RN.

Clinical Learning Experiences:

- The program has active clinical contracts with a number of affiliating agencies (e.g. rehabilitation, long-term care, clinics, hospitals, health care centers, and home health) that provide a variety of clinical learning experiences to meet the objectives and outcomes of the curriculum.
- Skills lab and simulation lab activities are utilized.
- Intravenous therapy is taught as part of the clinical learning experiences.
- Faculty provides supervision during all clinical learning experiences and maintains BON required ratios. Preceptors are utilized and there are written procedures for orienting and working with preceptors.
- Clinical learning experiences are scheduled to correlate with didactic content.
- Criteria for selecting clinical agencies are well-defined.

- The clinical evaluation tools are progressive and are based upon course content and the DEC's. Clinical evaluation tools include formative and summative evaluations throughout the program. Student expectations are well-defined.

Facilities, Resources, and Services:

- A full array of student services is offered, including restrooms, faculty and student lounges, lockers, break areas, study areas, and a snack bar.
- Computer labs are available in the nursing building and students have 24-hour access to online resources.
- There is ample, open parking available adjacent to the program building.
- The VN program building is conducive to learning, with spacious classrooms, and well-equipped skills and simulation labs.
- Students have access to a library on the main campus in Kilgore and to the public library, which is across the street from the VN building.
- The program director and full-time faculty have furnished private offices.
- The program has full-time clerical and secretarial support.
- The program director agreed that resources are adequate to meet all teaching needs.

Records and Reports:

- Faculty files provide evidence of faculty qualifications, official transcripts, and performance appraisals.
- The program has a Total Program Evaluation (TPE) Plan that is used for decision making.
- Meeting minutes consistently reflect implementation of the TPE.
- Student files contain all documents required by Rule 214.
- Clinical affiliation agreements are current.
- Storage of files meets the requirement of Rule 214.

DRAFT LETTER

October 26, 2017

Michaelle Green, RN, Program Director
Vocational Nursing Education Program
Kilgore College Longview
300 South High Street
Longview, Texas 75601

Dear Ms. Green:

At the October 26, 2017 meeting, members of the Texas Board of Nursing (Board) considered the report of the September 26-27, 2017 survey visit to Kilgore College Vocational Nursing Education Program in Longview, Texas. It was the decision of the Board to accept the report of the survey visit and impose the following recommendation:

Recommendation:

1. It is recommended that the program develop exams with cognitive levels using the upper domains of Bloom's taxonomy and provide sample blueprints and examples of test items to Board Staff no later than April 1, 2018.

Recommendations are suggestions based upon program assessment indirectly related to the rules to which a program must respond but in a method of their choosing.

If you have any questions, please contact Board Staff at susan.lee@bon.texas.gov or 512-463-4631.

Sincerely,

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

copy: Michael H. Turpin, Ph.D., Vice President of Instruction and Chief Academic Officer